



**OVERALL PRELIM BALANCE
OF PAYMENTS OF MACAU
RECORDED A SURPLUS OF
MOP10.9 BILLION IN 2021**

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EFFORTS TO ENFORCE BEIJING'S
JURISDICTION IN THE SARS**

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**YUAN SLIDES
TO 14-YEAR
LOW AFTER US
RATE HIKES**

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AP PHOTO



Vietnam Typhoon Noru weakened into a tropical storm over central Vietnam yesterday, causing blackouts and blowing off roofs and billboards with strong winds and putting Thailand on alert for more floods and downpours. There were no immediate reports of casualties after Noru made landfall south of Da Nang and quickly moved inland. Although losing strength, Noru dumped heavy rains, flooding villages while wind gusts caused damage to homes and uprooted trees, according to state media.

AP PHOTO



North Korea fired two short-range ballistic missiles toward its eastern waters yesterday, Seoul said, a day before U.S. Vice President Kamala Harris is to visit the South. South Korea's Joint Chiefs of Staff said in a statement that the North Korean missiles lifted off 10 minutes apart yesterday afternoon from its capital region and flew toward the waters off its east coast. It said South Korea has boosted its surveillance and is maintaining a military readiness in close coordination with the United States. *More on p7*

AP PHOTO



Pakistan's foreign minister says the international community should work with Afghanistan's ruling Taliban, not against them, when it comes to combatting foreign extremist groups and the economic and humanitarian crises in that country. Bilawal Bhutto Zardari (pictured) spoke to AP in the final days of a trip to the United Nations General Assembly in New York and to Washington that has focused on trying to draw more world attention to unprecedented flooding that has one-third of his country underwater.

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Macau filmmakers get nominations in prestigious Golden Horse Awards

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ADVISED TO NOT
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BOOSTS EFFORTS
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ECONOMY

UM FORECASTS ECONOMIC GROWTH TO DROP UP TO 29% IN 2022

LYNZY VALLES

THE University of Macau (UM) estimates that economic growth will drop between 26.4% and 29.2% this year.

This is followed by a drop between 31.3% and 33.6% of exports of services, while the current revenue of the Macau SAR government is expected to be between MOP 29.3 billion and MOP 33.3 billion, the university's Centre for Macau Studies and Department of Economics estimates.

In the first quarter of 2022, the GDP fell by 8.9% year-on-year. Following the relatively large-scale emergence of infection cases in the Macau community beginning in mid-June, the GDP fell sharply by 39.3% year-on-year in the second quarter, returning to the level of the second quarter of 2020.

Due to the city's largest outbreak in June to July, the economy continued to deteriorate as Macau underwent 14 rounds of mass testing and a two-week

MDT ARCHIVE



lockdown – including closure of non-essential business activities.

In line with this scenario, local economists were not only alarmed by these figures but also anticipate that the results from the second half of this year could be as bad as the first: predicting 2022 to be a historic year for all the wrong

reasons.

Previously, economists such as Albano Martins were quoted saying that though the data was alarming, it was natural that the GDP would fall substantially since the economy is at a standstill.

The UM scholars, however, took into account the vaccination

situation in Macau and the experience of other countries and places in gradually opening up, and assumed that Macau would be gradually opening up to varying degrees in 2022.

However, the city continues to adhere to Beijing's zero-Covid policy where lockdowns and mass

testings are done to contain the virus.

Therefore, in response to possible changes in the pandemic and government policies, the team has put two different scenarios into consideration. The first scenario assumes stable growth in the fourth quarter of 2022 and that the number of visitor arrivals will return to the level of the fourth quarter of 2021 of 1.95 million. The team also considers a scenario with worse conditions: Macau will face one more month of lockdown, with only 1.31 million visitor arrivals.

Further, the scholars forecasted that the unemployment rate is projected to be between 3.8% and 4.0%. Excluding non-resident workers, the unemployment rate for residents is expected to be 4.9% to 5.1%.

Recent data shows that the unemployment rate of local residents for May-July 2022 rose to 5.4%, a record high since 2008, according to the available data disclosed by the government.

Lawmakers have already called on the government to enact additional and more effective measures to promote the employment and reemployment of local workers affected by the Covid-19 crisis.

GAMING

Investment firm predicts mass GGR to reach 40% pre-pandemic levels in Q4

LYNZY VALLES

UBS analyst Angus Chan is estimating that the city's mass gross gaming revenue (GGR) will reach 40% of pre-pandemic levels in the fourth quarter.

With optimism, the analyst forecast the figure may increase to 70% next year, and then jump to 105% in 2024.

"Importantly, we believe the mobility relaxation reflects Beijing's policy support for Macau's economy," he writes, as cited in Dow Jones Institutional News.

Brokerages and analysts have been giving their fresh

XINHUA



estimates for the gaming sector following announcements of group visa reinstatements which may be in place by the end of October.

For brokerage BofA Securities, the group expects that the sector can fully recover in early 2023, citing

the long-awaited announcement of group travel resumption, which is expected to bring an end to the tourism drought that has negatively impacted the economy.

Such a forecast was more optimistic than that of Mor-

gan Stanley, who observed that the recovery of the local gaming sector may only be seen by 2024.

These comments echo similar sentiments issued by industry analysts, as the spending power of group travelers is weaker than that of those holding individual visit scheme (IVS) visas.

The gaming sector has long been in turmoil as it has been affected by the strict restrictions in place in the SAR as the city adheres to Beijing's zero-Covid policy.

The largest outbreak Macau has recorded in mid-June to July saw 12 days of casinos shutting down, leading to the lowest GGR in decades as revenues plunged to MOP398 million, down 95% year-on-year.

The gaming sector is also facing the largest gaming law overhaul yet while they await their proposals to be reviewed, which will determine whether they acquire another concession for the next 10 years.

BOP

SAR LEFT WITH MOP10.9B SURPLUS FOR 2021

THE overall preliminary balance of payments (BOP) of the Macau SAR recorded a surplus of MOP10.9 billion in 2021. Of which, the current account registered a surplus of MOP23.7 billion, and financial non-reserve assets showed a net decrease of MOP10.1 billion, data from the Monetary Authority of Macao (AMCM) shows.

Exports of goods increased by 92.4% year-on-year while imports of goods (f.o.b.) rose by 58.1%. With imports having a higher base than exports, the merchandise trade deficit increased from

MOP61.5 billion in 2020 to MOP85.6 billion in 2021.

Simultaneously, the rebound of travel exports drove up total service exports by 60.1% during the year while service imports merely rose by 20.6%. Therefore, the services account surplus expanded from MOP66.2 billion in 2020 to MOP116.3 billion in 2021.

The primary income account, which reflects cross-border flows of factor income, recorded a net inflow of MOP5.9 billion in 2021; of which, inflows went down from MOP55.1 billion in 2020 to MOP46.5 billion in 2021. **LV**

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A MACAU TIMES PUBLICATIONS LTD PUBLICATION

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Macau filmmakers get nominations in prestigious Taiwan film awards

ANTHONY LAM

DESPITE being only partially confident, the three local filmmakers who were nominated at the Taiwan Golden Horse Awards (GHA) feel flattered by the recognition.

Dubbed the Oscars in the Chinese-speaking world by some, the GHA was inaugurated 60 years ago. Films that have half of their dialog spoken in the Chinese language are eligible for the awards. Silent films will also be eligible if they are directed by an ethnic Chinese director and produced by a crew consisting of a minimum of 50% ethnic Chinese.

Similar to other famous film awards around the world, the GHA is currently held as a film festival. It will be hosting its 59th edition on November 19.

In this edition of the film awards, three local filmmakers managed to secure nominations in three categories, namely young film director Hong Heng Fai for Best New Director, audio technician Ellison Lau Chi Keong for Best Sound Effects and cinematographer Charlie Sou Wai Kin for Best Cinematography.

The name of the film they produced is *Kissing the Ground You Walked On*.

