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AP PHOTO



Pakistan The death toll from more than five weeks of monsoon rains and flash flooding across Pakistan has reached 304, authorities said Saturday. Since mid-June, the deluge has swollen rivers and damaged highways and bridges, disrupting traffic. Almost 9,000 homes have been fully destroyed or partially damaged. Particularly hard-hit was the volatile, impoverished southwestern Baluchistan province, where 99 people died in rain-related incidents.

AP PHOTO



UN Judges at the United Nations' highest court last week dismissed preliminary objections by Myanmar to a case alleging the Southeast Asian nation is responsible for genocide against the Rohingya ethnic minority. The decision establishing the International Court of Justice's jurisdiction sets the stage for hearings airing evidence of atrocities against the Rohingya that human rights groups and a U.N. probe say breach the 1948 Genocide Convention.

AP PHOTO



Lebanon's prime minister warned that the ruin of a massive grain silo risks total collapse due to an ongoing fire that's expanding amid the summer heat at the Beirut port where a devastating blast two years ago tore through the Mediterranean city. A fire in the structure has been smoldering for the past two weeks due to 800 tons of grain inside fermenting in the hot weather. The government said the fire expanded after flames reached nearby electrical cables.

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HANDFUL OF FILIPINOS ALLEGEDLY FACE VERBAL BULLYING WHILE IN NAT QUEUE

LYNZY VALLES

A handful of Filipino nationals have allegedly been verbally harassed while queuing for the three-day mandatory nucleic acid test (NAT), a mandate that created dissent on social media platforms.

Last week, the government announced that all Filipino passport holders, whether a Macau ID holder or not, should undergo a three-day NAT – a decision that came after its assessment that 9.5% of the total 1,795 Covid-19 cases are Filipinos.

Those who have shifted to Macau passports from Philippine passports also received a text message from the government, notifying them of the mandatory testing requirements for three days.

Many expressed their concerns over social media, noting that the move is discriminatory as it only targets a small percentage of the total number of cases.

On Friday, the next day after the announcement, health authorities reiterated that the move was not discriminatory or racist, nor were they profiling the community. Rather, the decision was based on statistics showing that one-fourth of Covid-19 cases in the past two weeks hail from the Philippines.

Official data shows that from July 11 to 22 (the partial lock-

down), there were 83 cases in total, implying that 20 cases are Philippine passport holders.

However, the mandate seemed to have caused the alleged bullying encountered by some Filipinos.

Eloida Alvarez was one such person who described her experience to the Times.

Alvarez, who has been a nurse in the public hospital for about two decades, queued for a NAT with her two children.

“They were staring at us for a while until the couple just cussed at us twice

ELOIDA ALVAREZ

On the first day of the mandate, while queuing up at the NAT station, two older individuals allegedly cussed at them “because we are Filipinos.”

“They were staring at us for a while until the couple just cussed at us twice,” she recounted.

According to Alvarez, her sons were surprised at the actions of the couple as this was followed by another hostile local in the

queue.

“She looked at me from head to toe and I just said I didn’t care if she was angry,” she noted, adding that her words infuriated the woman.

Alvarez and her children hold a Macau passport but were required to undergo the NAT as they received a text message from the government noting they were part of the key group.

Meanwhile, another Filipino non-resident worker expressed that while in the queue with two of her friends, they were allegedly laughed at while being termed, “Filipan.”

“Filipan” is the Cantonese word for Filipino.

“I felt like that way they pinpointed us as Filipinos and tagging us as having a ‘high infection rate’ was very discriminatory. I think there could have been a better way to phrase it,” said Gabrielle, who refused to provide her last name.

“I immediately had other people laughing at me just because I was in line at the NAT station. It was insulting to have these people look at you and judge you, then laugh at you. They knew we were Filipinos,” she added.

Health authorities justified

the three-day NAT as part of their objective to “discover the hidden origins of infections.”

According to the government, Filipino nationals are employed in different sectors, and are more likely to gather.

Filipinos are not the first group that have been singled out for mass testing.

Back in October 2021, certain occupational and racial groups of individuals – identified as ‘key groups’ by the Health Bureau (SSM) – had been ordered to take four NATs in eight days. At the time, this series of tests concerned workers in construction, laundry and security services, as well as non-resident workers from Nepal and Vietnam.

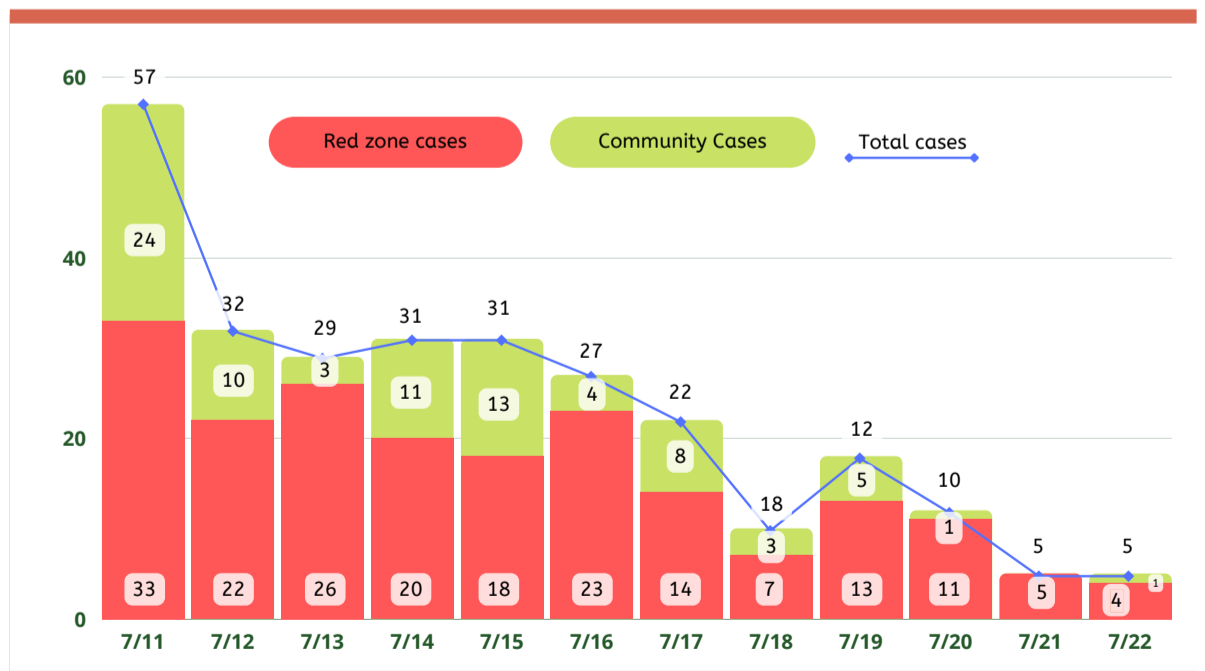
During that time, the Nepalese community also expressed that many nationals felt discriminated against at work following the directive.

