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AP PHOTO



Russia-Ukraine A young man shot a Russian military officer at close range at an enlistment office yesterday, in an unusually bold attack reflecting resistance to the Russian leadership's efforts to mobilize hundreds of thousands of men to wage war on Ukraine. The attack in the Siberian city of Ust-Ilimsk, 25-year-old local resident Ruslan Zinin walked into the enlistment office saying "no one will go to fight" and "we will all go home now." The shooting comes after scattered arson attacks on enlistment offices and protests in Russian cities against the call-up that have resulted in at least 2,000 arrests.

AP PHOTO



Russia A gunman opened fire in a school in central Russia yesterday, killing 15 people and wounding 24 others before shooting himself dead, authorities said. The shooting took place in School No. 88 in Izhevsk, a city 960 kilometers (east of Moscow in the Udmurtia region). Russia's Investigative Committee identified the gunman as 34-year-old Artyom Kazantsev, a graduate of the same school, and said he was wearing a black t-shirt bearing "Nazi symbols."

AP PHOTO



Russia's war in Ukraine and the lingering effects of the COVID-19 pandemic are dragging down global economic growth more than expected and driving up inflation that will stay high into next year, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development said in a darkening outlook. The Paris-based organization projects worldwide growth to be a modest 3% this year before slowing further to just 2.2% next year, representing around \$2.8 trillion in lost global output in 2023.

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HERE COMES THE SUN

XINHUA



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CE: GAMING OPERATORS KNOW BETTER ABOUT TOURIST ARRIVAL OUTLOOK

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MACAU HISTORY

MUST KICKS OFF ANCIENT MAPS EXHIBITION

▲ P5

MACAU'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

CE: GAMING OPERATORS KNOW BETTER ABOUT TOURIST ARRIVAL OUTLOOK

ANTHONY LAM

CHIEF Executive Ho Iat Seng expressed his belief that gambling concessionaires “know better than the government” about the outlook on tourist arrival numbers.

His remark was given at a recent press conference in response to a question about the unattractiveness of Macau as a destination for foreign tourists, given its strict mandatory seven-day quarantine period, despite his urging the tourism industry to focus on attracting foreign visitors rather than mainland ones, as it has done over the past two decades.

Comments were made at the press conference about the difficulties that casino license bidders face in estimating tourist arrival numbers and evaluating their investments. In the worst-case scenario, they may need to break their promises as set out in the bidding documents due to insufficient tourist numbers and consequent income.

On this matter, the head of the government pointed to

RENATO MARQUES



the resumption of group tours and travel endorsement digital applications to support his optimism. He added that those

returning bidders – who have 20 years of experience under their belts – will be able to make up their minds based on historical

information. For newcomers, he said that open data would help with their evaluations.

Ho emphasized that no land

plots will be assigned for the use of major resorts, citing the provisions in the Land Law. In addition, if a new company wins the bid, it can start operating in an existing casino. As such, he said that “investments will not be major.”

Secretary for Administration and Justice André Cheong, who was also at the press conference, noted that he understood the concerns of license bidders given the current circumstances facing Macau.

Considering that this week, the government will meet all bidders regarding the bids for the first time, the officials were questioned on whether bidders would ask them how long Covid-19 control measures would be in place and what answers the government could be expected to give.

In reply, Ho said the government will not disclose details related to discussions undertaken during the bidding process, but he believes the bidders have their own ideas.

Cheong also refrained from commenting on the review on the National Security Law being a matter of concern for both common residents and foreign investors. He reiterated that the law review “is a protection on the rights of residents, the economy of Macau and the development of society.”

HEALTH

CHCSJ hopes for wider reach of rescue knowledge



ANTHONY LAM

THE government hospital hopes that increasing community knowledge on CPR will help save more lives.

A couple of weeks ago, an older man fell unconscious in Iao Hon District due to cardiac arrest. Three passers-by administered cardiopulmonary resuscitation (more commonly known as CPR) to the patient and managed to revive him.

Dr Lei Choi Chu from the government hospital's Accident and Emergency (A&E) Department, commented that hospital-induced resuscitation is the last

resort, using this incident as an example.

She added that emergency CPR administration prior to patients reaching the hospital will help increase the chances of survival.

That being said, she believes that with appropriate training, anybody can administer CPR to those in need, and that knowledge of emergency first aid techniques within the community is important.

Moreover, her colleague Dr Chang Tam Fei, said that there are number of patients in cardiac arrest each year and emphasized that timely resuscitation can increase the odds of survival

by at least 58%. Therefore, the government hospital has implemented a training system for staff to improve their familiarity with resuscitation techniques.

Chang recalled that the hospital started offering internal resuscitation training more than 10 years ago, first relying on faculty from Hong Kong and later establishing its own team of trainers. Chang added that the hospital has plans to expand the eligibility for resuscitation training courses to a wider range of medical staff, including pharmacists and physical therapists.

Cases in other jurisdictions have led to civil lawsuits against well-meaning

people being sued after administering resuscitation techniques. Rib fracture is a common side effect of CPR.

Commenting on the risk of potential lawsuits, Lei pointed out that the Penal Code has provisions that prohibit the failure to offer emergency assistance to a person in need.

It was later revealed that one of the two helpers in the incident that occurred several weeks ago worked at the government hospital as a nurse in the surgical department. The other helper was an off-duty police officer.

The female nurse, Kuok Chi Kio, was among the first to be at the scene. While others were calling an ambulance, Kuok began administering CPR to the patient. Minutes later, the off-duty policeman arrived at the scene, before another nurse passed by and offered help.

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MDT ARCHIVE



GAMING

Casino stocks soar ahead of group visa reinstatement

LYNZY VALLES

GAMING shares soared yesterday, the highest surge recorded in six months following a long-awaited announcement that will bring an end to the tourism drought that has negatively impacted the economy.

Over the weekend, the Chief Executive announced that the re-

turn of group tours from mainland China can be expected as soon as late October, along with the reinstatement of digital travel endorsement applications.

Tours will restart gradually from the provinces of Guangdong, Zhejiang, Jiangsu, Fujian and the municipality of Shanghai, with Guangdong being the frontier.

After the closing trade yesterday, Sands China led the surge

in gaming shares with 15.65% growth, followed by SJM Holdings (+11.57%) and Wynn Macau (+11.06%).

Galaxy Entertainment Group's shares also increased by 7.18%, while Melco International Development and MGM China increased 5.26% and 4.64% respectively.

"Finally, we feel we can talk about a return to normalcy," JP-Morgan Chase & Co. analyst DS

Kim wrote in a note Sunday. "The resumption of e-visa and group tours should alleviate friction for a Macau trip, as well as signal to many that it's OK to visit Macau, in turn boosting demand into the year-end holidays and 2023."

However, Angela Hanlee, Bloomberg Intelligence Analyst on APAC Gaming and Hospitality Research, warned that forecasts for the city's gross gaming revenue

(GGR) for the year 2022 will not be altered.

"The issue is that group tours have never been a major driver for Macau casinos because their spending [power] is not high," said Hanlee on Bloomberg Radio.