It is not the first time the film director has had a nomination in the GHA. In 2016, Hong was nominated for Best Live Action Short Film with his production titled *Crash*. He eventually lost to *A Sunny Day* by Ying Liang.

Speaking to the Times, Hong said that his last experience with the GHA was more exciting because it was the first experience of its kind in his life.

He also admitted that he is competing with four other aspiring and talented emerging film directors, making his odds of winning the award no larger than his co-workers Lau and Sou.

Both Lau and Sou are lined up with big names. Lau is competing among veteran filmmakers such as Nopawat Likitwong for Hong Kong film *Limbo*, winner of the Best Sound Effects category in the 15th Asian Film Awards held in Busan, South Korea; as well as R.T Kao, Rockid Lee and Richard Hocks for Taiwanese cinema and Netflix blockbuster pseudo-documentary *Incantation*. Other nominees in this category include R.T Kao, Tsai Doit, Kenny Cheng for *The Abandoned* and Tu Duu-Chih, Chiang Yi-Chen, Chen Yu-Chieh



A scene from *Kissing the Ground You Walked On*

Meanwhile, Sou has been nominated as well as Cheng Siu-keung for *Limbo* and Chen Ko-chin for *Incantation*, as well as Leung Ming-kai for *The Sunny Side of the Street* and Yao Hung-i for *Salute*. Cheng won the awards in the category in both the Festival de Cine de Sitges in Catalonia and the Hong Kong Film Awards.

The revelation of the nominations for films and filmmakers this year was held on Tuesday.

The film director said that he was "a little relieved" when he got the news. When question-

ed about this feeling – not very common and not very similar to his co-workers' – Hong explained that he had seen his own production too many times and become numb. "I started to become detached from what other people think [about the film]," he said.

Moreover, he added that this film is quite experimental, making him unsure if it will be well received. This is also why he felt relieved when his nomination was announced.

This time, he wants to focus more on the experience rather

than being over excited, he said. "After all, getting three nominations has already surpassed my expectations," Hong concluded.

On the other hand, Lau described being nominated as "dreamy and fantastic," adding that "it feels wonderful to be on the grid with big masters."

He considers the nomination as a recognition, despite not yet being an award, for he thinks getting a nomination in such a globally recognized award in the ninth year of his career in the film industry is memorable and

worth celebrating.

He admitted that although not every filmmaker chases after awards, he would still work diligently in the hopes of further and greater recognition.

Similar to Lau, Sou also feels excited about being on the same grid with big names in the industry. His emotions fluctuated slightly when he got the news. "I was a little shocked when the nomination was revealed," said Sou. He also thinks that this nomination is a recognition and pledged that he would keep working hard in the industry.

The three of them are not very confident about securing the awards, due to the fact that Macau is still very green in the filmmaking industry, but will consider this a very precious lesson.

KISSING THE GROUND YOU WALKED ON: A BRIEF SYNOPSIS

Hong's film is a story revolving around two men: a half-retired young novelist and his tenant. There is a day when the novelist gets an opportunity to write a new book. While he is contemplating his new masterpiece, he has an internal struggle as to what his ideal is like. Here comes his tenant, a young man who eventually gives him inspirations not only on his upcoming book, but also on his vision of life, through an intriguing relation intertwining the two men.

CULTURAL COMMENTATOR HAPPY AT NOMINATIONS, FRUITFUL SUBSIDY SCHEME

LOCAL cultural commentator and academic Pan Lei recounted his memories of seeing Hong at the GHA After Party in 2016. In that year, Lei was a juror for The Network for the Promotion of Asian Cinema (NETPAC) at the Golden Horse Film Festival.

He recalled that he felt amazed when he saw a whole table of Macau filmmakers being invited to the GHA and the After Party, as they were seated among famous industry stars like film director Hou Hsiao-hsien and star actress Shu Qi.

"I didn't expect in just a few years, he's now finished a feature film and returned to the GHA to compete for another award," Lei told the Times. He is also happy seeing three local filmmakers competing in the well-recognized GHA.

In addition, the nominations also highlight the effectiveness of the Support Program for the Production of Feature Films of the Cultural Development Fund, since *Kissing the Ground You Walked On* is actually a beneficiary of the support program.

Lei also cited precedents, such as Sisterhood by local film director Tracy Choi and

Empire Hotel by Ivo Ferreira, to support his comments. "Although not all beneficiaries were good, the structure of the program is in fact helpful [in nurturing film professionals]," the commentator remarked.

Explaining further, he said the program requires its beneficiaries to negotiate for collaborations with established film companies. "That's why Choi's film starred famous Hong Kong artistes such as Gigi Leung, Fish Liew, Stephanie Che and Elena Kong, given its collaborations with film star Louis Koo's One Fool Film Production Limited," he added.

It has been said that working with external experienced filmmakers will help Macau's emerging filmmakers understand how a film industry actually works.

Judging from the reality in the past few years, he finds the support program useful in nurturing film professionals by giving them the opportunities to produce feature films. Gathering these experiences, these emerging filmmakers will have greater chances of standing on their own feet.

For example, Lei said, Choi and another film director, Arie Chan, have started their



Pan Lei

own projects after finishing the film sponsored by the support program.

Lei emphasized that the road was not easily paved. Taking Hong's case as example, he pointed out that there are a lot of emerging directors each year in the Chinese-speaking film industry. Hong's nomination at the GHA represents local filmmakers' readiness to shine, Lei added. **AL**

POLITICAL ADVISOR CALLS FOR EFFORTS TO ENFORCE BEIJING'S JURISDICTION IN THE SARs

CHINA'S top political advisor Wang Yang attended a reception on Tuesday to celebrate the upcoming 73rd anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic of China in Beijing and delivered a speech.

People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC), the United Front Work Department of the Communist Party of China (CPC) Central Committee, the Overseas Chinese Affairs Office of the State Council, the Hong Kong and Macao Affairs Office of the State Council, the Taiwan Affairs Office of the State Council, and the All-China Federation of Returned Overseas Chinese.

Since the 18th CPC National Congress in 2012, the CPC Central Committee with Comrade Xi Jinping at its core has implemented the strategy of national rejuvenation within the context of global changes of a scale unseen in a century, said Wang, a member of the Standing Committee of the Political Bureau of the CPC Central Committee and chairman of the CPPCC National Committee.

It has solved many longstan-



Political advisor Wang Yang

ding problems, brought about important achievements on matters concerning the future, and withstood risks and challenges at home and abroad, Wang added.

Noting that the upcoming 20th CPC National Congress matters in carrying forward the cause of the Party and the country, the future of socialism with Chinese charac-

teristics, and China's national rejuvenation, Wang urged efforts to study, publicize and implement the spirit of the congress, and follow the guidance of Xi Jinping Thought on Socialism with Chinese Characteristics for a New Era to strive for fully building a modern socialist China and advancing national rejuvenation.

Stressing understanding the spirit of President Xi Jinping's address at the meeting celebrating the 25th anniversary of Hong Kong's return to the motherland, Wang called for efforts to implement the principle of "one country, two systems," enforce the central government's overall jurisdiction in the Hong Kong and Ma-

cau special administrative regions (SARs), implement the principle of patriots administering Hong Kong and Macau, as well as supporting the SAR governments in their administration in accordance with the law, ensuring that the SARs maintain their unique status and advantages, and supporting their integration into China's overall development.

Wang stressed implementing the Party's overall policy for resolving the Taiwan question in the new era, upholding the one-China principle and the 1992 Consensus, and promoting the peaceful and integrated development of cross-strait relations.

Noting that China's reunification is unstoppable, Wang warned that seeking "Taiwan independence" with foreign support will lead nowhere, while using Taiwan to contain China is doomed to fail.

Wang urged efforts to implement the policies of the Party and the country on overseas Chinese affairs, and help the world to better understand China. **MDT/XINHUA**

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GOLDEN WEEK

Zhuhai residents advised not to travel, MGTO boosts efforts in city promotion

FLORA TANG

THE Zhuhai health authority is calling on mainland residents to celebrate National Day at home and avoid going to medium-risk or high-risk areas.