Meanwhile, another non-resident worker who refused to be identified, expressed that the fact that 25% of the community cases are Filipinos has hindered him from returning to work – sad news for the worker, as he has been on unpaid leave due to the partial lockdown.

The Filipino national, who has been working at a hotel in the peninsula, said, “Our boss issued a memo to not give work schedules to us Filipinos because of the fact that 25% of community cases are of my nationality.”

“Due to this circumstance, my unpaid leave will be extended to the end of the month.”

Filipinos are no longer listed as a key group, and the mass testing requirements for the group ended yesterday.



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COVID-19

Filipinos and condo workers stop daily NAT

RENATO MARQUES

FILIPINO passport holders as well as condominium management workers have been removed from the list of key groups that need to undergo daily nucleic acid tests (NAT), the Novel Coronavirus Response and Coordination Centre informed yesterday at the daily press briefing on Covid-19 in Macau.

The local coordinator of the Center for Disease Control and Prevention, Dr. Leong Iek Hou, justified the decision with the NAT results of the last few days as well as the epidemiological investigation conducted by the health authorities.

"After the last couple of days, we have decided to adjust the testing of key groups and so workers from the condominium management as well as all Filipino passport holders will stop being part of the target groups of daily NAT from July 25. Still, I want to remark that those who

need to work still need to do a NAT every two days," Leong said, noting that the orders regarding the other key groups remain unchanged.

The same official also reminded the population that those who do not need to perform a NAT between July 22 and 29 must continue to upload a daily result of a Rapid Antigen Test (RAT) to the platform. This measure also applies to those who have been exempted from the mass testing such as children below the age of three years old, those over 80 years old, and those with a high degree of immobility who need support from caretakers.

Leong also urged business owners to strictly comply with the guidelines regarding the resumption of work activities, including deep cleaning workspaces and disinfecting common areas such as toilets. This process should be also repeated every time a shift ends and before a new working shift begins.

RENATO MARQUES



ZERO COMMUNITY CASES REPORTED FOR SATURDAY

PROVIDING an update on the number of new cases detected in the community, Leong said that during the 24 hours of last Saturday, there were no new positive cases detected in the community, with the five cases previously detected all being from people in the red zone of confinement

or medical observation hotels. The five new cases reported raise the tally to 1,810. According to the same official, there is at least one new case found on Sunday as a result of the 13th round of citywide mass testing that ended on Saturday evening. Leong said that two

10-in-1 mixed samples have tested positive, from which one case was already confirmed on Sunday. The second group is likely to be related to the relapse of a person who arrived from abroad, who might have already had some viral levels in their system which potentially contaminated the sample.

MASS TESTING

CONSTRUCTION WORKERS ADDED TO KEY GROUP FOR NAT, WITH NEW KEY AREA

ANTHONY LAM

ALL construction workers are required to take a SARS-CoV-2 nucleic acid test (NAT) every day starting from now, the Novel Coronavirus Response and Coordination Centre announced over the weekend.

The profession is the newest group to be added to the daily NAT requirement.

Similarly, the city's health officials emphasized that the NAT result should not be considered an essential condition for work.

These groups of test takers may take the test at any general test stations across the city.

Meanwhile, the Coordination Centre has also announced that an area covering the neighborhood of Border Gate to some parts of the Iao Hon District has been designated a key group. The scope of those required to test inclu-

MDT ARCHIVE



des people who live or work in the area surrounded by Istmo de Ferreira do Amaral, Rua dos Hortelãos, Avenida do Hipódromo, Rua Alegre, Estrada Marginal do Hipódromo, and Estrada da Areia Preta, as well as those who have stayed within the area

for more than half an hour on or after July 20.

All those within the key area are required to be tested every day from now until July 26. Missing a test will result in a yellow code, and missing two consecutive tests will result in red code.

LAWMAKER SUGGESTS IMPROVING NAT SERVICES

STAFF REPORTER

LAWMAKER Lei Chan U expressed hope that the Macau government will improve nucleic acid testing (NAT) services to ensure that Covid-19 pandemic prevention needs are met.

"This pandemic outbreak has exposed the insufficiency of our existing ability to conduct NAT, especially due to the lack of nucleic acid samplers," Lei said. He explained that due to a staff shortage for NAT services, public medical institutions were required to suspend the provision of basic medical services to redeploy skilled personnel to NAT stations.

Lei suggested keeping several NAT stations to help prevent people from gathering



and reduce the risk of virus transmission.

Further, Lei also called on the government to extend the service hours of some NAT stations to 24 hours to meet the needs of residents.

Also, the lawmaker questioned whether the introduction of the NAT service competitors will be delayed due to the pandemic.

Back in May, the go-

vernment announced that a new NAT operator may be approved to provide services in June, meaning cheaper tests may be possible.

Therefore, the lawmaker hopes that the government will expedite the introduction of new nucleic acid testing providers to reduce the cost of NAT and the consequent burden on the general public.

NAT VENUES

GOV'T PREPARING TO SWAP SCHOOLS FOR CITY PARKS, GARDEN AREAS

RENATO MARQUES

LOCAL health authorities are preparing to use city parks and gardens as venues for nucleic acid testing (NAT).

During yesterday's daily press briefing of the Novel Coronavirus Response and Coordination Center, the local coordinator of the Center for Disease Control and Prevention, Dr. Leong Iek Hou, explained that this idea stems from the need to stop using the high number of NAT stations located in school facilities, while also keeping the stations close to the residential areas for convenience.

"At the moment we are preparing to establish new outdoor NAT stations. This is to prepare for upcoming works regarding NAT [venues]. We are currently working with many schools, but after the schools resume in September, we need to stop using them and so we need to find other places," Leong said. Leong added, "The idea is to set up stations near the residents' homes and parks or gardens are suitable and convenient for people to do their tests, as we need to continue to do NATs for some time to ensure that there are no other [Covid-19] outbreaks."



The solution seems to have been inspired by other cities on the mainland where it is common to see tents installed in public outdoor venues for NAT.

Questioned on how many of these outdoor NAT stations would be installed and their operations,

Leong refused to provide details at present, stating that further information will be provided subsequently at the right time.

"As for the number of stations and the operations, and whether it will be paid or free of charge, we will publish all these details soon," she remarked, adding, "The [outdoor stations] are not going to totally replace the others. At the moment, we have 59 stations, but

step-by-step we will replace some as we will need to reinforce the works of key groups and we need to have this option. Our idea is to continue to have some of those located in indoor places and add some more outdoors."

RAT KITS ACQUIRED VIA PUBLIC TENDER, QUALITY TESTED

To an inquiry on the topic, the medical director of the Conde

de São Januário Hospital Center, Lei Wai Seng, has said that all the Rapid Antigen Test (RAT) kits being distributed by the authorities have been acquired through a public tender. The price, stock availability and quality were the main assessment criteria that formed the basis of the decision of which RAT brands to acquire.