"This is revitalizing those current empty casino floors in Macau, but I would not expect much change this year. Our forecast GGR may only reach 20% of pre-covid levels," she added.

The issuance of group package tours to Macau and eVisas under the Individual Visit Scheme (IVS) is shaping up to be a massive boost for the SAR's gaming and tourism operators, which have been negatively affected since the pandemic began in early 2020.

According to André Cheong, Secretary for Administration and Justice, the reinstatement will boost gaming operators' confidence to continue investing in the SAR, admitting that it was natural for the bidders to have concerns about the possible return of investment to the city.

However, the city will continue to face headwinds amid the current turmoil in the gaming sector as mainland China and Macau continue to adhere to their zero-Covid policies. This means that a small number of cases may lead to lockdowns and travel restrictions.

As Beijing is also tightening control over the travel of frequent gamblers, the e-visa change is unlikely to help, said Credit Suisse analysts including Kenneth Fong in a note.

Brokerage firm Sanborn Bernstein earlier noted that "channel checks have indicated that frequent gamblers to Macau have seen [their] visa issuance denied by China immigration offices."

GRAND PRIX

Sports chief hints about return of Motorcycle GP

RENATO MARQUES



ANTHONY LAM

THE odds of the Motorcycle Grand Prix (GP) returning to the annual Macau GP are on the rise, president Pun Weng Kun of the Sports Bureau (ID) revealed over the weekend.

In addition to the possible resumption of the motorcycle race, foreign racers are also considering returning to Macau for the races. Despite this news, the Formula 3 World Cup and GT World Cup will not be returning to the Guia Circuit this year, Pun noted.

Pun emphasized that his bureau was still striving to bring the Motorcycle GP back to Macau and he saw an increasing probability of achieving this. This par-

ticular race has been suspended for two years due to border restrictions.

Negotiations are currently being conducted with prospective racers. Pun said that local racers were ready for the race and foreign racers had expressed their desire to come to Macau, but admitted that quarantine was still a hurdle.

At least one motorcycle racer expressed his lack of interest in racing in Macau this year.

According to a report by the UK media outlet News Letter, racer Michael Sweeney – who raced in Macau in 2012 – admitted that the organizers of the Macau GP had approached him to ask if he would return to Macau this year.

However, the racer said, "I'm not [going] because [I] need to quarantine [there]." Moreover, he commented on the unattractiveness of the quarantine requirements, stating, "You can't expect lads to go all the way over there and spend [...] time in quarantine," as cited in the article.

He further disclosed that he had discussed the matter with big names such as John McGuinness, Peter Hickman and Michael Rutter, and "none of them are going to quarantine for ten days," according to the report.

The current requirement to quarantine-upon-arrival lasts for seven days, with an additional three days during which entrants will be assigned a yellow health code, when in practice they will be unable to enter public venues such as restaurants, bars, government offices, and the airport.

MAINLAND UNIVERSITIES DRAW MORE SARs, TAIWAN STUDENTS

A total of 38,200 students from Hong Kong, Macau, and Taiwan were pursuing higher education on the mainland in 2021, an increase of 51% compared with 2012, according to the Chinese Ministry of Education (MOE). Over the past decade, mainland universities have enrolled 79,000 students from Hong Kong, Macau, and Taiwan, the MOE said at a press conference last week. About 3,000 programs have facilitated communication between university teachers and students from the three regions. More than 1,000 universities across the Taiwan Strait have engaged in 1,300 exchange programs, and about 60,000 teachers and students from Taiwan have visited the mainland in the past 10 years.

STRONG MONSOON SIGNAL MAY BE ISSUED TODAY

The weather bureau may issue a Strong Monsoon Signal due to the influence of the northeast monsoon. Under the influence of the southward moving northeast monsoon, the winds in Macau will occasionally reach Beaufort scale level 6 with gust and a few showers starting from today, the bureau warned. The chance of Tropical Cyclone Noru directly affecting Macau is expected to be relatively low. In addition, another low-pressure area will develop in the South China Sea later this week, and it is possible that it may also develop into a tropical cyclone.

AD

CRIME

PJ BUST 35 PEOPLE IN A CASE OF PROCURING SEX WORK

STAFF REPORTER

THE Judiciary Police (PJ) has busted a prostitution syndicate, resulting in the arrests of 35 people, with an estimated MOP15,000,000 illegal benefits obtained.

PJ collaborated with Zhuhai authorities, searching eight local residential units, a store and four hotels. A total of nine local syndicate group members (including two ringleaders), and 26 women who held mainland identity cards (ID) were arrested in Macau. Further, one mainland woman was found holding a forged mainland ID, according to the PJ.

In late February, PJ busted a case of cross-border prostitution syndicate operations, involving the recruitment of sex workers via an online forum. Thirty-seven people were arrested.

The Public Prosecutions Office (MP) subsequently requested that PJ continue to conduct an in-depth inves-



tigation of the case and carry out an information and intelligence exchange with the Zhuhai Municipal Public Security Bureau.

After the in-depth investigation, PJ targeted two ringleaders and took joint action with Zhuhai authorities on September 25, resulting in the arrests.

The first male ringleader, a local 34-year-old information technology employee, was a

manager of the webpage and forum.

The second female ringleader, a 34-year-old local intermediary, managed the posts on an online platform.

PJ said that the two suspects did not know each other.

The remaining seven local men and women were aged between 28 and 51, and engaged in various capacities as online post publishers and

sex workers.

Furthermore, PJ seized around 2,000 condoms, more than 90 electronic devices, five vehicles and hundreds of thousands of dollars in cash (including MOP and RMB), which were suspected of being illegally obtained.

According to the PJ, the syndicate hired sex workers through a chat group, arranging staff to publish advertisements to attract clients. Some members wrote some positive comments after providing services.

PJ said that the webpage was suspected to have operated for 10 years, having over 10,000 registered users and in excess of 52,000 advertisements and posts.

The webpage has since been shut down, although the PJ still needs to investigate when the syndicate began.

According to the PJ, the two ringleaders admitted to operating the relevant webpage. All cases were transferred to the Public Prosecutions Office.

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MUST kicks off ancient maps exhibition

STAFF REPORTER

THE Macau University of Science and Technology (MUST) library last week opened its Macau exhibition of ancient maps, showcasing historical records that contribute to the study of Macau history.

According to the university, the exhibition also provides new evidence to fill in historical gaps, noting the maps also reveal the close interaction and connection between Macau and mainland cities.

The exhibition is divided into six parts, including Chinese maps of Macau, early Portuguese maps of Macau, Macau maps drawn in the Netherlands in the 17th century, Macau maps drawn by Western countries in the 18th century, Macau maps made before and after the Opium War, and a modern map of Macau.



There are also 64 pictures of the most important or representative aspects of Macau in this exhibition, many of which are being exhibited for the first time.

"Ancient maps have become one of the highlights of MUST," MUST vice president Tong Ka Lok said.

Tong hoped that through the collection and arrangement of ancient maps and related resources, the study of history and culture and humanities, construction in

Macau would be promoted, and contributions would be made in the construction of the Greater Bay Area.

Tong also added that, since its establishment 22 years ago, MUST has made a lot of progress in teaching, researching, social services and international cooperation.