For the upcoming National Day holidays, Zhuhai authorities have called on residents to reduce visits to other cities as much as possible due to the current pandemic, according to the statement published by the Zhuhai-Macau Joint Prevention and Control Working Group.

Residents who need to go to medium-risk or high-risk areas, must hold a green health code and provide a negative nucleic acid test (NAT) result within 48 hours.

The group reminded resi-



dents who returned to Zhuhai, that they are required to carry out two NAT tests within three days, complete a health declaration through their mobile phone, and complete their first NAT test when they arrive in Zhuhai.

Furthermore, after returning to Zhuhai, residents are advised for the first three days, to avoid taking public trans-

portation and participating in large gatherings, and not to travel between residences and workplaces, for their own protection as well as that of others.

Meanwhile, the Macao Government Tourism Office (MGTO) is gearing up for the National Day Golden Week Holiday starting this weekend, boosting efforts in destination marketing and promotion of

special offers.

As part of ongoing partnerships with e-commerce companies, the office highlights a series of special offers including 50%-off hotel coupons and "buy-one-get-one-free-plus" air tickets during the Golden Week on different platforms, in a bid to attract mainland residents to Macau for longer vacations and a greater boost in tourists' spending.


Lou Chi Leong, director of the Macao Hoteliers & Innkeepers Association, remained highly confident on the business performance during the upcoming National Day Golden Week holiday, anticipating the hotel occupancy rate to further elevate to above 70%, with most of the customers projected to extend their stays to three days, as cited in a report issued by Macao Daily News.

COMMERCIAL FLIGHTS PLUNGE 40% Y-O-Y IN AUGUST



Arriving and departing commercial flights totalled 485 trips in August, a decline of 39.1% year-on-year, data from the the Statistics and Census Service (DSEC) shows. From January to August 2022, the number of arriving and departing commercial flights declined by 36.4% year-on-year to 6,365 trips. Also, cross-border vehicular traffic in August increased by 9.3% year-on-year to 309,623 trips, of which light automobile trips (277,985) grew by 10.9%. In the first eight months of 2022, cross-border vehicular traffic (2,225,846 trips) decreased by 19.6% year-on-year, while gross weight of containerized cargo by land (35,489 tonnes) surged by 93.6%.

70 GBA PLACEMENTS AVAILABLE AT CAREER EXPO



Over 70 positions in Hengqin will be showcased in the Youth Career Expo 2022, which will be held on October 8 and 9. During the expo, there will be booths from the Guangdong-Macau In-Depth Cooperation Zone in Hengqin, which involves industries such as technology, finance and health. Meanwhile, in addition to interview areas for industries hiring staff, several services for supporting youth such as mock interview workshops and workshops for writing curriculum vitae will be added this year. Also, senior human resources consultants from various enterprises will answer questions from young people in relation to finding jobs at the expo.





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STATE MEDIA

Former top graft buster indicted on bribery charges

A former top graft buster at China's ministry for intelligence and counterintelligence has been indicted on bribery charges, just weeks before a major congress of the ruling Communist Party whose leader Xi Jinping has made fighting corruption a signature issue.

Yesterday's indictment of Liu Yanping, who headed the State Security Ministry's branch of the party's Central Commission for Discipline Inspection was a further reminder of Xi's vow to attack corruption "amongst both the flies and tigers."

On Friday, former deputy police minister Sun Lijun was given a death sentence with a two-year reprieve on charges of manipulating the stock market, taking bribes and other offenses. The case involved at least two former Cabinet officials.

State media said Liu had accepted "huge" amounts of property from others in return for favors. Those often include derailing investigations or offering promotions for cash.

He was expelled from the party earlier this month in a sign he



Liu Yanping, former committee director under the Central Commission for Discipline Inspection

would be indicted, tried and almost certainly handed a lengthy prison term.

In that initial investigation, it was found that Liu had "lost his ideals and convictions," was "downright corrupt politically."

He "traded political power for

interests and distorted his power into a tool to seek political capital, personal benefits, and wealth," the reports said.

Liu was found to have "engaged in superstitious activities" and accepted invitations to golf games, banquets, tours, and medical

services from private business people "that may compromise his impartiality in the performance of official duties," the reports said.

In Sun's case, a former justice minister and a former ruling party official who were accused of colluding with him received similar

penalties. Sun was convicted of collecting 646 million yuan (\$91 million) in bribes and charged with using his official position in 2018 to manipulate stock trading to help a trader avoid losses. He also was accused of selling official jobs and abandoning his post during the COVID-19 outbreak.

Earlier, Sun was named in a lawsuit by the U.S. Justice Department against Las Vegas casino mogul Steve Wynn seeking to compel Wynn to register as a foreign agent. The department cited lobbying work it says Wynn performed for the Chinese government.

The lawsuit says senior officials including Sun wanted Wynn's help in trying to have a Chinese citizen's visa application denied, according to the complaint. Beijing wanted the man, who was charged with corruption and sought political asylum, returned to China.

Xi launched his anti-graft campaign shortly after taking over as party leader in late 2012. It has at times been seen as a tool to remove political rivals and intimidate the vast bureaucracy into doing his bidding. It also has sometimes sparked a public backlash, as in the case of the rigid enforcement of zero-COVID restrictions that have hobbled the economy and upended the lives of millions.

At next month's party congress, Xi is expected to try to break with tradition and award himself a third five-year term as leader. **MDT/AP**

ECONOMY

Yuan slides to 14-year low after US rate hikes

CHINA'S yuan fell to a 14-year low against the dollar yesterday despite central bank efforts to stem the slide after U.S. interest rate hikes prompted traders to convert money into dollars in search of higher returns.

A weaker yuan helps Chinese exporters by making their goods cheaper abroad, but it encourages capital to flow out of the economy. That raises costs for Chinese borrowers and sets back the ruling Communist Party's efforts to boost weak economic growth.

The yuan fell to 7.2301 to the dollar, its lowest level since January 2008. One yuan was worth about 13.8 cents, down 15% from this year's March high.

Yesterday, a deputy central bank governor, Liu Guoqiang, held a video meeting with Chinese



bankers and told them to "maintain the basic stability of the exchange rate," according to a central bank statement. It said Liu warned the bankers against betting the yuan would rise or fall.

"Maintaining stability is the top priority," the statement said.

The yuan has exceeded expectations it might fall to 7 to the dollar after the

U.S. Federal Reserve started aggressive rate hikes to cool inflation that is at a four-decade high. The Fed has raised rates five times this year and says more increases are likely.

By contrast, the People's Bank of China has cut interest rates to boost growth that fell to 2.2% over a year earlier in the first six months of 2022 — less than half the official 5.5% target.

The yuan is allowed to fluctuate up or down 2% from its starting price each day in tightly controlled trading. That prevents big daily swings, but down days can add up to a big change over time.

To shore up the exchange rate, Beijing cut the amount of foreign currency deposits Chinese banks are required to hold as reserves to 6% from 8% as of Sept. 15. That increases the amount of dollars and other foreign currency available to buy yuan, which should push up the exchange rate.

Still, that reserve cut is unlikely to stop a slide that is driven by "a strong U.S. dollar and the expectation of more Federal Reserve hikes," said Iris Pang of ING in a report.

"Less aggressive rate hike talk" might help the yuan rally, but it might

weaken further "if the Fed maintains its very hawkish tone" into next year, Pang wrote.

Chinese officials have previously promised to avoid "competitive devaluation" to gain an advantage in trade.

The yuan sank in 2019 during trade tension with then-President Donald Trump. That prompted suggestions Beijing was trying to reduce the impact of U.S. tariff hikes, but there was no official confirmation. The currency later strengthened.