"We have acquired different brands of RAT via a public tender. We have performed a few tests before distributing the test kits to the population. If the products did not meet the quality requirements, we did not choose them," Lei said. Further, Lei added, "We have been distributing a large quantity of RATs to the population so it is normal that some might have some problems. When we decided which ones to acquire, we also took into account whether the suppliers had enough stock and whether they could restock easily. Price, stock, and quality were the main criteria for the acquisition."

Regarding reported cases of tests being flawed, Lei said that the Health Bureau has been following up these cases and the feedback obtained from the population to determine which kit brands or types were having more issues to avoid acquiring more of those in the future.

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Legal grounds founded for gov't to wiretap social media contacts

ANTHONY LAM

FOLLOWING the passing of a law allowing interceptions of communications, the government has set up a legal ground for it to request communication records from social media operators.

Officially referred to as the Legal Regime for the Interception and Protection of Communications, the draft law was passed by the parliament on July 22, and will be enacted into law on August 1.

In defense of the necessity of the law, Secretary for Security Wong Sio Chak cited precedents that when the government had previously wanted social media platforms, including but not limited to Facebook and WhatsApp, to surrender parts or all of their communication records, the government would be asked for legal grounds. Previous laws were not amply clear in this respect, he added.

He then warned that in similar scenarios in the future, there would be legal grounds for the government to demand such data from service providers, even if they are not located or headquartered in Macau.

Lawmaker Ron Lam, not only



at this plenary, but also in previous written commentaries, issued a reminder about the private nature of communication data. He urged the government

to introduce an independent supervising body to monitor the approval of each request for data interception.

However, Wong disagreed

with the lawmaker. He even cited the judiciary's authority to deny Lam's request, saying that all future data interception must be approved either prior to or

following the operation by a judge of law.

On the other hand, the lawmaker also wanted the law to mandate law-enforcement agencies to periodically disclose figures on requested and approved interceptions.

Wong did not find this proposal feasible. He said that in addition to the police, the Commission Against Corruption is also responsible for criminal investigations. "The police will not have all the statistics," Wong said, despite the lawmaker asking for "law-enforcement agencies" to make disclosures.

In addition, Wong said the judiciary announced three-year figures on the number of interceptions that were requested and approved in 2018 and invited Lam to enquire with the court at his own convenience.

This law allows each interception to last three months at most for each approved application, but law-enforcement agencies will be allowed to apply for extensions. Each application must be approved by a judge of law prior to the interception unless delays will cause irreversible damage to investigations.

Wong, as an official in the executive branch, assured lawmakers that judges would not approve applications for interceptions targeting unrelated subjects.

Wong reiterated in the online parliamentary plenary meeting that the law was intensively rigorous.

Manila to boost assistance following viral clip of nationals grappling for food packs

LYNZY VALLES

THE Philippines' Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) is preparing to assist the country's Department of Migrant Workers (DMW) in case the department sends additional relief goods to Filipino nationals in Macau.

This comes after a social media post went viral showing several Filipinos grappling for relief goods being handed out by a Chinese vegetarian restaurant.

DSWD Secretary Erwin Tulfo posted on his social media page, "Although the DMW has already sent out assistance to Overseas Filipino Workers (OFWs), we are getting ready to assist the DMW in case they need to send additional assistance to the 27,000 OFWs in Macau."

On Saturday, several do-



Screenshot from a video shows restaurant handing relief goods to Filipino nationals

zens of Filipinos were seen along Rua dos Ervanarios waiting for relief goods from a vegetarian restaurant.

The distribution of goods was supposed to start at 6:30 p.m.

However, the Times was informed that people be-

gan queuing up as early as 5 p.m., with queues forming by around 5:30 p.m. A police officer reportedly told them not to gather and to

maintain a distance of at least one meter apart.

However, such instructions became difficult to follow as the packs were only being distributed to the first 100 in queue.

"I have been on no-pay leave this entire month. Getting at least some food packs here would be helpful," a non-resident told the Times.

While queuing up, many remained anxious as they were afraid of being caught by police officers for breaching pandemic prevention measures.

"I'd rather leave than get caught for lining up. It's a lot of people already. I don't even know if the goods will reach me," said another.

The relief pack reportedly contained rice, canned goods, and noodles.

The video posted on social media had caught the

attention of DSWD, as it depicted the remaining Filipinos at the tail end of the queue grappling for the relief goods.

"The DMW and DSWD are preparing relief packs for the OFWs as soon as possible.

The Consulate is looking for a grocery store from which items for the OFWs can be purchased, which will be paid for by DSWD," said Tulfo.

"The Malacañang Palace is monitoring the situation and the DMW Secretary is updating the President of the Philippines," he added.

Philippine local associations told Lusa News Agency that several migrant workers were surviving only on food donations, as many of them had to undergo unpaid leave due to the lockdown.

Two weeks ago, the DMW said that all hands were on deck to bring as many Covid-care packages and food packs to OFWs who might not have either the means or the mobility to buy food and medicines.

BEIJING COURT RULES AGAINST WOMAN WHO WANTED TO FREEZE EGGS

HUIZHONG WU,
TAIPEI, TAIWAN

A Chinese court has overruled a rare legal challenge brought by an unmarried Beijing woman seeking the right to freeze her eggs.

The Chaoyang Intermediate People's Court in Beijing said in a judgment that the hospital did not violate the woman's rights in denying her access to freeze her eggs. Teresa Xu received the court judgment Friday, almost three years after she first brought the case.

In China, national law does not explicitly ban unmarried people from services like fertility treatments, and simply states that a "husband and wife" can have up to three children. In practice, however, hospitals and other institutions implement the regulations in a way that requires people to show a marriage license. Unmarried women who choose to have children have struggled to access public benefits like maternity leave or coverage for prenatal exams.

In 2018, Xu, then 30 years old, had gone to Beijing Obstetrics and Gynecology Hospital at Capital Medical University, a public hospital, to ask about freezing her eggs. After an initial examination, she was told she could not proceed further because she could not show a marriage certificate. She said the doctor also ur-



Teresa Xu speaks to journalists after her court session at the Chaoyang People's Court in Beijing, China on Sept. 17, 2021

ged her to have a child while she was still young.

Xu, who is unmarried, had wanted to preserve her eggs so she could have an option to bear children at a later date.

"I think this lost lawsuit, it's not an attack on single women's reproductive rights, maybe it's a temporary setback," she said in a short video statement announcing the news on her WeChat account.

Xu's case drew broad covera-

ge from domestic media outlets in China, including some state media outlets, when she first brought her case to court in 2019. Local media had said her case against the hospital was the country's first.

The hospital, according to the judgment, had argued that egg freezing poses certain health risks. But it also said that delaying pregnancy would bring about "problems" such as risks to the mother during pregnancy, and

"psychological and societal problems" if there is a large age gap between parents and their child.

The hospital also said that egg-freezing services were only available to women who could not get pregnant in the natural way, and not for healthy patients.

Xu said she plans to appeal the ruling.