"By exhibiting these ancient maps to promote exchange in the Greater Bay Area, that was what we should be proud of," said

MUST's librarian, Zhao Xi-chen, in his speech.

Through this exhibition, Zhao said, people may understand the history of Macau and the important role Macau has played in the development of Chinese culture.

The exhibition, sponsored by the Macao Foundation (FM) and co-organized by MUST's library and the Macao Map Society, will run from September 20 to December 20.

13TH IICF

CONSTRUCTION FORUM SEES 20% INCREASE IN PARTICIPANTS

STAFF REPORTER

THE 13th International Infrastructure Investment and Construction Forum (IIICF) will gather more than 1,300 participants, an approximately 20% increase in scale compared to last year.

With the aim of co-building high quality infrastructure to improve sustainability, the event will take place from 28 to 29 September.

The forum will bring together different enterprises from the industry and relevant supply chains. To provide all-round support for participating enterprises, the forum will provide business matching areas for enterprises to showcase their projects and services, connect with prospective partners, and conduct business meetings.

During the press conference, Fang Qiuchen said that the discussion topics and activities at the forum are all designed with the aim of motivating industry participants to carry out international infrastructure co-operation at a higher level and at higher quality to promote the implementation of the Global Development Initiative and to strengthen the synergies between the Belt and Road Initiative and the Global Development Initiative.

The Belt and Road Infrastructure Development Index and Report (2022) will be released on the first day of IIICF. The report will provide scientific reference data and guidance on trends in the field of international infrastructure co-operation, as well as new trends and characteristics in the global infrastructure industry.

AD

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NORTH KOREA, CHINA REOPEN FREIGHT TRAIN TRAFFIC

HYUNG-JIN KIM, SEOUL

NORTH Korea and China resumed freight train service yesterday following a five-month hiatus, South Korean officials said, as the North struggles to revive an economy battered by the pandemic, U.N. sanctions and other factors.

The reopening came after North Korean leader Kim Jong Un last month made a dubious claim to have overcome the COVID-19 pandemic and ordered an easing of the restrictions guarding against the spread of the coronavirus.

South Korea's Unification Ministry, which handles relations with North Korea, said it assessed the North Korea-China freight railway service restarted yesterday. Spokesperson Cho Joonghoon said how long the train service would last and what goods would be transferred would remain to be seen.

Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Wang Wenbin later told a regular briefing that China and North Korea had agreed to resume cross-border freight trans-

AP PHOTO



A freight train crosses a bridge connecting China and North Korea in Dandong in Liaoning province yesterday

port between two of their border cities "according to border-related treaties and through friendly consultation." North Korea's state media didn't immediately confirm the reopening.

Earlier yesterday, South Korea's Yonhap news agency said it has seen a freight train with more than 10 cars leaving the Chinese

border city of Dandong and crossing a railway bridge into North Korea's Sinuiju city.

Kim Jong Un likely wants to import consumer goods, materials needed to build residences in Pyongyang and modernize factories in rural areas, and other items related to his hope to improve public livelihoods, said Lim Eul-

chul, a professor at Kyungnam University's Institute for Far Eastern Studies in Seoul.

Lim said the Dandong-Sinuiju railroad has handled more than 70% of official trade between the two countries. There are no reports that other cross-border railway or truck transport routes have been reopened.

"The two sides will continue to strengthen coordination to ensure the steady and secure transport of goods and make further contributions to friendly relations between China and (North Korea)," Wang, the Chinese spokesperson, said.

In April, China said it had halted the Dandong-Sinuiju freight train traffic amid the spread of the COVID-19 in Dandong. Earlier in January, the two countries reopened the railway link following two years of suspension while North Korea closed all its international borders as part of the world's harshest restrictions to guard against the pandemic.

China, which shares a porous border with North Korea, is the North's economic pipeline and last major diplomatic ally. More than 90% of North Korea's external trade has been with China. The nosedive in trade volume between them during the pandemic was believed to have caused a further strain on the North's fragile economy, which has also been hit by the sanctions, natural disasters and Kim's own mismanagement.

Kim's claim to have beaten the pandemic came only three months after his country first admitted an outbreak following a highly disputed claim to be coronavirus-free for more than two years. **MDT/AP**

HONG KONG

Cardinal Zen, five others stand trial over fund

ZEN SOO, HONG KONG

A 90-year-old Catholic cardinal and five others stood trial in Hong Kong yesterday for allegedly failing to register a now-defunct fund set up to assist people arrested in the mass anti-government protests in the city three years ago.

Cardinal Joseph Zen, who is a retired bishop of Hong Kong, was first arrested in May together with others including singer Denise Ho and barrister Margaret Ng on suspicion of colluding with foreign forces to endanger China's national security.

While they have not yet been charged with national security-related charges, Zen and five others have since been charged for failing to properly register the now-defunct 612 Humanitarian Relief Fund.

Zen, together with Ho, Ng as well as cultural studies scholar Hui Po Keung and former lawmaker Cyd Ho, were trustees of the fund. A sixth defendant,

AP PHOTO



Cardinal Joseph Zen (left) arrives at the West Kowloon Magistrates' courts yesterday

Sze Ching-wee, was the fund's secretary.

The Societies Ordinance requires local organizations to register or apply for an exemption within a month of their establishment. Prosecutors say Zen and the others failed to do so.

The case will mainly center around whether the 612 Humanitarian Relief Fund is considered an organization that is obliged to register, and when the fund was established.

The fund helped pay medical and legal fees for arrested protesters during

the anti-government protests in 2019 and later ceased operations in August 2021.

All have pleaded not guilty. If convicted, they face a fine of up to 10,000 Hong Kong dollars (\$1,273), with no jail time.

Zen arrived at court in

a plain, black-and-grey outfit with a clerical collar and long cross necklace and used a walking stick. Sze wore a black T-shirt with the words "we stand as one" emblazoned across the front.

The case has sent shockwaves through the Catholic community, although the Vatican has been muted on Zen's arrest, stating only that it was monitoring the development of the situation closely.

It also comes as the Vatican is working to renew its agreement with the Chinese government over the appointment of bishops in China, in which Beijing recommends bishops which are then approved and appointed by the pope.

The 12-million strong Catholic community is split between the "underground" church, which recognize the pope, and those who attend state-sanctioned churches controlled by the Chinese Patriotic Catholic Association.

In Hong Kong, where

there are about 390,000 Catholics in a population of nearly 7.3 million, the Catholic church has not yet faced mainland-style restrictions on freedom even as Beijing tightens its grip over the city.

Zen has openly criticized Vatican's deal with China, calling it a "sell-out" of China's "underground" Catholics that are loyal to the Vatican. He has been seen as a somewhat controversial figure for his open criticism of Beijing and ties with Hong Kong's pro-democracy camp.

The case is also part of an ongoing crackdown on dissent in the city. Following the protests, Beijing implemented a tough national security law that outlaws secession, subversion, terrorism and collusion with foreign forces to intervene in the city's affairs.

The law has been widely seen as a means to stamp out dissent and has been used to arrest over 150 people since it was implemented, many of whom are pro-democracy supporters and activists.