Other governments also are struggling to manage capital flows under pressure from Fed rate hikes. On Friday, Vietnam's central bank raised a key interest rate in what economists said appeared to be an effort to stop an outflow of money in search of higher returns. **MDT/AP**

CHANGCHUN

RESTAURANT FIRE KILLS 17 PEOPLE IN NORTH-EASTERN CITY

A restaurant fire killed 17 people yesterday in the city of Changchun in northeastern China, authorities said.

The fire was reported about 12:40 p.m. in a high-tech section of the Changchun New Area industrial zone, according to a social media post by the zone's management committee.

Three other people were injured and taken to a hospital for treatment, the post said. The cause of the fire was under investigation.

Changchun is an auto manufacturing center and the capital of Jilin province. **MDT/AP**

AP PHOTO



U.S. Vice President Kamala Harris talks to the media at Yokosuka Naval Base, in Yokosuka, near Tokyo, yesterday

DIPLOMACY

US seeks united front in Asia despite Korea, Japan tensions

CHRIS MEGERIAN & MARI YAMAGUCHI, YOKOSUKA

STANDING on the deck of an American destroyer at a naval base here yesterday, Vice President Kamala Harris directly challenged China by accusing it of “disturbing behavior” and “provocations” around Taiwan.

Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Wang Wenbin responded to Harris by saying the U.S. had violated its pledge to respect China’s territorial integrity.

“When the U.S. cannot honor its own commitment, in what position can it talk about rules and order? It will only become a saboteur of international rules,” Wang said in a daily briefing.

The escalating tensions over Taiwan have raised the potential for conflict in an already volatile corner of the globe. But the core of U.S. plans for deterring — or, if necessary, confronting — China depends on alliances that are under strain. South Korea and Japan, which Harris described as the “linchpin” and “cornerstone” of American strategy in Asia, remain at odds with each other, divided by the legacy of World War II despite renewed efforts at reconciliation.

Japan colonized the Korean Peninsula years before the conflict began, sending many people into forced labor and women into sexual slavery. Decades later, ten-

sions continue to spill out of the history books and into debates over trade, technology and intelligence sharing.

Although Japan and South Korea are taking steps to repair their relationship, progress remains uncertain. Leaders in both countries face political challenges at home that could make it harder for them to reach compromises abroad, and the disputes are deeply rooted in questions about national honor and responsibility for some of Asia’s worst atrocities.

South Korea believes it is entitled to additional compensation from Japan and a more fulsome acceptance of guilt. Japanese leaders have resisted, saying such issues have already been settled.

The United States is prodding both sides to compromise as it tries to refocus its alliances to counter China’s growing strength.

Harris, whose four-day trip to the region was anchored by the state funeral for former Japanese prime minister Shinzo Abe, told reporters she views American foreign policy in the region “in the context of a trilateral relationship,” with the U.S., Japan and South Korea all working together.

A senior administration official, speaking on the condition of anonymity to discuss private conversations, said Harris encouraged the South Korean and Japanese leaders to advance their negotiations during her meetings with them.

The U.S. wants “to see two of our closest allies in the world working even better with each other,” and “we’re gratified to see that both countries seem determined to address those issues with a real vigor,” the official said.

However, the official said the U.S. had a limited role to play.

“It’s not for us to mediate or negotiate or broker what that relationship should look like,” the official said.

South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol and Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida sat down with each other last week at the United Nations, the first meeting between leaders of the two countries in three years.

Then yesterday, South Korean Prime Minister Han Duck-soo met with Kishida after Abe’s funeral and described their countries as “close neighbors and cooperative partners who share the values of democracy and the principles of the market economy.”

Kristi Govella, deputy director of the Asia program at the German Marshall Fund of the United States, said the U.S. will struggle to achieve its goals if South Korea and Japan don’t work together.

“Broadly, the three countries share the same concerns, but the willingness and capacity to act aren’t always aligned between the three,” she said.

Harris accused China of “a pressure campaign against Taiwan,” while Beijing blames the U.S. ad-

ministration for failing “to respect China’s territorial integrity.”

Zack Cooper, a senior fellow focused on Asian defense strategy at the American Enterprise Institute, said “there’s a feeling that the likelihood of a serious crisis over Taiwan is growing pretty rapidly.”

Fractures among American allies could undermine any response to an invasion, said Fang-Yu Chen, a political science professor at Soochow University in Taipei, Taiwan.

“If they don’t have good relationships with each other, then there will be trouble,” he said.

Ties between South Korea and Japan worsened during the leadership of Abe and former South Korean Prime Minister Moon Jae-in.

Abe’s government reacted furiously after South Korea’s Supreme Court in 2018 upheld lower court verdicts and ordered Nippon Steel and Mitsubishi Heavy Industries to compensate Korean forced laborers.

Those rulings led to further tensions in 2019 when Japan placed export controls on chemicals vital to South Korea’s semiconductor industry. Citing the deterioration of trust, Japan also removed South Korea from a list of countries with preferential trade status.

Moon’s government accused Abe of weaponizing trade and downgraded Japan’s trade status in a tit-for-tat move. Seoul even threatened to terminate a military

intelligence-sharing agreement with Tokyo that was a major symbol of their three-way security cooperation with Washington.

South Korea eventually backed off and continued the deal under pressure from former President Donald Trump’s administration, which until then had seemed content to let the U.S. allies escalate their feud.

Experts say the Japanese export controls had limited impact on South Korea’s semiconductor industry, partially because of successful South Korean efforts to diversify their sources of chemicals and materials.

But there are concerns that Japan could respond with further economic retaliation if South Korean courts approve a process to liquidate local assets of Japanese companies that have been refusing court orders to offer reparations to South Korean forced labor victims.

That would undermine U.S. hopes for expanding computer chip manufacturing in allied countries, strengthening delicate supply chains and countering China’s own technology investments. Harris met with Japanese business executives yesterday and said “no one country can satisfy the globe’s demand” and “it is important that we and our allies partner and coordinate.”

Japan insists all wartime compensation issues were settled under a 1965 treaty normalizing relations between the two nations that included hundreds of millions of dollars in economic aid and loans from Tokyo to Seoul.

Yoon, the South Korean president who took office in May, has expressed hope for finding a way to resolve the compensation issue without “causing a clash between the sovereignties.”

But it’s unclear what kind of compromise the countries could reach as South Korean plaintiffs have been rejecting the idea of receiving compensation from the South Korean government instead of Japanese companies.

Kishida also says both countries need to improve ties because of the worsening security environment in the region, although Japanese officials insist that Seoul should be the one to make the first step and propose plans acceptable to Japan.

Daniel Sneider, a lecturer in East Asian Studies at Stanford University, wrote recently that Japan and South Korea are being nudged closer together by threats including North Korea.

However, he said both countries will need to make compromises for their cooperation — and their alliances with the U.S. — to reach their full potential.

“True trilateral cooperation, even with the strategic imperatives, depends on resolving the profound disputes over wartime history and justice,” he wrote.
MDT/AP

COLD WAR

Japanese leader's trip to China in '72 was diplomatic gamble

MARI YAMAGUCHI, TOKYO

THE Japanese leader who normalized relations with China 50 years ago feared for his life when he flew to Beijing for the high-stakes negotiations at the height of the Cold War, according to his daughter, a former Japanese foreign minister.

Kakuei Tanaka's mission to normalize relations with China just two months after taking office was a huge gamble, his daughter, Makiko Tanaka, said in an interview with The Associated Press ahead of the 50th anniversary today of the historic communique that Tanaka signed with his counterpart, Zhou Enlai.

The then-prime minister told his daughter before his departure that he would resign if his mission failed, recalled Makiko Tanaka, who served as foreign minister and in other key posts from 1993 to 2012.