"There will definitely be a day (when) we will take back sovereignty over our own bodies," she said. MDT/AP

REAL ESTATE

Evergrande CEO, CFO resign amid probe into subsidiary

ANNE D'INNOCENZIO,
NEW YORK

STRUGGLING Chinese real estate developer China Evergrande has announced that its chief executive and chief financial officer have resigned after initial findings in a probe found \$2 billion belonging to its property unit subsidiary was redirected back to the group.

The news, announced Friday, comes as the company is already saddled with \$310 billion in debt.

China Evergrande said CEO Xia Haijun and CFO Pan Darong had resigned over their involvement in

an arrangement to use the money as collateral to guarantee a series of loans. The money was then redirected to Evergrande through a third party, the company said. The loans involved three sets of deposits. The company didn't name the third party.

The company is discussing with the subsidiary Evergrande Property Services regarding the repayment plan of the sums related to the pledged. The plan is mainly to set off the relevant sums by transferring assets of the group to Evergrande Property Services.

In light of the above

preliminary findings, China Evergrande said it will consider appointing an internal control consultant to conduct a comprehensive review of the internal control and risk management systems of the company.

Evergrande, the world's most indebted developer, came under pressure after China's ruling Communist Party ordered property developers to cut their debt levels. The authorities are trying to direct the industry toward a more sustainable pace of development after many years of stimulus-fueled growth.

MDT/AP



GOV'T LAUNCHES ONE OF 2 LAB MODULES TO JOIN SPACE STATION

CHINA yesterday launched one of two laboratory modules to complete its permanent orbiting space station.

The Wentian was launched from tropical Hainan Island with a large crowd of amateur photographers and space enthusiasts watching. Designed for science and biology experiments, the module lifted off on the Long March 5B remote 3 rocket, and spent roughly eight minutes in flight before it entered orbit, according to the official Xinhua News Agency.

A second lab module, called the Mengtian, is due to be launched in October, and both will join the Tiangong space station. Three astronauts are already living in the core module and will oversee the arrival and docking of the lab.

The launch is the third since the Chinese space station entered its construction phase. It was preceded by the Tianzhou-class cargo spacecraft and the Shenzhou-14 crewed spacecraft.

China's space program is run by the ruling Communist Party's military wing, the People's Liberation Army, prompting the U.S. to exclude it from the International Space Station. As a result, China largely had to work on its own in its Tiangong space station program, building and then abandoning two experimental stations before embarking on the latest iteration.

The 23-ton lab module is heavier than any other single-module spacecraft that is currently in space, according to the state-owned Global Times.

China's space program launched its first astronaut into orbit in 2003, making it only the third country to do so on its own after the former Soviet Union and the U.S. MDT/AP

INFO BLOCKADE

S.Korea to lift ban on N.Korea TV, newspapers despite tensions

HYUNG-JIN KIM, SEOUL, SOUTH KOREA

SOUTH Korea plans to lift its decadeslong ban on public access to North Korean television, newspapers and other publications as part of its efforts to promote mutual understanding between the rivals, officials said Friday, despite animosities over the North's recent missile tests.

Divided along the world's most heavily fortified border since 1948, the two Koreas prohibit their citizens from visiting each other's territory and exchanging phone calls, emails and letters, and they block access to each other's websites and TV stations.

In a policy report to new President Yoon Suk Yeol on Friday, South Korea's Unification Ministry said it will gradually open the door for North Korean broadcasts, media and publications to try to boost mutual understanding, restore the Korean national identity and prepare for a future unification.

Ministry officials said South Korea will start by allowing ac-



cess to North Korean broadcasts to try to encourage North Korea to take similar steps. The ministry refused to provide further details, saying the plans are still being discussed with relevant authorities in South Korea.

Jeon Young-sun, a research professor at Seoul's Konkuk University, said North Korea is unlikely to reciprocate because the flow of South Korean cultural and media content would pose "a

really huge threat to" its authoritarian leadership.

Ruled by three generations of the Kim family since its 1948 foundation, North Korea strictly restricts its citizens' access to outside information, though many defectors have said they watched smuggled South Korean TV programs while living in the North. In 2014, North Korean troops opened fire when South Korean activists launched balloons carrying USB sticks

containing information about the outside world and leaflets critical of the Kim family toward North Korean territory.

Relations between the two Koreas remain strained over North Korea's torrid run of missile tests this year. Yoon, a conservative, has said he would take a tougher stance on North Korean provocations, though he said he has "an audacious plan" to improve the North's economy if it abandons its

nuclear weapons.

Despite the North's likely reluctance to reciprocate, Jeon said South Korea needs to ease its ban on North Korean media because the restrictions have led to dependence on foreigners and other governments to gather North Korea-related information. Jeon said that has increased the danger of acquiring distorted information on North Korea.

It wasn't clear how anti-North Korea activists in the South would react to the government's move. Jeon said there was little chance the move would promote pro-North Korean sentiments.

South Korea, the world's 10th-largest economy, is a global cultural powerhouse. Its nominal gross domestic product in 2019 was 54 times bigger than that of North Korea, according to South Korean estimates.

Some observers say the ban must be lifted in a step-by-step process with discussions on what North Korean contents would be allowed first and how the access should be given to the South Korean public.

While South Korean authorities block access to North Korean government websites and other media, they rarely crack down on experts, journalists and others using virtual private networks or proxy servers to access them. A large number of North Korean movies, songs and other contents are also available on YouTube, which is accessible in South Korea. **MDT/AP**

Rights groups urge Sri Lanka not to use force on protesters

BHARATHA MALLAWARACHI, COLOMBO

INTERNATIONAL human rights groups on Saturday urged Sri Lanka's new president to immediately order security forces to cease use of force against protesters after troops and police cleared their main camp following months of demonstrations over the country's economic meltdown.

A day after President Ranil Wickremesinghe was sworn, hundreds of armed troops raided a protest camp outside the president's office in the early hours of Friday, attacking demonstrators with batons. Human Rights Watch said the action "sends a dangerous message to the Sri Lankan people that the new government intends to act through brute force rather than the rule of law."

Two journalists and two lawyers were also attacked



by soldiers in the crackdown. Security forces arrested 11 people, including protesters and lawyers.

"Urgently needed measures to address the economic needs of Sri Lankans demand a government that respects fundamental rights," Meenakshi Ganguly, South Asia director at Human Rights Watch, said in a statement. "Sri Lanka's international partners should send the message loud and clear that they can't support an administration that tramples on the rights of its

people."

Also condemning the attack, Amnesty International said "it is shameful that the new government resorted to such violent tactics within hours of coming to power."

"The protesters have a right to demonstrate peacefully. Excessive use of force, intimidation and unlawful arrests seem to be an endlessly repetitive pattern in which the Sri Lankan authorities respond to dissent and peaceful assembly," said Kyle Ward, the group's

deputy secretary general.

Wickremesinghe, who previously served as prime minister six times, was sworn in as president a week after his predecessor, Gotabaya Rajapaksa, fled the country. Rajapaksa later resigned while exiled in Singapore.

Sri Lankans have taken to the streets for months to demand their top leaders step down to take responsibility for the economic chaos that has left the nation's 22 million people struggling with shortages of essentials,

including medicine, fuel and food. While the protesters have focused on the Rajapaksa's family, Wickremesinghe also has drawn their ire as a perceived Rajapaksa surrogate.