Most of the city's outspoken pro-democracy activists are either in jail or have fled the city. **MDT/AP**

JAPAN

Kishida opens diplomacy rush as country preps divisive funeral

MARI YAMAGUCHI, TOKYO

JAPANESE Prime Minister Fumio Kishida held a series of meetings with foreign dignitaries yesterday in what he's called "funeral diplomacy" the day before he hosts a controversial state-sponsored ceremony for former leader Shinzo Abe.

Kishida has been criticized for pushing for today's formal state funeral for Abe, who was assassinated in July, amid questions over their governing party's close ties with the Unification Church, accused of brainwashing its adherents, and doubts over the legitimacy of a state event with links to pre-World War II imperial Japan.

Kishida says the honor is fitting for the longest-serving leader in Japan's modern political history. He has also said it will allow him to meet personally with visiting foreign leaders and forge stronger ties at a time where Japan faces a host of urgent issues in northeast Asia and the world, from Chinese and North Korean military threats to worries over regional economic and security matters.

In a rush of planned meetings, Kishida was to hold talks with about 40 foreign dignitaries over the next few days at the Akasaka state guest house in Tokyo.

Kishida met with U.S. Vice Pre-

AP PHOTO



U.S. Vice President Kamala Harris (left) and Japan's Prime Minister Fumio Kishida at the Akasaka Palace state guest house in Tokyo, yesterday

sident Kamala Harris, Vietnamese President Nguyen Xuan Phuc, Philippine Vice President Sara Duterte and about 10 other foreign dignitaries.

Kishida told Harris that Abe "poured his heart and soul" into strengthening ties between their two countries.

"I feel it is my duty to carry on his aspirations," Kishida said.

Harris said that "the alliance between Japan and the United States

is a cornerstone of what we believe is integral to peace, stability and prosperity in the Indo-Pacific region."

Today, he is to hold talks with Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese.

China, a sometimes harsh critic of what it saw as the conservative Abe's moves to expand Japan's military and whitewash history, will send former Minister of Science

and Technology Wan Gang, whose title is sufficiently politically neutral as to raise few eyebrows. He is also the head of the China Zhiong Party, one of eight figurehead bodies tasked with advising the ruling Communist Party and giving China the veneer of a multiparty system.

Wan is also a ranking member of the legislature's toothless advisory body, with a specialty in the auto industry. Wan is not known to have

had any connections to Japan, Japan's parliament or the Abe family.

Other leaders from Group of Seven countries and many others who attended Queen Elizabeth II's funeral in London last week won't be at Abe's funeral. South Korea is sending Prime Minister Han Duck-soo, who is to meet with Kishida on Wednesday.

Political watchers say holding a state funeral for Abe is an attempt by Kishida to stabilize his grip on power by placating governing Liberal Democratic Party lawmakers belonging to Abe's conservative political faction.

Security around the Budokan martial arts arena, where the memorial will be held Tuesday, has been raised to high levels, with uniformed police officers patrolling the neighborhood with police dogs and stopping cars for inspections. They also poked inside manholes, and a group of police officers dived into a nearby moat for safety checks.

Travel on roads around the Budokan and the Akasaka guest house will be restricted through Wednesday, including about 10 hours on Tuesday, according to Tokyo police.

Police security has come under scrutiny after the police force was accused of not providing adequate protection for Abe when he was killed. Chief Cabinet Secretary Hirokazu Matsuno told reporters yesterday that police have stepped up information gathering, analysis and protection measures ahead of the funeral.

"We will do our utmost for security and take all necessary steps so we can respond to any situation," Matsuno said. **MDT/AP**

PHILIPPINES

Powerful typhoon leaves six rescuers dead in Bulacan province

TYPHOON Noru blew out of the northern Philippines yesterday, leaving six people dead, knocking down power in two entire provinces, trapping villagers in floods and forcing officials to suspend classes and government work in and around the capital.

The most powerful typhoon to hit the country this year slammed ashore in Burdeos town in Quezon province before nightfall on Sunday then weakened as it barreled overnight across the main Luzon region, where more than 52,000 people were moved to emergency shelters, some forcibly, officials said.

AP PHOTO



Residents pass by a flooded road from Typhoon Noru in San Miguel town, Bulacan province, yesterday

Gov. Daniel Fernando of Bulacan province, north of Manila, said five rescuers, who were using a boat to help residents trapped in

floodwaters, were hit by a collapsed wall then apparently drowned in the ram-paging waters.

"They were living heroes

who were helping save the lives of our countrymen in the calamity," Fernando told DZMM radio network. "This is really very sad."

Police said a Bulacan villager drowned after refusing to heed appeals to leave his riverside house. Authorities were separately trying to confirm another death in Burdeos town and a missing farmer in a flooded village in western Zambales province.

In Aurora province's hard-hit Dingalan town, more than 6,000 houses were damaged and a newly built evacuation center housing more 200 displaced families was battered by the fierce wind and rain but no injuries were reported, officials said.

About 3,000 people were evacuated to safety in metropolitan Manila, which was lashed by fierce wind and rain overnight. Classes and government work were suspended yesterday in the capital and outlying provinces as a precaution although the morning skies were sunny.

The entire northern pro-

vinces of Aurora and Nueva Ecija, which were hit by the typhoon, remained without power yesterday and repair crews were at work to bring back electricity, Energy Secretary Raphael Lotilla told President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. in a televised meeting the president called to assess damage and coordinate disaster-response.

Marcos Jr. praised officials for evacuating tens of thousands of people before the typhoon hit, preventing more deaths, but expressed concern at how Noru and another storm that devastated central and southern provinces in December rapidly intensified into super typhoons.

"Is this climate change?" Marcos Jr., who took office in June, asked. "We have kept watched on these storms for a long time but it wasn't like this before... This is something I have to deal with." **MDT/AP**

ITALY

A shift to the far-right as voters reward Meloni's party

NICOLE WINFIELD,
FRANCES D'EMILIO,
GIADA ZAMPANO, ROME

A party with neo-fascist roots, the Brothers of Italy, won the most votes in Italy's national elections, looking set to deliver the country's first far-right-led government since World War II and make its leader, Giorgia Meloni, Italy's first woman premier, near-final results showed yesterday.

Italy's lurch to the far right immediately shifted Europe's geopolitics, placing a eurosceptic party in position to lead a founding member of the European Union and its third-largest economy. Right-wing leaders across Europe immediately hailed Meloni's victory and her party's meteoric rise as sending a historic message to Brussels, while Italy's left warned of "dark days" ahead and vowed to keep Italy in the heart of Europe.

Near-final results showed the center-right coalition netting some 44% of the parliamentary vote, with Meloni's Brothers of Italy snatching some 26%. Her coalition partners divided up the remainder, with the anti-immigrant League of Matteo Salvini winning 9% and the more moderate Forza Italia of ex-Premier Silvio Berlusconi taking around 8%.

The center-left Democratic Party and its allies had around 26%, while the 5-Star Movement — which had been the biggest vote-getter in 2018 Parliamentary elections — saw its share of the vote halved to some 15% this time around.

Turnout was a historic low 64%. Pollsters suggested voters stayed home in protest, disenchanted by the backroom deals that had created the last three governments.