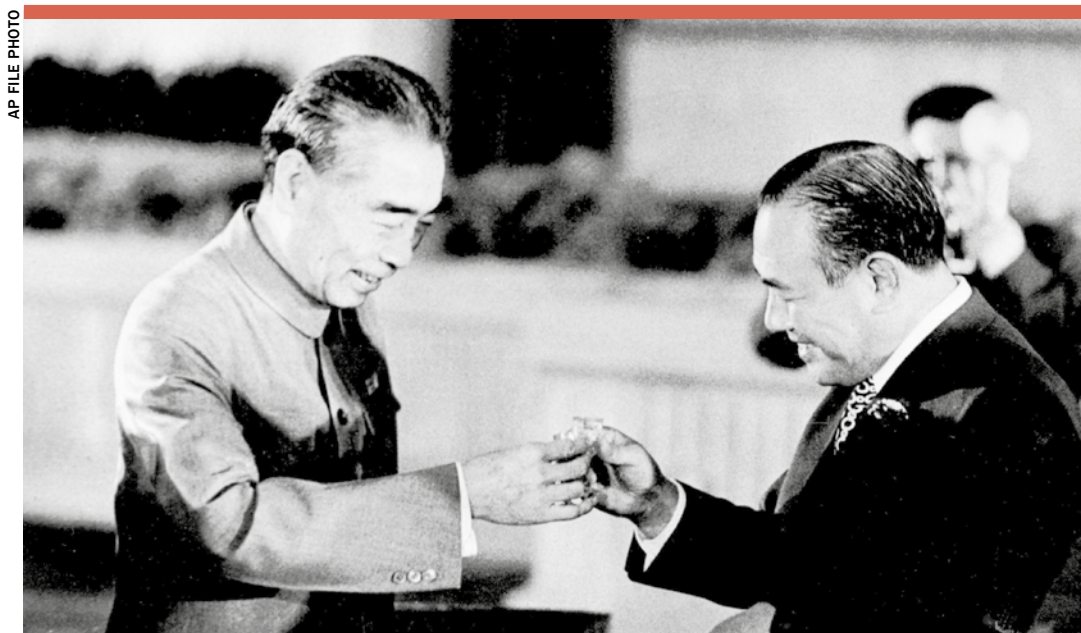
Opposition was so fierce in Japan, she said, that some ruling party hawks came to their home the day before the trip to try to stop him from leaving. He told his daughter that he feared being poisoned in China, which was a largely closed country in 1972.

Earlier that same year, U.S. President Richard Nixon had made his visit to communist China that would transform China's position in the world. His trip led to the U.S. establishing diplomatic relations with China in 1979 and the parallel severing of formal ties with Taiwan, the self-governing island that Beijing claims as its own.

Much has changed, too, in the China-Japan relationship over the past half-century. The neighbors enjoy deep business and cultural ties. Japan has given China more than \$25 billion in development aid over the years, and China is Japan's biggest trade partner.

But the underlying tension that marked Tanaka's diplomatic foray remains.

China, a relative backwater then, is now the world's No. 2 economy and a growing military power. Tensions surround Beijing's rivalry with Washington and its increasingly assertive activity in the region, especially around Taiwan.



Premier Zhou Enlai (left) and Japanese Prime Minister Kakuei Tanaka toast each other at a banquet in the Hall of the People in Beijing (Sept. 28, 1972, on the eve of the joint communiqué signing)

Japan considers China a security threat and is particularly worried about Chinese naval activity around Japanese-controlled islands in the East China Sea that Beijing also claims.

Top-level visits have stalled in recent years, and Japan has been steadily building its military, largely in response to China.

Current Prime Minister Fumio Kishida's government has pledged to further reinforce military power and to nearly double its spending over the next five to 10 years.

"Japan's alliance with the United States is a lynchpin of our diplomacy, but we should not isolate China," Makiko Tanaka said.

She raised worries about U.S.-led groupings of like-minded democracies, including Japan, as a counter to China, and cautioned against pushing Beijing toward closer ties with Russia.

"We are just banding together and being confrontational" toward China, said Tanaka, who was foreign minister in 2001-2002 under former Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi. She criticized U.S. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi's visit to Taipei in August for escalating tensions.

Wang Jiaxun, president of the China Enterprises Association in Japan, which includes 150 Chinese companies, acknowledged difficulties but said the neighbors need each other as business partners.

"China and Japan have thousands of years of up-and-down relations," said Wang, whose association sponsored

a weekend Japan-China festival in Tokyo in hopes of improving rocky ties.

China has not forgotten Japan's support after the 1972 normalization, and even though his country has become a major power, the two countries can learn from each other. China can provide a huge market for Japan and further contribute to the Japanese economy, he said.

When Tanaka, who died in 1993, made his trip, memories were fresh in Beijing of Japanese brutality during the first half of the 20th century. There was also opposition from anti-communist lawmakers in Tokyo.

Makiko Tanaka accompanied her father on many foreign trips, but he refused to take her to Beijing because of safety worries.

The main sticking points in 1972 were Japan's apology for wartime aggression and differences over Taiwan — issues that strain relations today.

Kakuei Tanaka, however, was determined to make amends with China and change the state of the relationship with a country he saw as a growing power, his daughter said. He believed energetic diplomacy was the only way his resource-poor country could rise from the devastation of the war and survive global competition.

Makiko quoted her father as saying that "leaving the China issue dangling is not good for Japan's future. She said her father "was ready to lower his head and apologize to China (over Japan's wartime atrocities) to create a win-

-win relationship for Japan's major benefit."

Contrary to his worries, Tanaka was treated in China with extreme hospitality.

His biggest relief centered on Zhou's pledge to waive China's right to seek war compensation, which he said saved Japan from going bankrupt. Makiko Tanaka says the waiver was in exchange for Japan's pledge to sever formal ties with Taiwan.

The East China Sea islands dispute was not part of the 1972 communique. Kakuei Tanaka raised the issue but Zhou said he did not want to discuss it, according to diplomatic records released by the Japanese Foreign Ministry.

In response to Chinese concerns, the Japanese side strengthened an apology over Japan's wartime aggression in the communique.

Makiko Tanaka said an improvement in the current political relationship between Beijing and Tokyo is hopeless, but she is pushing for deeper ties in the private sector. She has been invited to speak at Qinghua University in Beijing, and she is planning to invite a Chinese delegation to visit her father's tomb in his hometown of Niigata later this year.

"If business, scientists and cultural exchanges were prompted more, there would be a sense of closeness" between the countries, Tanaka said. "Diplomacy is about people, and whether you can develop personal relations and talk when needed, but politicians who can do this are rare." **MDT/AP**

this day in history

1960 KHRUSHCHEV ANGER ERUPTS AT UN



The Soviet Premier Nikita Khrushchev has disrupted a meeting of the United Nations General Assembly with several angry outbursts.

Twice he pounded his desk and twice he shouted interruptions to show his disapproval at the way UN forces have intervened in the recent trouble in former Belgian Congo.

Mr Khrushchev is calling for the UN Secretary General Dag Hammarskjöld to be replaced by a three-man executive representing the western, Soviet and neutral camps.

His interruptions came during a speech by British Prime Minister Harold Macmillan, who expressed total confidence in Mr Hammarskjöld's "energy, resourcefulness and above all integrity".

While most of the Assembly applauded his sentiments, Mr Khrushchev pounded the table with both fists.

When Mr Macmillan referred to the recent four-power summit in Paris, which was called off after a US spy plane was shot down over the Soviet Union, Mr Khrushchev began shouting in Russian and waving his forefinger.

His words were translated as: "Don't send U2s. You were supporting aggression."

Another more violent interruption came when Mr Macmillan moved on to the subject of inspection and control of disarmament.

The prime minister said he understood Soviet concerns that inspection and control of arms could be a cover for espionage.

At this point, Mr Khrushchev stood up and waved his hand and shouted: "You accept my disarmament proposals and I'll accept any controls."

During last Friday's session of the General Assembly, Mr Khrushchev accused the UN of siding with the so-called colonial powers.

He is angry at the UN's refusal to use military force in newly independent Congo, which appears to be on the brink of civil war. Instead, a UN peacekeeping force has been deployed with orders not to intervene to influence the outcome of the conflict.

Courtesy BBC News

IN CONTEXT

On 3 October, Nikita Khrushchev demanded the resignation of Dag Hammarskjöld, accusing him of acting on behalf of the colonial powers and therefore not fit to represent all nations of the UN.