Armed troops and police arrived in trucks and buses on Friday to clear the main protest camp the capital, Colombo, even though protesters had announced they would vacate the site voluntarily.

Sri Lanka's opposition, the United Nations, and the U.S. have denounced the government's heavy-handed tactics.

Despite heightened security outside the president's office, protesters have vowed to continue until Wickremesinghe resigns.

On Friday, he appointed as prime minister a Rajapaksa ally, Dinesh Gunawardena.

Wickremesinghe on Monday declared a state of emergency as acting president in a bid to quell the

protests. Just hours after he was sworn in, he issued a notice calling on the armed forces to maintain law and order — clearing the way for the move against the protest camp.

The protesters accuse Rajapaksa and his powerful family of siphoning money from government coffers and of hastening the country's collapse by mismanaging the economy. The family has denied the corruption allegations, but the former president acknowledged that some of his policies contributed to Sri Lanka's crisis.

The political turmoil has threatened efforts to seek rescue from the International Monetary Fund. Still, earlier this week, Wickremesinghe said bailout talks were nearing a conclusion.

The head of the IMF, Kristalina Georgieva, told the Japanese financial magazine Nikkei Asia this week that the IMF hopes for a deal "as quickly as possible." **MDT/AP**

PUTIN'S WAR

Russia FM visits Egypt, part of Africa trip amid Ukraine war

SAMY MAGDY, CAIRO

RUSSIAN Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov was in Cairo for talks yesterday with Egyptian officials as his country seeks to break diplomatic isolation and sanctions by the West over its invasion of Ukraine.

Lavrov landed in Cairo late Saturday, the first leg of his Africa trip that will also include stops in Ethiopia, Uganda and the Democratic Republic of Congo, according to Russia's state-run RT television network.

The Russian chief diplomat met yesterday morning with President Abdel Fattah el-Sissi in a Cairo presidential palace, the Egyptian leader's office said. Lavrov then held talks with Egyptian Foreign Minister Sameh Shukry.

Lavrov was scheduled to meet later yesterday with the Arab League Secretary General Ahmed Aboul Gheit. He will also address the permanent representatives of the pan-Arab organization, RT reported.

Russia's war in Ukraine has had dire effects on the world economy, driving up oil and gas prices to unprecedented levels.

Ukraine is one of the world's largest exporters of wheat, corn and sunflower oil, but Russia's invasion of the country and naval blockade of its ports have halted shipments. Some Ukrainian grain is transported through Europe



Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov

by rail, road and river, but with higher transportation costs.

The war has disrupted shipments of Russian products because shipping and insurance companies did not want to deal with Western sanctions on the country.

African counties are among those most affected by ripples of the war. The prices of vital commodities skyrocketed and billions of dollars in aid have been directed to help those who fled the war in Europe. That has left millions of people in conflict areas in Africa and the Middle East suffering from worsening shortages in food and other assistance.

In an article posted on the Russian Foreign Ministry website, Lavrov rejected the West

accusations that Russia is responsible for the global food crisis, as "another attempt to shift the blame to others."

Seeking to rally African nations on his country's side, he hailed what he called "an independent path" such nations took when they refrained from joining the West in sanctioning Russia.

"We know that the African colleagues does not approve of the undisguised attempts of the U.S. and their European satellites to gain the upper hand, and to impose a unipolar world order to the international community," he wrote in the article, which also was published in four African newspapers.

Lavrov's meetings with Egyptian officials and Arab envoys in Cairo come less

than two weeks after U.S. President Joe Biden's Mideast trip. Biden met with the leaders of Israel and the Palestinian Authority, before convening a summit with the leaders of Arab Gulf countries, Egypt, Jordan and Iraq in Saudi Arabia.

Egypt, the Arab World's most populous country, refused to take sides since the war in Ukraine began in February as it maintains close ties with both Moscow and the West. Egypt is among the world's largest importers of wheat, with much of that from Russia and Ukraine.

El-Sissi also completed a three-day visit to Serbia last week, the first in more than thirty years by an Egyptian president. Serbia has refused to join Western sanctions against Russia and has maintained friendly relations with Moscow despite the war. The two countries promised to increase economic cooperation. The Egyptian leader also visited Germany and France last week.

Russia and Egypt have strengthened their ties considerably in recent years as el-Sissi and Russia President Vladimir Putin developed a close personal rapport which helped increase military and economic cooperation.

Lavrov's visit to Cairo came as Russia's state-owned atomic energy corporation, Rosatom, began last week the construction of a four-reactor power plant it is building in Egypt. **MDT/AP**

information about fathers and mothers, some who are missing and others who the gangs prevented from leaving Cite Soleil.

"We need a lot of help," said Jean Michelet, a 16-year-old who said he was wounded on the day that the gang battles erupted in early July.

"I was home on the day the war started. It was a lot of shooting. A bullet went through the roof and it hit me in the head," he said.

He said a nun took him to a hospital to have the injury treated.

Michelet said a lot of people had been killed during the gunbattles. "The situation is really bad," he said. **MDT/AP**

this day in history

1978 FIRST 'TEST TUBE BABY' BORN



The birth of the world's first "test tube baby" has been announced in Manchester.

Louise Brown was born shortly before midnight in Oldham and District General Hospital.

Weighing 5lb 12oz (2.61 kg) the baby was delivered by caesarean section because her mother, Lesley Brown, was suffering from toxæmia.

The consultant in charge of the case, Mr Patrick Steptoe, said: "All examinations showed that the baby is quite normal. The mother's condition after delivery was also excellent."

Mrs Brown, 29, has blocked fallopian tubes so she and her husband, 39, have been undergoing in vitro fertility treatment.

Last November Mrs Brown had an embryo - of her egg and her husband's sperm - implanted in her womb after it had been fertilized in a laboratory.

The technique is being pioneered by consultant gynaecologist Patrick Steptoe and Cambridge research physiologist Robert Edwards.

"This work may be developed in other respects. It may include the reversal of sterilization," Dr Edwards told a press conference at Prestwich Hospital, Manchester.

More than 5,000 couples have applied for the new fertility treatment already and there are 20,000 women in the UK with blockages similar to that experienced by Lesley Brown.

None of the main religions have an official policy on artificial insemination, but the Roman Catholic Church has raised the strongest objection.

The Archbishop of St Andrews and Edinburgh, Cardinal Gordon Gray said: "I have grave misgivings about the possible implications and consequences for the future."

Louise Brown's financial future has been assured by the sale of newspaper rights for her story worth about £300,000.

Courtesy BBC News

HAITI

315 kids, adults shelter at school to escape gang war

EVENS SANON,
PORT-AU-PRINCE

HUNDREDS of children and adults sheltered at a high school in Haiti's capital Saturday after fleeing shooting in a neighborhood where fighting between two rival gangs in recent weeks has caused dozens of deaths and destroyed homes.