Meloni, whose party traces its origins to the postwar, neo-fascist Italian Social Movement, tried to sound a unifying tone in a victory speech yesterday, noting that Italians had finally been able to determine their leaders.

"If we are called to govern this nation, we will do it for everyone, we will do it for all Italians and we will do it with the aim of uniting the people," Meloni said. "Italy chose us. We will not betray it as we ne-



AP PHOTO

ver have."

While the center-right was the clear winner, the formation of a government is still weeks away and will involve consultations among party leaders and with President Sergio Mattarella. In the meantime, outgoing Premier Mario Draghi remains in a caretaker role.

The elections, which took place some six months early after Draghi's government collapsed, came at a crucial time for Europe as it faces Russia's war in Ukraine and the related soaring energy costs that have hit ordinary Italian pocketbooks as well as industry.

A Meloni-led government is largely expected to follow Italy's current foreign policy, including her pro-NATO stance and strong support for supplying Ukraine with weapons to defend against Russia's invasion, even as her coalition allies stake a slightly different tone.

Both Berlusconi and Salvini have ties to Russian President Vladimir Putin. While both have distanced themselves from his invasion, Salvini has warned that sanctions against Moscow are hurting Italian industry, and even Berlusconi has excused Putin's invasion as foisted on him by pro-Moscow separatists in the Donbas.

A bigger shift and one likely to cause friction with European powers is likely to come over migration. Meloni has called for a naval blockade to prevent migrant boats from leaving North African shores, and has proposed screening potential asylum-seekers in Africa, before they set out on

smugglers' boats to Europe.

Salvini made clear he wants the League to return to the interior ministry, where as minister he imposed a tough anti-migrant policy. But he may face an internal leadership challenge after the League suffered an abysmal result of under 10%, with Meloni's party outperforming it in its northeastern stronghold.

Salvini acknowledged the League was punished for its governing alliances with the 5-Stars and then Draghi, but said: "It's a good day for Italy because it has five years of stability ahead of it."

On relations with the European Union, analysts note that for all her eurosceptic rhetoric, Meloni moderated her message during the campaign and has little room to maneuver given the economic windfall Italy is receiving from Brussels in coronavirus recovery funds. Italy secured some 191.5 billion euros, the biggest chunk of the EU's 750 billion-euro recovery package, and is bound by certain reform and investment milestones it must hit to receive it all.

That said, Meloni has criticized the EU's recent recommendation to suspend 7.5 billion euros in funding to Hungary over concerns about democratic backsliding, defending Viktor Orban as the elected leader in a democratic system.

Orban's political director, Balazs Orban, was among the first to congratulate Meloni. "In these difficult times, we need more than ever friends who share a common vision and approach to Europe's challenges," he tweeted.

French far-right leader Marine Le Pen praised Meloni for having "resisted the threats of an anti-democratic and arrogant European Union."

Santiago Abascal, the leader of Spain's far-right Vox opposition party, tweeted that Meloni "has shown the way for a proud and free Europe of sovereign nations that can cooperate on behalf of everybody's security and prosperity."

Meloni is chair of the right-wing European Conservative and Reformist group in the European Parliament, which gathers her Brothers of Italy, Poland's Law and Justice Party, Spain's Vox and the Sweden Democrats, which just won big in elections there on a platform of cracking down on crime and limiting immigration.

"The trend that emerged two weeks ago in Sweden was confirmed in Italy," acknowledged Democratic Party leader Enrico Letta, calling yesterday a "sad day for Italy, for Europe."

"We expect dark days. We fought in every way to avoid this outcome," Letta said at a somber news conference. While acknowledging the future of the party and his own future required reflection, he vowed: "The PD will not allow Italy to leave the heart of Europe."

Thomas Christiansen, professor of political science at Rome's Luiss University and the executive editor of the Journal of European Integration, noted that Italy has a tradition of pursuing a consistent foreign and European policy that is in some ways bigger than individual party interests.

Meloni proudly touts her roots as a militant in the neo-fascist Italian Social Movement, or MSI, which was formed in the aftermath of WWII with the remnants of Mussolini's fascist supporters. Meloni joined in 1992 as a 15-year-old.

During the campaign, Meloni was forced to respond after the Democrats used her party's origins to paint Meloni as a danger to democracy.

"The Italian Right has handed fascism over to history for decades now, unambiguously condemning the suppression of democracy and the ignominious anti-Jewish laws," she said in a multilingual campaign video. **MDT/AP**

this day in history

1996 AFGHAN FORCES ROUTED AS KABUL FALLS



The capital of Afghanistan has fallen to opposition militia after three days of fierce fighting.

Taliban forces consolidated their grip on Kabul after storming the presidential palace - the country's seat of government - 24 hours ago.

Ousted President Burhanuddin Rabbani, his prime minister and his military chief are being hunted by the radical Islamic group who branded them "national criminals".

The former president, Mohammed Najibullah, and his brother have already been murdered by the militants.

One-eyed opposition leader Mullah Mohammed Omar and his student fighters had been repulsed from the city twice before, but this time it appeared government forces lost the will to fight.

Hundreds were killed and many have fled for the protection of the Jabal-us-Seraj base north of Kabul.

They leave a ruined, war-torn city deserted by almost all the aid agencies that were working there until a few days ago.

"There was so much panic in the city, so much tension, that everyone who could, fled," said Azad Singh Toor, an Indian diplomat.

But many of the citizens in Kabul are waiting to see if the Taliban can unite the country under one faction after decades of internal conflict.

And the murder of the last communist ruler of Afghanistan, former president Najibullah, was a grim warning to anyone who wished to oppose their version of Islamic rule.

The "Soviet puppet" and Taliban hate figure was dragged out of the UN compound where he had sought refuge in 1992 and was beaten, shot and hanged in front of the presidential palace.

Courtesy BBC News

IN CONTEXT

The Taliban wanted to make Afghanistan the world's purest Islamic state.

Executions and amputations were introduced as punishments and women were totally excluded from public life.

Pakistan and Saudi Arabia recognised the extremist group as the legitimate rulers of Afghanistan in 1997, but most other countries continued to regard President Rabbani as head of state.

Mullah Omar's grip on the country ended after the 11 September attacks on the United States which were blamed on one of his guests - Osama Bin Laden.

The opposition Northern Alliance - who seized the opportunity of US backing - marched into the capital in November 2001.