A week later Mr Khrushchev caused uproar when he famously used his shoe to bang on the desk after the Philippine delegate accused the USSR of imperialism in Eastern Europe.

The UN Secretary General was later killed during a visit to Congo in September 1961.

He was on his way by plane to negotiate a peaceful settlement between Congo and Katanga when the aircraft exploded.

There are various theories as to why the plane crashed and sabotage has still not been ruled out. He was posthumously awarded the Nobel peace prize in 1961.

YOUR STARS



ARIES

Mar. 21-Apr. 19

You may end up being blamed if anything goes wrong. Use your creative flair. If you are not already, think about going into business for yourself.



TAURUS

Apr. 20-May. 20

You might just as well let others do their own thing. You may have ignored or neglected your mate lately. Relationships will become stronger.



GEMINI

May. 21-Jun. 21

Make those phone calls and pay your bills. Use your inventiveness to find solutions. Don't spend more than is necessary on travel or friends.



CANCER

Jun. 22-Jul. 22

Go out with friends. Your lover probably won't put up with your behavior. You will profit from home improvement projects and real estate deals.



LEO

Jul. 23-Aug. 22

The knowledge you have will enhance your reputation. Romance will develop through work. You can meet potential new mates, but make sure that they aren't already committed to someone else.



VIRGO

Aug. 23-Sep. 22

Join a choir or a drama club. You may be considering moving to larger quarters. Take a break; you can finally mend any disputes on the home front. You should put your efforts into creative projects.



LIBRA

Sep. 23-Oct. 22

You will get bored quickly, so make sure that you have scheduled enough activity to hold your interest. Someone you least expect may not have your best interests at heart.



SCORPIO

Oct. 23-Nov. 21

You should be traveling to that exotic destination you've been dreaming about. Make residential changes that will lift your spirits. Travel will also entice you.



SAGITTARIUS

Nov. 22-Dec. 21

Your creative ideas will be put to good use if you dig in and do things around the house that will make your family happy. Your emotional partner will push all the right buttons today.



CAPRICORN

Dec. 22-Jan. 19

Opportunities for romance will develop through group endeavors; however, the association isn't likely to last. If you have to deal with large institutions, be careful not to make waves.



AQUARIUS

Jan. 20-Feb. 18

Lay your cards on the table regarding your personal direction. Be cautious when dealing with coworkers. You can make excellent investments if you are in the right place at the right time.



PISCES

Feb. 19-Mar. 20

Make plans to mix business with pleasure. Dinner with clients or business associates should be successful. This will not be the day to lend money to friends or family.

The Born Loser by Chip Sansom



SUDOKU

EASY

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

EASY+

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

MEDIUM

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

HARD

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

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- Ringing instrument; 5- Membership fees; 9- Hydrox rival; 13- Slippery as ____; 15- "____ quam videri" (North Carolina's motto); 16- Dissolve; 17- Patti LuPone role; 18- For fear that; 19- Touch on; 20- Handwoven Scandinavian rug; 21- Jury member; 23- Texas border city; 25- Attention-getting sound; 26- Origin; 27- Jock; 30- ____ Tiki; 31- Neighborhoods; 32- Affecting the whole body; 37- Last name in spydom; 38- Bullwinkle, e.g.; 40- Starchy staple; 41- Iberian peninsula inhabitant; 43- Biblical king; 44- Turkish title; 45- Effeminate; 47- Pertaining to the skin; 50- Fly catcher; 51- Hungarian sheep dog; 52- Junk e-mail; 53- Reveal, in verse; 56- Ireland; 57- Billy ____ had a hit song with "White Wedding"; 59- Was Hamlet; 61- Quod ____ demonstrandum; 62- Pianist Peter; 63- Clangorous; 64- Gives a bad review; 65- Auction site; 66- Sgts., e.g.;

DOWN 1- Boxer Max; 2- Covetousness; 3- Sci-fi princess; 4- Tennis do-over; 5- Erase; 6- Manipulator; 7- Pothook shape; 8- Free; 9- Astrologer Sydney; 10- Renaissance fiddle; 11- Evade; 12- Director Preminger; 14- Passes by degrees; 22- Ballpark fig.; 24- Em, e.g.; 25- Evident; 26- The ____ the limit; 27- Contented sighs; 28- Pitfall; 29- Jealous wife of myth; 32- Turf; 33- Set up; 34- Where to wallow; 35- Clickable image; 36- Sign over; 38- Periodical publication; 39- Like some history; 42- Alpo alternative; 43- Hired killer; 45- Hire; 46- Actress Zadora; 47- Indian millet; 48- Perrier rival; 49- Carries on; 51- Retain; 52- Marsh bird; 53- Auricular; 54- Baja bread; 55- Ice cream brand; 58- Ball girl; 60- Chile ____ carne;



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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properties
available!

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& SEIZE THIS OPPORTUNITY!

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FOR RENT

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MANHATTAN 3 BEDS	HKD17,500
CHUN LEONG 1 BED	HKD8,200
BUCKINGHAM 2 BEDS	HKD13,900
HELLENE G. 3 BEDS	HKD12,500
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	HKD10,000

FOR SALE

JADE GARDEN 4 BEDS	HKD15,380,000
NOVA TAIPA 4 BEDS	HKD11,475,000
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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FINANCE

BANK OF ENGLAND TO BUY UK BONDS TO AVERT FINANCIAL RISK

DANICA KIRKA & JILL LAWLESS, LONDON

The Bank of England said yesterday that it will launch a temporary government bond-buying program to stave off "material risk to U.K. financial stability" after unfunded government tax cuts spooked markets and sent the British pound tumbling.

The emergency intervention means the central bank will buy government bonds in an effort to stabilize the market and drive down the soaring cost of government borrowing.

The bank said in a statement that it is "monitoring developments in financial markets very closely in light of the significant repricing of U.K. and global financial assets" — especially long-dated U.K. government debt.

As a result, it said "the bank will carry out temporary purchases of long-dated U.K. government bonds from 28 September. The purpose of these purchases will be to restore orderly market conditions."



The move came after the International Monetary Fund urged Britain's Conservative government to "reevaluate" unfunded tax cuts that it says may fuel inflation and are likely to increase economic inequality.

After the rare IMF warning to a Group of Seven economy, the value of the pound sagged yesterday, trading at under \$1.07. The central bank intervention did not boost it.

The British government said

it was underwriting the central bank's emergency bond purchases, which are due to last for two weeks.

"To enable the Bank to conduct this financial stability intervention, this operation has been fully indemnified by HM Treasury," it said in a statement.

Treasury chief Kwasi Kwarteng also was meeting with executives from investment banks as the new government seeks to soothe markets alarmed by its decision to slash taxes and increase borrowing.

The government of Prime Minister Liz Truss on Friday unveiled a 45 billion-pound (\$48 billion) package of tax cuts in an effort to spur economic growth. But the plan wasn't accompanied by spending cuts, or even an independent cost estimate, raising concerns that it would swell government debt and add to inflation that is already running at close to a 40-year high of 9.9%.

"Given elevated inflation pressures in many countries, inclu-

ding the U.K., we do not recommend large and untargeted fiscal packages at this juncture, as it is important that fiscal policy does not work at cross purposes to monetary policy," the IMF said in a statement. "Furthermore, the nature of the U.K. measures will likely increase inequality."

The British pound fell to a record low against the U.S. dollar Monday, to \$1.0373, amid investor concern about the government's policies, which also include borrowing billions to help shield homes and businesses from soaring energy prices.

The Bank of England sought to stabilize markets, saying Monday that it was prepared to raise interest rates "as much as needed" to rein in inflation. But the bank's next scheduled meeting is not until November, and the lack of immediate action did little to bolster the pound.

The British currency is still down 4% since Friday, and the pound has fallen 20% against the dollar in the past year.