Francisco Seriphin, general coordinator for the

religious community group Kizito, said 315 people had taken refuge in the Saint-Louis de Gonzague school, which is in the Delmas district neighboring the violence-wracked Cite Soleil neighborhood.

Classes are out for summer vacation, and classrooms at the high school have been converted into dormitories, where some of the teenagers, children and toddlers sleep

on small mattresses provided by the nonprofit group. Others must sleep on the floor without mattresses.

Young people chatted and joked in the schoolyard Saturday, while others played soccer and basketball or jumped rope.

Seriphin said many of the children sheltering at the school came without their parents. Some youngsters stood in line waiting to give

IN CONTEXT

Louise Brown celebrated her 21st birthday in 1999, by which time 300,000 women worldwide had conceived through IVF. Louise's younger sister, Natalie, also born through IVF, became the first test tube baby to give birth - naturally - in 1999. The success rate for IVF treatment has remained at 17%. Doctors say social rather than medical factors are the major determinant of success. More than 70% of IVF clinics are in the UK and 80% of them charge £3,000 for each cycle of treatment. The process has attracted concern because embryos have been mixed up in the laboratory and the chance of multiple IVF births increased in the 1990s from one in 200 to one in 20.

MACAU'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

YOUR STARS

ARIES
Mar. 21-Apr. 19
 Don't take advantage of your expense account. Take care of the needs or responsibilities of elders. Don't believe everything you hear.

TAURUS
Apr. 20-May. 20
 Travel will turn out to be far more exciting than you imagined. You can stabilize your personal relationship if you're willing to communicate honestly. Use your high energy and dynamic approach to win favors.

GEMINI
May. 21-Jun. 21
 Include the whole family or those you love. Face any emotional problems head-on to avoid situations getting out of hand. This is a wonderful day to look into courses or hobbies that interest you.

CANCER
Jun. 22-Jul. 22
 Deceit around you is evident. Be prepared to encounter new friendships that will provide you with valuable information. The distance may make you both appreciate each other more.

LEO
Jul. 23-Aug. 22
 Opportunities to get involved in self improvement projects will be rewarding. Try to slow down, and take another look. You may want to clear the air where older relatives are concerned.

VIRGO
Aug. 23-Sep. 22
 Your home may be in an uproar and you are best to stay out of the line of fire if at all possible. Realize that you don't have to do everything yourself. Travel may be confusing.

LIBRA
Sep. 23-Oct. 22
 Try to avoid any drastic decisions concerning personal legal matters. Use your energy wisely. Recognition will be yours if you meet your deadline.

SCORPIO
Oct. 23-Nov. 21
 Help if you can, but more than likely it will be sufficient just to listen. You can pick up wonderful buys if you really look hard today. Try to iron out any friction over money with your mate.

SAGITTARIUS
Nov. 22-Dec. 21
 Try not to use emotional blackmail; it will only make matters worse. Don't be angry, but be on your guard. Take time to make physical improvements that will enhance your appearance.

CAPRICORN
Dec. 22-Jan. 19
 Your charm will attract someone special. Your need to be in a leadership position will help you surpass any rivals you might encounter. Don't divulge secret information.

AQUARIUS
Jan. 20-Feb. 18
 Be up front if you don't want to be embarrassed. You can expect changes in your living arrangements. Hassles with female colleagues may lead to problems with your boss.

PISCES
Feb. 19-Mar. 20
 Your best efforts will come through investments concerning your home. Your best efforts will come through investments concerning your home. Make plans to do something special with the one you love.

The Born Loser by Chip Sansom



SUDOKU

EASY

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

EASY+

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

MEDIUM

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

HARD

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

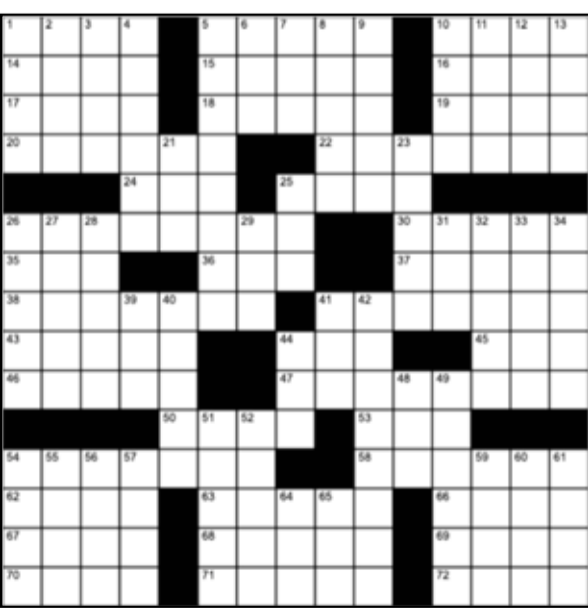
WEATHER

	MIN	MAX	CONDITION
CHINA			
Beijing	25	33	rain
Changchun	19	29	cloudy
Chengdu	24	34	cloudy
Chongqing	26	37	cloudy
Fuzhou	28	40	cloudy
Guangzhou	27	38	fine
Guiyang	21	31	cloudy
Haikou	26	35	cloudy
Hangzhou	26	37	fine
Harbin	20	28	cloudy
Hefei	24	33	rain
Nanjing	25	36	cloudy
Shanghai	27	34	overcast
Taipei	26	32	cloudy
Wuhan	27	36	fine
Hong Kong	29	34	fine
WORLD			
Moscow	17	27	rain
Frankfurt	16	34	rain
Paris	16	27	overcast
London	15	24	overcast
New York	23	32	showers

CROSSWORDS

ACROSS 1- Art Deco artist; 5- Animal; 10- Tennis units; 14- Switchblade; 15- Mule with a tyre; 16- Vicinity; 17- Mal de ___; 18- Hand woven wall hanging; 19- King of comedy; 20- Island in the South China Sea; 22- Floating mass; 24- Bro, e.g.; 25- Graceful horse; 26- Learned persons; 30- Mixed bags; 35- "Xanadu" band; 36- Baton Rouge sch.; 37- Insect stage; 38- Confer; 41- Sports arena; 43- Verbal flourishes; 44- From ___ Z; 45- ___-mo; 46- Glide along smoothly; 47- Knee-length trousers; 50- Prod; 53- Crusty treat; 54- Sailing vessel; 58- From birth; 62- Neighbor of Cambodia; 63- Try; 66- A wedding cake may have three of these; 67- Sea eagles; 68- Nahuatl speaker; 69- Cube creator Rubik; 70- Kiln for drying hops; 71- Farm layers; 72- Cincinnati team;