MACAU'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

YOUR STARS

<p>ARIES Mar. 21-Apr. 19 You are in a high cycle where travel, education, and creative endeavors are concerned. Others may want to steal your thunder when they realize your ideas are pretty solid.</p>	<p>TAURUS Apr. 20-May. 20 You will be able to get along well with colleagues. Those you live with may be experiencing problems. You will get drawn into groups that are not favorable to you.</p>
<p>GEMINI May. 21-Jun. 21 You must try to help. Do whatever your mate wants; it really doesn't matter as long as you're together. You can make financial deals that will bring you extra cash.</p>	<p>CANCER Jun. 22-Jul. 22 Think twice before you volunteer information. Get involved in groups and organizations that are of a distinguished nature. Make a point of working on yourself.</p>
<p>LEO Jul. 23-Aug. 22 Use your charm to get your own way. You should be making plans to spend some time with the ones you love. Trips will be favorable for business as well as pleasure.</p>	<p>VIRGO Aug. 23-Sep. 22 Your outgoing nature might work against you today. You'll be tempted to spend extravagantly today. You may find yourself a bit frazzled if you allow someone to goad you into an unsavory debate.</p>
<p>LIBRA Sep. 23-Oct. 22 Don't be too quick to judge others. Your health may have suffered due to neglect or abuse. Sudden trips may take you by surprise; try to include your mate, mixing business with pleasure.</p>	<p>SCORPIO Oct. 23-Nov. 21 Problems with peers is apparent. Your high energy will help you through this rather hectic day. Try to stay calm and understand both sides of the situation.</p>
<p>SAGITTARIUS Nov. 22-Dec. 21 Try not to let your emotions interfere with the completion of your work. Partnerships with creative people could lead to financial gains. You may want to look into warm vacation spots.</p>	<p>CAPRICORN Dec. 22-Jan. 19 Your devotion will be persuasive. Your irritability may drive your loved ones crazy. Secret intrigues could get you into trouble. Try to be tolerant of the moods of those around you.</p>
<p>AQUARIUS Jan. 20-Feb. 18 Direct your energy wisely today. Anger will prevail if you expect help from others. You can make money if you concentrate on producing services that will make domestic chores easier.</p>	<p>PISCES Feb. 19-Mar. 20 You must make them stand on their own two feet regardless of how much you want to make things better for them. You will upset your partner if you have spent money on things that aren't necessary.</p>

The Born Loser by Chip Sansom



SUDOKU

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WEATHER

	MIN	MAX	CONDITION
CHINA			
Beijing	16	27	cloudy
Changchun	27	35	cloudy
Chengdu	20	24	overcast
Chongqing	31	37	cloudy
Fuzhou	27	37	cloudy
Guangzhou	26	35	thunderstorms
Guiyang	21	31	cloudy
Haikou	26	33	cloudy
Hangzhou	24	35	cloudy
Harbin	15	21	rain
Hefei	23	30	rain
Nanjing	23	32	thunderstorms
Shanghai	25	33	overcast
Taipei	26	31	fine
Wuhan	24	30	rain
Hong Kong	26	29	cloudy
WORLD			
Moscow	8	13	overcast
Frankfurt	8	12	rain
Paris	11	14	rain
London	7	13	rain
New York	12	3	overcast

CROSSWORDS

ACROSS 1- Jack of "The Great Dictator"; 6- Derive; 11- Monopoly quartet; Abbr.; 14- Mountaineer's tool; 15- Money spent; 16- ___ the land of the free...; 17- Inclined; 18- Render weaponless; 19- Exec's degree; 20- Concerning; 22- Brainstorms; 24- Decked out; 28- Elder; 30- Medium setting?; 31- Twisted expression?; 32- Assault; 33- Bony structures; 37- Bard's "before"; 38- Mimicry; 39- ___ Dawn Chong; 40- Funky; 43- Gnu cousin; 45- Sluggish; 46- Show clearly; 47- Ring combo; 49- Air bubble; 50- Holmes's creator; 51- Stepped; 52- "You've got mail" co.; 53- Rate; 56- Lauder of cosmetics; 61- ___-pitch softball; 62- Author Calvino; 63- Approaches; 64- Solo of "Star Wars"; 65- Shifted; 66- Pipsqueak;


DOWN 1- Lubricate; 2- Hotshot; 3- New Zealand parrot; 4- Author Fleming; 5- Died out; 6- Melon, e.g.; 7- Crescent-shaped figure; 8- LAX posting; 9- Cabinet dept.; 10- Candidate; 11- Lover of Juliet; 12- Rod used to reinforce concrete; 13- Ladies of Spain; Abbr.; 21- Maiden name indicator; 23- Gossip; 24- It's a plus; 25- Tractor maker; 26- Western; 27- Cellular stuff; 28- Dummy Mortimer; 29- Slippery; 31- Trapshooting; 33- Hubert's successor; 34- Praying figure; 35- John ___ Garner; 36- Passover meal; 38- Not many; 41- Monetary unit of Cambodia; 42- Meantime; 43- Plain; 44- Fleur-de-___; 46- "Xanadu" band; 47- Alley Oop's girlfriend; 48- Thermoplastic yarn; 49- Young; 50- Morse element; 51- One with a glazed look, perhaps; 54- From ___ Z; 55- The last letter of the Hebrew alphabet; 57- Stitch up; 58- ___ kwon do; 59- Be mistaken; 60- Mentalist's claim;

Yesterday's solution

DENSE	RIAR	TWIST
ANEAR	ABUR	RUSTY
CONTAINER	ISAAK	
ESE	TATA	CHASE
ARAT	COUCH	
EYEFUL	LEER	
MEXICO	AEONIAN	
ONER	WIN	RTES
SCEPTER	PRRAISE	
STATE	ARIS	RETEST
SPITE	AROW	CUR
AREEL	DOINCLOTH	
LEGAL	AMS	HORNE
TESTA	RAY	APNEA

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

Emergency calls 999	Taxi 28 939 939 / 2828 3283
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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RENT

FOR RENT

MANHATTAN 4 BEDS	HKD 18,800
MANHATTAN 3 BEDS	HKD 17,500
CHUN LEONG 1 BED	HKD 8,200
BUCKINGHAM 2 BEDS	HKD 13,900
HELLENE G. 3 BEDS	HKD 12,500
SAN ON 2 BEDS	HKD 8,500
COLOANE V. 1 BED	HKD 9,300
COLOANE V. 2 BEDS	HKD 10,500
COLOANE V. 2 BEDS	HKD 10,000

FOR SALE

JADE GARDEN 4 BEDS	HKD 15,380,000
NOVA TAIPA 4 BEDS	HKD 11,475,000
BAI YUEN GRD. 3 BEDS	HKD 12,800,000
MANHATTAN 3 BEDS	HKD 12,980,000
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NAM LONG 1 BED	HKD 3,780,000
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MACAU'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

MANUFACTURING

APPLE INC WILL MANUFACTURE IPHONE 14 IN INDIA

KRUTIKA PATHI, NEW DELHI

APPLE Inc. will make its iPhone 14 in India, the company said yesterday, as manufacturers shift production from China amid geopolitical tensions and pandemic restrictions that have disrupted supply chains for many industries.

"The new iPhone 14 lineup introduces groundbreaking new technologies and important safety capabilities. We're excited to be manufacturing iPhone 14 in India," Apple said in a statement.

Apple unveiled its latest lineup of iPhones earlier this month. They will have improved cameras, faster processors and longer lasting batteries at the same prices as last year's models.

India is the world's second-largest smartphone market after China but Apple iPhone sales have struggled to capture a large share of the market against cheaper smartphones from competitors.

The announcement from the Cupertino, California-based company dovetails with Prime Minister Narendra Modi's push

AP PHOTO



for local manufacturing, which has been a key goal for his government ever since he took office in 2014.