The turmoil is already having real-world effects, with British mortgage lenders pulling hundreds of offers from the market amid expectations the Bank of England will sharply boost interest rates to offset the inflationary impact of the pound's recent slide. **MDT/AP**

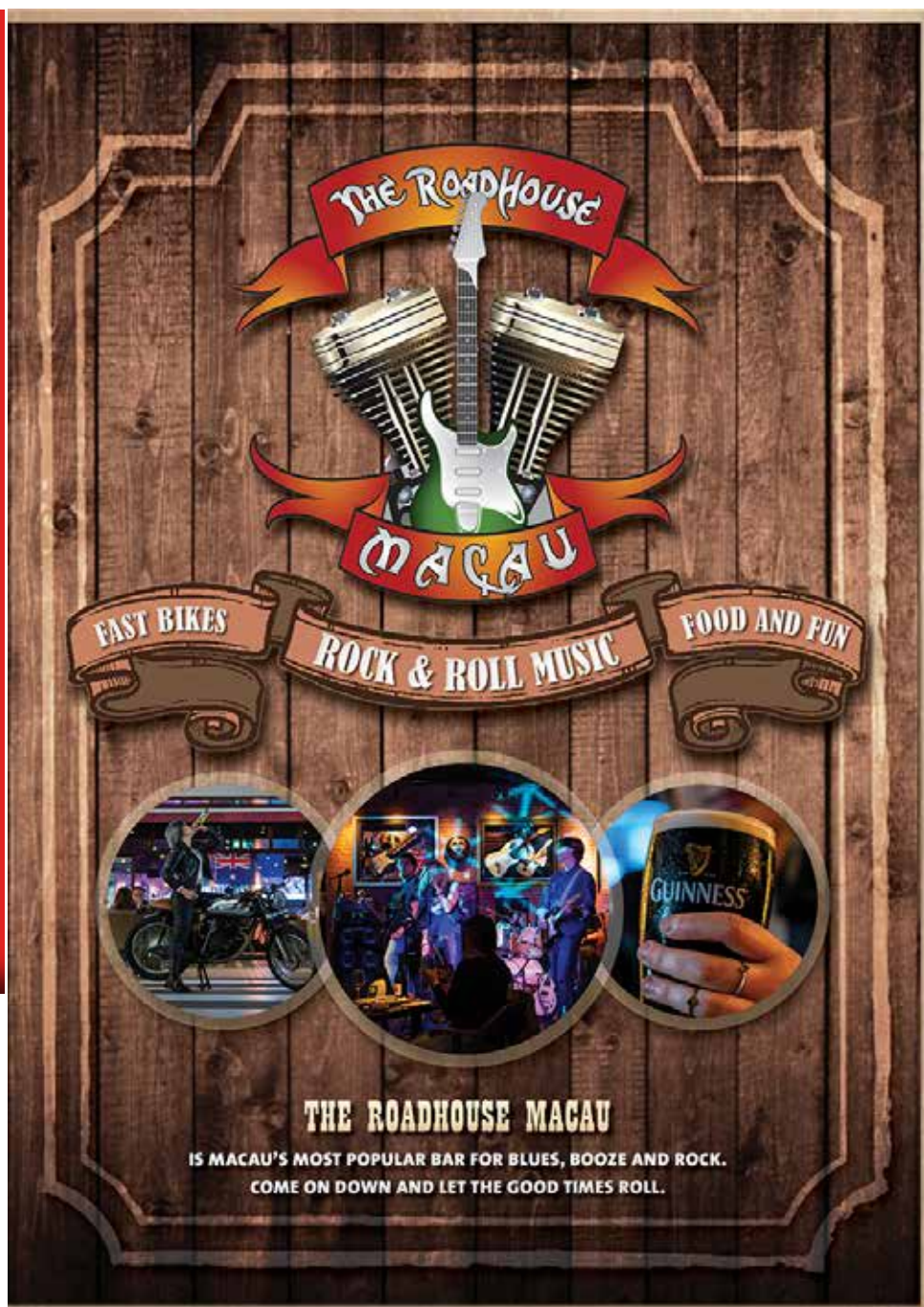
AD



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FOOTBALL | NATIONS LEAGUE

Spain tops Portugal late to reach Final Four

TALES AZZONI, MADRID

PORTUGAL 0, SPAIN 1

LUIS Enrique was ready for the criticism to start pouring out back home. He knew another setback so close to the World Cup would raise questions about his team and his work.

Then a late goal changed it all, and it was all joy and praise for La Roja heading into soccer's showcase event.

Spain scored an 88th-minute goal to end its winless streak against Portugal yesterday [Macau time] and advance in the Nations League to complete the Final Four lineup.

"The questions in soccer will always be a consequence of the results," Spain coach Luis Enrique said. "If we had lost in the 85th, then it would be said that everything was a disaster. Now it's all different."

The late goal by Álvaro Morata secured a 1-0 victory that allowed Spain to overtake Portugal in Group A2 and join Croatia, Italy and the Netherlands in the finals to be played in June next year in the Netherlands.

"It's wonderful to be back in the Final Four," Luis Enrique said. "Victory is the best antidote for any depression or sadness."

Portugal had a late chance to earn the point it needed but Cristiano Ronaldo missed from close range to see his scoreless streak with the national team reach three matches.

Spain needed a victory to return to the Final Four after losing last year's final to France. Portugal won the competition's inaugural edition at home in 2019 but hasn't made it past the group stage since then.



Spain's Alvaro Morata celebrates after scoring his side's sole goal

Spain struggled to create chances until Dani Carvajal found Nico Williams inside the area and the young Athletic Bilbao forward headed the ball back across the box for an easy strike by Morata into the open net.

"Nico, in only his second game with the national team, was key after the pass from Carvajal, and I just had to push the ball into the goal," Morata said. "We fought until the end."

Spain had been in control of the group until losing 2-1 to Swit-

zerland at home last weekend, while Portugal took over first place with a 4-0 win over the Czech Republic.

Spain hadn't been able to win in Portugal in nearly two decades, since a friendly in 2003. It got its first competitive away victory against Portugal since a 2-1 World Cup qualifying triumph in 1934.

The Iberian neighbors had drawn their last four matches including friendlies. Spain's last triumph against Portugal had come in a penalty shootout in the

semifinals of the 2012 European Championship.

Spain also needed a last-day victory to make it to the Final Four last year, shocking Germany 6-0 at home.

Luis Enrique made seven changes to the starting lineup after the home loss to Switzerland, with Barcelona players Sergio Busquets, Gavi Páez and Pedri González among those relegated to the bench.

Switzerland, coming off consecutive victories over Portugal and

Spain, defeated the Czech Republic 2-1 at home to avoid relegation to League B.

LEAGUE B

Norway needed a home draw against Serbia to win its group, but lost 2-0 with Aleksandar Mitrović outdoing Erling Haaland. Mitrović scored in the second half after Dusan Vlahović had opened the scoring before halftime.

Sweden, coming off four straight losses, was demoted after being held to a 1-1 draw at home against Slovenia.

Scotland won its group by holding Ukraine to a 0-0 draw, while Ireland stayed in the second tier with a 3-2 win over Armenia.

FRIENDLIES

Brazil routed Tunisia 5-1 in Paris with Raphinha scoring twice and Neymar, Pedro and Richarlison adding a goal each.

A banana was thrown toward the Brazilian players celebrating Richarlison's goal in the first half at the Parc des Princes.

The Brazilian soccer federation condemned the incident and reinforced its stance to "fight against racism."

Brazil was using the match to make a statement against racism, with the players posing before kickoff in front of a sign that said "Without our black players, we wouldn't have stars on our shirt" — a reference to the five stars above the team crest that represents its five World Cup titles.

Elsewhere, Ecuador drew Japan 0-0 in Germany, while Uruguay beat Canada 2-0 in Slovakia with Darwin Núñez scoring one of the goals. Saudi Arabia and the United States drew 0-0 in Spain. **MDT/AP**

RUGBY

English club Worcester suspended amid financial issues

ENGLISH Premiership Rugby club Worcester Warriors were suspended from all competitions this week after plunging into financial turmoil amid debts totaling more than 25 million pounds (\$26.7 million).