DOWN 1- Bk. before Job; 2- Ostrichlike bird; 3- South American monkey; 4- Nevertheless; 5- Yankee Stadium pitch directed at the batter's head; 6- Sin; 7- Swiss river; 8- Flight segment; 9- Scarpa's killer; 10- Swedish auto; 11- Della's creator; 12- Muscle injury; 13- Squealed; 21- Feel unwell; 23- Deadly virus; 25- Tempe sch.; 26- Shakers et al.; 27- Loose outer garment; 28- Accord maker; 29- Queue after Q; 31- Fellow; 32- Whiskey type; 33- Early-stage seed; 34- Aegean island; 39- Posed; 40- Deplete; 41- Orch. section; 42- Footwear; 44- Jurist Fortas; 48- German article; 49- Pivot; 51- Put a new price on; 52- Feed on grass; 54- Jazz singer Laine; 55- Pasternak heroine; 56- Charged particles; 57- Hey, over here!; 59- Yorkshire river; 60- Look after; 61- Cupid's counterpart; 64- Canonized Mlle.; 65- French possessive;



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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- BUCKINGHAM | 2 BEDS HKD13,900
- HELLENE G. | 3 BEDS HKD12,500
- NAM LONG | 2 BEDS HKD11,500
- COLOANE V. | 1 BED HKD 9,300
- TAIPA STUDIO | 1 BED HKD 6,800
- COLOANE V. | 2 BEDS HKD10,500

FOR SALE

- JADE GARDEN | 4 BEDS HKD15,380,000
- NOVA TAIPA | 4 BEDS HKD12,880,000
- BAI YUEN GRD. | 3 BEDS HKD12,800,000
- MANHATTAN | 3 BEDS HKD12,980,000
- HELLENE G. | 4 BEDS HKD 9,588,000
- NAM LONG | 1 BED HKD 3,780,000
- HELLENE G. | 2 BEDS HKD 9,900,000
- TAIPA STUDIO | 1 BED HKD 3,980,000
- NOVA PARK | 2 BEDS HKD10,800,000

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FORMULA ONE

Verstappen wins French GP as Leclerc crashes, Hamilton second

DEFENDING Formula One champion Max Verstappen won the French Grand Prix yesterday after Charles Leclerc crashed out as Ferrari's woes resurfaced, falling 63 points behind the Red Bull driver in the championship.

Lewis Hamilton finished second in his 300th GP — securing a fourth-straight podium — while George Russell overtook Sergio Perez's Red Bull following a virtual safety car restart late in the race to give Mercedes its first podium double of the season.

Leclerc's race ended on Lap 18 when he lost the rear of his car coming out of Turn 11, spinning 360 degrees before crashing into a tire wall. Leclerc could not speak at first, breathing heavily in his helmet before telling his team the mishap was caused by another throttle problem, and then letting out a furious "Noooooooooooo!"

It was the third time he did not



finish a race this season — Ferrari's seventh in 12 races — and came two weeks after a throttle problem almost cost him victory at the Austrian GP.

Later, Leclerc said the crash was caused by his mistake.

"We'll add things up at the end of the season, but if we're 25 or 30 points short at the season I can only blame myself," Leclerc said. "I couldn't go into reverse, but those are

small details. You just can't put a car into the wall."

Perez finished fourth ahead of Sainz, who took a bonus point for fastest lap.

Sainz had passed Russell and Perez when his team told him to pit for new tires with 10 laps left.

"Come on, guys, I can't believe you told me to box then," a frustrated Sainz said. "I don't know why we boxed... I don't understand." **MDT/AP**



Netherlands' Lorena Wiebes

TOUR DE FRANCE

WIEBES WINS ON CHAMPS ELYSEES AS WOMEN'S TOUR RETURNS

LORENA Wiebes of the Netherlands sprinted to victory yesterday in the first stage of the women's Tour de France which returned after a 33-year absence.

The Team DSM rider struck in the last 150 meters of the 82-kilometer circuit in Paris to beat former Olympic champion Marianne Vos to the line on the Champs-Elysees.

Wiebes punched the air in celebration.

Tour of Flanders champion Lotte Kopecky ended third.

It's the first time since 1989 that a women's edition of the

Tour de France is being held. Tour de France organizer Amaury Sport Organization (ASO) previously organized La Course, a one-day race held in Paris coinciding with the men's Tour.

The first stage started from the Eiffel Tower and ended on the iconic avenue, just hours before the conclusion of the men's race.

The "Tour de France Femmes" will end July 31 in eastern France at La Super Planche des Belles Filles, a spectacular uphill finish often visited by the men's Tour. **MDT/AP**

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FOOTBALL

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DAILY TRAININGS

OPINION

Our Desk

Lynzy Valles



ALL IN THE SAME BOAT, THEY SAY

The mandate that all Filipino nationals should undergo mass testing has led to public outcry, fueled frustrations and disappointment among many, and several have been perturbed by how easily migrant workers are targeted by these measures.

Last week, the government mandated that all Filipino nationals are to undergo mass testing as they comprised 9.5% of the Covid-19 cases in the city.

Causing outrage online and offline, authorities stated the next day that 25% of the community cases over the past two weeks were Filipinos.

That 25% amounts to 20 cases, 20 Filipinos.

Available data shows that roughly 4% of the current population in the city are Filipino nationals, given that many have left amid the pandemic crisis that has forced companies to lay off employees – including locals.

171 Covid-19 cases, 20 community cases. These are the justifications for the mandatory testing.

Details on the 171 cases were not provided. Were they essential workers? Workers who were exposed and therefore more prone to contracting the virus while the city was half asleep during the partial lockdown?

Were they domestic workers who were not living with their employers despite several calls by the government for bosses to arrange a place for them to stay at their homes but who could not because a spare room was not available – and hence had to take public transport?

Or were they workers who squeezed themselves together into a two-bedroom apartment, sharing a room with three to four other people, hence constituting a ‘gathering’?

Heeding the government’s call for mass testing is not difficult. What is a 10-minute walk to a nucleic acid test (NAT) station to get the test done if it can assist with tracing the origin of the infection? Especially if authorities also call on employers to allow their staff to undergo testing during work hours. We all come away from these stations with freebies in hand: free N95 masks and rapid antigen test kits.

This jurisdiction has been generous in making sure the public heeds their call to achieve their goal of zero cases.

It has, however, become difficult to achieve because of an underlying problem – the circumstances of vulnerable groups.

The vulnerable ones that are not included in the minimum wage law – the vulnerable ones who earn the least, and work the longest.

They are not just part of a global health crisis; they are a part of a crisis that has long existed.

The pandemic has only exposed (yet again) how the majority of these nationals residing in the city see a proper housing environment as luxury due to the outdated MOP500 housing allowance. They are thus becoming more prone to contracting the virus because of these ‘gatherings.’

What has happened also echoes the UN Human Rights Committee’s (UNHRC) questions last week, which grilled the Labour Affairs Bureau (DSAL) over the absence of a minimum wage for domestic helpers.

To this question, the bureau inexplicably responded, “The main reason for it is because domestic helpers are special and families [who] employ domestic workers are providing jobs and the domestic workers are not there [to help them] make a profit.”

In response to the mandate, the Philippine Consulate General in the SAR issued three statements over the weekend, which were also heavily criticized by many as throwing Filipinos under the bus.

In its second statement, the Consulate remarked, “lubo na nababahala,” which translates to a statement that it was “extremely concerned” over the one in four Filipino cases in the community.