The tech company has bet big on India, where it first began manufacturing its iPhone SE in 2017 and has since continued to assemble a number of iPhone models there. Apple opened its online store for India two years ago, but the pandemic has delayed plans for a flagship store in India,

according to local media reports.

The latest model will be shipped out by Foxconn, a major iPhone assembler, whose facilities are on the outskirts of Chennai, a city in southern India.

Apple is likely to shift about 5% of its iPhone 14 production to India from later this year, raising it to 25% by 2025, according to a JP Morgan report quoted by the Press Trust of India news agency.

The analysts expect that nearly

a quarter of all Apple products to be manufactured outside China by 2025, compared to about 5% now. Supply chain risks like the stringent COVID-19 lockdowns seen in China are likely the trigger for such relocation efforts that will continue over the next two or three years, the report said.

"Apple has been trying to diversify its supply chain for a while, but these efforts have grown in the last two years over trade

sanctions between the U.S. and China," said Sanyam Chaurasia, an analyst at Canalisys.

Last year, the tech giant manufactured around 7 million iPhones in India. This news is likely to significantly increase India-made Apple smartphones, he added.

He said the plan to make more iPhones in India may also lead Apple to drop its prices for the Indian market, making it more competitive. "You can adopt a more aggressive pricing strategy if you manufacture locally," Chaurasia said.

Most of Apple Inc.'s smartphones and tablets are assembled by contractors with factories in China, but the company started asking them in 2020 to look at the possibility of moving some production to Southeast Asia or other places after repeated shutdowns to fight COVID-19 disrupted its global flow of products.

Apple hasn't released details, but news reports say the company planned to set up assembly of tablet computers and wireless earphones in Vietnam.

Other companies are keeping or expanding manufacturing in China to serve the domestic market while shifting export-oriented work to other countries due to rising wages and other costs, as well as the difficulty for foreign executives to visit China due to anti-COVID-19 travel restrictions. MDT/AP

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MACAU'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

BASKETBALL

US has record performance in rout of South Korea

DOUG FEINBERG, SYDNEY

USA 145, S.KOREA 69

A'JA Wilson and the U.S. put on quite a show, breaking the World Cup scoring mark in a record rout of South Korea.

Brionna Jones scored 24 points and Wilson added 20 to help the U.S. beat South Korea 145-69 yesterday. Shakira Austin's layup with 9 seconds left helped the Americans break Brazil's record of 143 points set in 1990.

"I don't think I've ever been part of a team that can score the basketball like this," Wilson said. "This is crazy, we put up 145 points. I think when you look at us and just knowing how talented we are, we just came together and we play together very, very well."

The U.S. always has the most talented and deepest roster of any team in the World Cup with 12 WNBA stars on the roster. Still, the Americans had never come close to that sort of offensive output during its storied World Cup history. The previous team record was 119 points against Angola in 2014 and China in 2006. The scoring margin was also the biggest in U.S. history as well surpassing the 75-point win over Angola in 2014.

The win was also the 26th in

AP PHOTO



United States' Ariel Atkins shoots at goal as South Korea's Kim Danbi attempts to block

a row in World Cup play for the Americans, who haven't lost since the 2006 semifinals when they fell to Russia. The U.S. also won 26 in a row from 1994-2006. The Soviet Union holds the World Cup record with 56 straight wins from 1959-1986.

What started with Sue Bird,

Diana Taurasi and Sylvia Fowles has now been passed on to Breanna Stewart and Wilson. A legacy of excellence that doesn't look like it's ending anytime soon.

The U.S. (4-0), which has been playing stellar defense, was challenged by South Korea early. The teams were trading baskets

for the first 8 minutes and it was tied at 21 before the Americans took control, scoring the final 11 points of the period.

Kahleah Copper came off the bench for the first time of the tournament and scored six points during that spurt. The Americans kept the streak going to start

the second quarter, scoring nine of the first 11 points to put the game away.

By the time the game reached the half the U.S. was up 68-40, including scoring 44 points in the paint against the undersized Koreans.

"We were trying to get the ball inside," Jones said. "We had an advantage there."

The only suspense in the second half was how many records the Americans could break. They took down their own scoring mark on Sabrina Ionescu's 3-pointer with 6:15 left in the game and kept putting up points with Austin's layup capping off the contest.

Other records broken on Monday included the 62 field goals made, 36 assists and 94 points in the paint.

"Our size was a problem for them and I thought we shared the ball," U.S. coach Cheryl Reeve said.

The Americans were well rested for the game after having their first day off of the tournament on Sunday.

Despite the rout, South Korea (1-3) can still advance to the quarterfinals with a win over Puerto Rico today.

Leeseul Kang, who had 37 points in a win over Bosnia and Herzegovina, scored 10 points. Hyejin Park had 17 to lead the team.

In other games yesterday, Belgium routed Bosnia and Herzegovina 85-55 and Serbia beat Mali 81-68.

South Korea faces Puerto Rico today with the winner advancing to the quarterfinals.

U.S. plays Bosnia and Herzegovina. **MDT/AP**

BASKETBALL

China eyeing a medal for first time in 28 years

IT'S been 28 years since China last won a medal at the World Cup, finishing second in the 1994 games.

With a dominant inside presence, led by Han Xu and Li Yueru, plus talented shooters and quick guards, the Chinese team has gotten off to a strong start in Australia and could find its way onto the podium.

China is 3-1 in pool play, with the lone loss coming against the U.S. In the three victories, the Chinese team won by an average of 48 points and scored close to 100 points a game. Even a 14-point loss to the U.S. showed that China has improved from finishing sixth in the 2018 World Cup and fifth in last year's Olympics.

AP PHOTO



China's Han Xu gathers the ball during their game at the women's Basketball World Cup against the United States in Sydney

"Compared with the U.S. team, the confrontation and intensity of the

Chinese team in the first two games of the group stage are not at the same

level. I hope the players can benefit from it," China coach Zheng Wei said

through a translator. "Throughout the game, our team only played poorly in the first few minutes and the last three minutes of the second quarter, and the rest of the time was good. I am proud of the performance of the players!"

U.S. coach Cheryl Reeve has seen a lot of improvement in China and joked that she doesn't want them to get too much better.

"We have all the respect in the world for China, we've seen them grow ... this is a great time for the women's national team," Reeve said. "It's a great time. It's a very, very good team."

China plays a more up-tempo unselfish style un-

der Zheng, who took over in May. In yesterday's win over Puerto Rico, the team had 39 assists on its 41 baskets.

Chinese fans have taken notice. Besides the host team, China has drawn the biggest crowds at the World Cup. The players have been appreciative of the support, signing autographs and posing for pictures after games.

"I like that our fans come to watch," said Han, who is averaging 12.3 points and 8.8 rebounds in the tournament.

She came into the tournament after having a strong season in the WNBA for the Liberty and has a huge fan following.

A win over Belgium today would secure the No. 2 seed in the pool and more importantly have the team avoiding a rematch with the U.S. until the gold medal game. **MDT/AP**

OPINION

China Daily
 Editorial, China Daily

GLOBAL EFFORTS FOR PEACE AND PROSPERITY NEEDED

The more severe and complex the international situation becomes, the more urgent it is for countries to maintain communication and interaction. That the Chinese delegation was one of the busiest ones among all the delegations on the sidelines of the United Nations General Assembly in New York last week has demonstrated China's strong sense of responsibility as a major country.

The Chinese delegation, headed by State Councilor and Foreign Minister Wang Yi, participated in more than 40 bilateral and multilateral activities, some of which it organized.

In contrast to the fierce and divisive geopolitical games of the United States and its allies, China upholds multilateralism and a fair international order, so it is no surprise that the Chinese delegation's efforts to promote peace and shared development should be warmly received. At the general debate of the UN General Assembly, Wang put forward a six-point proposal on how China should respond to the call of the times, urging all countries to stand up for peace, development, openness, cooperation, unity and fairness rather than their opposites.

Three years ago, then US president Donald Trump declared in the UN General Assembly that the future does not belong to globalists, and openly questioned the authority of the UN. Last week, his successor Joe Biden called on countries to uphold the UN Charter. Yet his administration has repeatedly and openly failed to do that.

The common aspirations of all countries should not be hijacked by the selfish agenda of an individual country or a small clique. The international community as a whole should oppose the universal aspiration of all peoples for a better life being usurped by the narrow interests of the privileged few. The core issue of this era is neither the so-called duel between democracy and authoritarianism, nor the deliberately intensified bloc politics or ideological camp confrontation, but rather the question of whether or not countries are willing to work together for shared development and shared security.

China's Global Development Initiative and Global Security Initiative have resonated with so many countries because they are not based on serving the interests of any one country or a small group of countries but rather aimed at striking a balance. The reason why so many countries have expressed their support for Wang's proposals is that China has proved that its endeavors to build a community with a shared future for mankind are not a cause that it is just paying lip service to.

China has always been a builder of world peace, a contributor to global development, a defender of the international order, a provider of public goods and a mediator of hot issues.

Those making irresponsible remarks against China's "stance" in relation to the Ukraine crisis during the UN General Assembly are also those openly supporting the secessionists in Taiwan and Xinjiang. Is that just coincidence?

A total of 2,296 delegates have been elected to the upcoming 20th National Congress of the Communist Party of China, according to an official statement released Sunday, Xinhua reported yesterday.

The delegates, representing 38 electoral units and the nation's over 96.7 million Party members, are outstanding CPC members who are highly qualified ideologically and politically, have good work styles and high moral standards, are competent in discussing State affairs, and have made remarkable achievements in their work, the statement said.

Among the delegates, Xinhua states, are Party members in lea-

dership positions and those from the grassroots, a considerable number of female Party members and those from ethnic minority groups.

They also come from all walks of life, such as the economy, science, national defense, law enforcement, education, health, sports and culture.

The eligibility of these delegates will be verified by a special review committee before they attend the upcoming Congress.

A meeting of the Political Bureau of the CPC Central Committee in August adopted a decision to propose the convening of the 20th National Congress of the CPC in Beijing on Oct 16, Xinhua says.

CHINA ACHIEVES INITIAL SUCCESS IN NEW INFRASTRUCTURE CONSTRUCTION

CHINA has achieved initial success in new infrastructure construction, which has greatly facilitated the country's social and economic development over the past decade, officials said yesterday, Xinhua state agency reported.

Zhang Zhihua, an official with the National Development and Reform Commission (NDRC), said China has quickened its steps in upgrading information infrastructure as well as advancing infrastructure integration and innovation.

The length of China's optical fiber network has increased 2.7 times over the past decade, and the number of data center racks has topped 5.9 million, Zhang told a press conference.

Smart devices are being integrated into various industries and businesses such as transport, energy supply, and industrial production, as well as facilities concerning people's well-being like e-commerce, telemedicine, and online education, he said.

In terms of innovation, Zhang said up to 32 of China's planned 77 major national science and technology infrastructure projects have been put into operation, while centers on engineering research, enterprise technology, and industrial innovation are being set up across the country.

Zhang particularly mentioned advancement in China's "east data, west computing" project, a mega data project launched in February this year and designed to have the country's less developed inland regions store and process data transmitted from economically advanced eastern areas.

In the "initial areas" of the project, construc-



Aerial photo of the Mogao Grottoes in Dunhuang, Gansu Province

tion has started on more than 60 new data centers, which involves over 1.1 million standard racks and over 400 billion yuan (about 56.9 billion U.S. dollars), he said, noting that the proportion of data centers in the western region has increased steadily.

Song Wen, an official with the National Energy Administration, revealed that with the energy sector seeking a faster shift to digital, internet-based, and smart-tech models, progress has been made in fields such as smart grid, mining, and power generation, as well as energy storage.

The coverage rate of China's power distribution automation system has exceeded 90 percent by 2021, and the country has seen the completion of over 800 smart mining sites and a number of "5G plus" smart thermal power plants, according to Song.

Zhang said new infrastructure has greatly empowered China's economic and social development by offering sustained support to new technology exploration, effectively backing the development of the digital economy and fully fa-

cilitating the improvement of people's well-being.

"While each round of scientific and technological revolution introduces new infrastructure, each round of infrastructure construction would bring in an upgrade in economic transformation," he said, voicing optimism in the prospect of new infrastructure investment.

With more supporting financial and fiscal policies in place, China will move faster to kick off a number of new infrastructure projects, according to Zhang.

According to Xinhua, He said to further support these projects, the NDRC will boost efforts to enhance coordination and planning, increase spending and shore up the weak links.

Works will be done to improve the basic networks in the medium and small cities in the central and western regions, bridge the digital gap, and make industrial and supply chains more resilient, with priority given to new infrastructure that meets the public's urgent needs and stimulates the real economy, he said. MDT/XINHUA



Netherlands Dutch prosecutors said yesterday that a 30-year-old man suspected of involvement in the slaying of crime reporter Peter R. de Vries (pictured) has been arrested by authorities in Poland. De Vries, one of the Netherlands' best-known journalists who also campaigned to solve cold cases, was gunned down in Amsterdam on July 6 last year. He died nine days later of his injuries at age 64.

UK TikTok could face a 27 million-pound fine in the U.K. over a possible breach of U.K. data protection law by failing to protect children's privacy when they are using the video-sharing platform. The U.K. Information Commissioner's Office said yesterday that it has issued the social media company a legal document that precedes a potential fine. It said TikTok may have processed the data of children under 13 without appropriate parental consent, and processed "special category data" without legal grounds to do so.

UK The British pound fell to all-time low against the U.S. dollar yesterday after Treasury chief Kwasi Kwarteng pledged a sweeping package of tax cuts, fueling concerns about the government's economic policy as the United Kingdom teeters toward recession. The pound fell as low as \$1.0373, its lowest level since the decimalization of the currency in 1971, before rallying to above \$1.08 in London early afternoon trading.



Gulf of Mexico Hurricane Ian moved near the Cayman Islands and closer to western Cuba yesterday on a track to hit the west coast of Florida as a major hurricane this week. Ian was forecast to intensify rapidly and hit Cuba as a major hurricane today, and then become an even stronger Category 4 hurricane over warm Gulf of Mexico waters before striking Florida today [Macau time] along a stretch of coast including the Tampa Bay area.