Given the circumstances of Filipino essential workers in the community, 20 community cases are less concerning. The sad reality of these vulnerable groups gives us much more to be “extremely concerned” about.

At least three people, including a former Philippine town mayor, were killed and another was wounded in a brazen attack yesterday by a gunman in a university campus in the capital region, officials said.

The gunman, who was armed with two pistols, was captured after the shooting near the gate of the Ateneo de Manila University in suburban Quezon city. The university was put under lockdown and the graduation rite at a law school was canceled, police said.

Supreme Court Chief Justice Alexander Gesmundo, who was

supposed to be a speaker at the ceremony, was en route to the university when the attack happened and was advised to turn back, officials said.

Quezon city Mayor Joy Belmonte condemned the attack. “This kind of incident has no place in our society and must be condemned to the highest level,” she said in a statement.

Officials said those killed in the attack were Rosita Furigay, a former mayor of Lamitan town in southern Basilan province, her aide and a university guard.

CHURCH APOLOGIES: TOP LEADERS SAY SORRY FOR HISTORICAL SINS

HOLLY MEYER & PETER SMITH

WHEN Pope Francis apologizes to Indigenous groups on Canadian soil this week, he will make another effort toward healing harms inflicted at church-run residential schools — and add to the Catholic Church’s growing ledger of atonement for past transgressions.

Like the papacy, top Protestant leaders also have gradually issued institutional mea culpas for their churches’ historical wrongs. Many of the apologies on behalf of Christian denominations are for grave offenses: genocide, sex abuse, slavery, war and more.

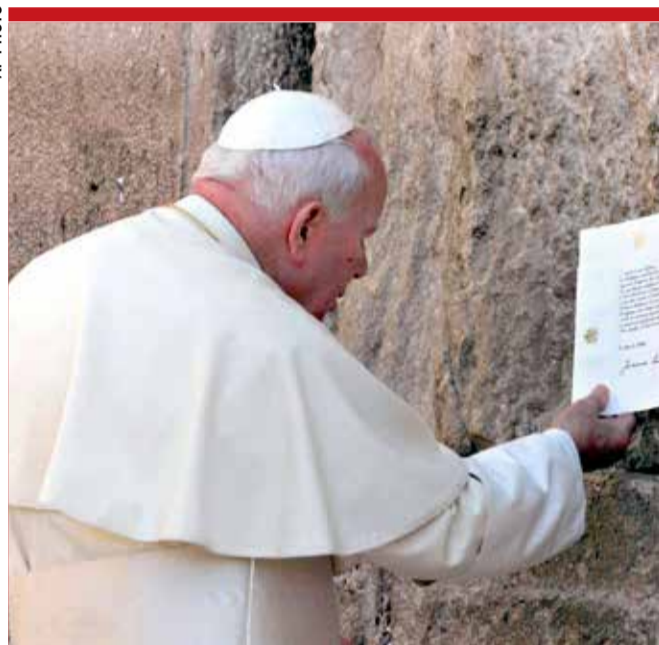
While increasingly common, the ecclesial apology is a relatively modern phenomenon, said Jeremy Bergen, a church apology expert and professor of religious and theological studies at Conrad Grebel University College in Waterloo, Ontario.

“For 1,900 years, churches didn’t apologize for the bad things that they did,” Bergen said.

He pinpoints the pivot to significant apologies coming in the aftermath of World War II, especially a declaration by Germany’s Protestant churches that they failed to adequately oppose the Nazis. It was among the first in a series of recognitions that Christian institutions themselves committed wrongs, Bergen said. In the 1990s, church apologies increased as more attention was paid to human rights following the Cold War, he said.

The pope flew to Canada on Sunday to apologize for abuses Indigenous people suffered in the country’s state-funded residential Christian schools. From the 1800s to the 1970s, Native children were forced to attend the schools where abuse was rampant.

The apology follows a si-



Pope John Paul II places a typed and signed note into a crack at the Western Wall, March 26, 2000

milar one Francis made in April in Rome to members of Canada’s First Nations, Inuit and Metis communities.

The setting matters, said Fernie Marty, a member of the Papaschase, a Cree nation in Alberta. The 73-year-old is a survivor of a day school — part of a system that, like residential schools, aimed to assimilate Indigenous children.

He appreciated the pope’s Rome apology, but “this is where all the atrocities happened,” Marty said. It’s “more meaningful coming on Canadian soil.”

Marty, an elder at Sacred Heart Church of the First Peoples in Edmonton, a Catholic parish in Alberta’s capital oriented toward Indigenous people and culture, said the pope’s visit offers “a tremendous opportunity for my own personal healing.”

But George Pipestem, 79, a member of the Montana First Nation and a survivor of the Ermineskin Indian Residential School, questioned the relevance of a papal apology, just as he questioned apologies by Canadian prime ministers for the government’s role in the schools.

He said the abusers should be the ones apologizing: “They’re all gone,

though. This apologizing, it doesn’t matter to me. It’s like nothing. It’s only a word.”

It is not uncommon for a leader who was neither involved nor alive when a wrong was committed to deliver a church’s apology. Some took generations to say sorry.

Graham Dodds, a political science professor at Concordia University in Montreal who researches political apologies, says institutional responsibility can extend beyond the present day or any one person’s lifetime.

“It’s part of being a leader to accept that connection with things past,” he said.

St. John Paul II embraced that responsibility and left a legacy of papal apologies. None were more significant than his list of mea culpas issued as the Catholic Church opened its 2000 Jubilee and entered its third millennium.

John Paul apologized for Catholics’ sins through the ages, including against women, Jews and other religious minorities. In his most memorable act, he tucked a prayer note into the Western Wall in Jerusalem asking God’s forgiveness for those who “have caused these children of yours to suffer.” MDT/AP



Germany The government will take a roughly 30% stake in energy supplier Uniper as part of a rescue package prompted by surging prices for natural gas and reduced Russian deliveries, the company and Chancellor Olaf Scholz said last week. Uniper, which has been Germany’s biggest importer of Russian gas used to fuel industry, generate electricity and heat homes, asked for a bailout two weeks ago. German officials quickly pledged that they would help, but thrashing out the details took time. One result will be higher prices for customers.



Germany Draped in rainbow flags and touting signs, around 150,000 people marched for LGBTQ rights Saturday at Berlin’s annual Christopher Street Day celebration, celebrating this year’s parade theme “United in Love.” Klaus Lederer, Berlin’s deputy mayor and a senator for culture and Europe, said in a speech opening the celebrations that Berlin must be a “safe haven” for LGBTQ individuals facing persecution in their home countries.



WHO The expanding monkeypox outbreak in more than 70 countries is an “extraordinary” situation that qualifies as a global emergency, the World Health Organization chief said Saturday, a declaration that could spur further investment in treating the once-rare disease and worsen the scramble for scarce vaccines. A global emergency is WHO’s highest level of alert but the designation does not necessarily mean a disease is particularly transmissible or lethal. Similar declarations were made for the Zika virus in 2016 in Latin America and the ongoing effort to eradicate polio