The English Rugby Football Union gave Worcester a deadline to show proof of insurance cover and funding for the club's monthly payroll. The RFU also wanted evidence of a "cre-

dible plan to take the club forward."

The crisis-hit Warriors, whose men's team includes Scotland winger Duhan van der Merwe and England center Ollie Lawrence, had not responded to those requests by 5 p.m. local time. That prompted the RFU to suspend Worcester's men's and women's teams with immediate effect.

It was later confirmed by the government that Worcester was placed in

administration — a form of bankruptcy protection — "to give the club the best possible chance of survival, and to protect a significant taxpayer investment."

"We met with players and staff last week to explain why this action would be necessary," RFU chief executive Bill Sweeney said, "and regrettably without assurances in place, we have had to take this action to protect everyone's best interests."

Part of the debt is an unpaid tax of at least 6 million pounds (\$6.4 million) amid growing anger toward owners Colin Goldring and Jason Whittingham, who have been accused of asset-stripping the club from central England whose men's team has been in the top-flight since 2015.

Worcester's Sixways Stadium is closed. Club staff were given until Monday afternoon to collect belongings, with no indication when

or if it will reopen.

Premiership Rugby confirmed Worcester's league game at Gloucester on Saturday will not take place.

Worcester has played three top-flight league games, winning one and losing the other two.

Its first home game of the season, against Exeter last Sunday, was given the green light to go ahead only two days earlier because volunteers offered to cover stewarding and medical re-

quirements.

For a domestic cup fixture against Gloucester on Wednesday, Worcester resorted to calling up a player who retired at the end of last season and runs a pizza shop, and its 41-year-old academy coach who last played a competitive match in 2013.

Because the Warriors have no public liability insurance, Worcester's squad face training off-site when the players eventually reconvene. **MDT/AP**

OPINION

China Daily
Editorial, China Daily

MEASURES CAN SPUR MOMENTUM OF FOREIGN TRADE

In spite of all the clamor about boosting domestic consumption as the main driver of growth, and the endeavors to that effect, foreign trade, export-oriented processing in particular, remains a crucial, indispensable cornerstone of China's economy.

With the novel coronavirus still continuing to disrupt normal life and production at home, stimulating consumption remains difficult.

Supporting the foreign trade sector, therefore, is of crucial importance. The Ministry of Commerce's new round of support for the foreign trade sector, announced on Tuesday, is an opportune move in the right direction. If soundly implemented the measures will have a tremendous impact on the well-being of numerous foreign trade businesses and their employees, and the broader economy.

For all the negative variables affecting the import and export businesses over the past few years, most noticeably pandemic-related disruptions at home and abroad, geopolitical shocks to global industry and supply chains, and inflation-induced withering demand, Chinese foreign trade has appeared to be a rare bright spot in the generally bleak global economic landscape. The decent 10.1 percent growth in imports and exports the country witnessed in the first eight months of 2022 has reinforced belief in the Chinese economy's "strong resilience and vitality".

Optimism, however, must be tempered as there are multiple signs indicating that there may be even tougher times ahead for the world economy going forward, which will inevitably dampen China's foreign trade. International foreign trade monitors have issued clear warnings about a decline in global demand for Chinese goods. The cost of shipping goods from China has reportedly dropped to the lowest level in more than two years, as a result of shrinking demand.

While geopolitical factors such as the United States' efforts to oust China from global supply chains remain largely negligible, the confluence of various headwinds devastating developed and developing economies alike, including but not limited to widespread inflation, currency policies and the shocks from the ongoing conflict between Russia and Ukraine, will not leave China unscathed.

The latest initiative of the Ministry of Commerce seeks to spur foreign trade through reducing the obstacles to foreign trade caused by the epidemic restrictions, facilitating online transactions, and improving customs and ports services.

While bureaucratic red tape has been a longstanding hurdle for foreign trade businesses, the chokepoints it has cultivated over decades have become even more of a hindrance in such a difficult time.

The new package of measures unveiled shows awareness of the domestic factors troubling foreign businesses, and hopefully, all the policies prescribed will be carried out faithfully so they can bear the intended fruit. Whether they can deliver the promised dividends, however, hinges on the removal of the obstacles local authorities have erected in the name of epidemic prevention and control.

EU VOWS TO ACT IF ENERGY LINES HIT AS FIRMS RAMP UP SECURITY

The European Union suspects that damage to two underwater natural gas pipelines was sabotage and is warning of retaliation for any attack on Europe's energy networks, a senior official said yesterday, as energy companies began ramping up security.

The episode underscored the vulnerability of Europe's energy infrastructure and further heightened tensions in the continent.

Seismologists reported that explosions rattled the Baltic Sea before unusual leaks were discovered Tuesday on two underwater natural gas pipelines running from Russia to Germany. The incidents came

as the EU struggles to keep a lid on soaring gas and electricity prices.

"All available information indicates those leaks are the result of a deliberate act," EU foreign policy chief Josep Borrell said in a statement on behalf of the bloc's 27 members.

Some European leaders and experts pointed to possible sabotage given the energy standoff with Russia provoked by the war in Ukraine. The three leaks were reported on the Nord Stream 1 and 2 pipelines, which are filled with natural gas but aren't delivering the fuel to Europe.



AUSTRALIA DEMANDS OPTUS PAY FOR NEW CUSTOMER IDS AFTER BREACH

ROD MCGUIRK,
CANBERRA

AUSTRALIA'S federal and state governments yesterday called for Optus to pay for replacing identification documents including passports and driver's licenses to avoid identity fraud after 9.8 million of the telecommunications company's customers had personal data stolen by computer hackers.

The Australian government has blamed lax cybersecurity at Optus for last week's unprecedented breach of current and former customers' personal information.

Most at risk of identity theft are the 2.8 million customers who had driver's license and passport numbers stolen.

Prime Minister Anthony Albanese rejected opposition lawmakers' calls for the government to waive the costs of replacing compromised Optus customers' passports.

"We believe that Optus should pay, not taxpayers," Albanese told Parliament.

Foreign Minister Penny Wong wrote to Optus CEO Kelly Bayer Rosmarin yesterday requesting her "earliest confirmation" that the Sydney-based company would pay for vulnerable customers' passports.

"There is no justification for these Australians — or for taxpayers more broadly on their behalf — to bear the cost of obtaining a new passport," Wong wrote.

Optus did not immediately

reply to a request for comment.

Different states have had varying responses to requests for driver's license replacements — Queensland and South Australia have announced free replacements for affected customers while New South Wales will charge Optus customers for replacement licenses. But the state government has said it expects Optus will offer reimbursements within days. Victoria state has also asked Optus to pay for new licenses, but continues to charge the company's customers.

Optus this week offered its "most affected" customers free credit monitoring for a year.

The federal government only became aware that health care client identification numbers were among the stolen data on Tuesday morning, when 10,000 customers' records were dumped on the dark web as part of an extortion attempt by the hacker who demanded Optus pay a \$1 million ransom. The so-called Medicare numbers are accepted as proof of identity, like passports and driver's licenses.

Health Minister Mark Butler said his government had not yet decided whether Optus customers required new Medicare cards.

"We're very concerned ... about the loss of this data and working very hard to deal with the consequences of that," Butler told Australian Broadcas-

ting Corp.

"But we're particularly concerned that we were not notified earlier and consumers were not notified earlier about the breach of the Medicare data as well," he added. Optus discovered the breach Sept. 21.

The hacker, who uses the online name Optusdata, withdrew a ransom demand Tuesday in an online post that claimed the stolen data had been destroyed.

Optusdata suggested the extortion attempt had attracted too much attention, said no ransom had been paid and apologized to Optus as well as its customers.

Former Special Adviser to the Prime Minister on Cybersecurity, Alastair MacGibbon, described that scenario as "too good to be true."

MacGibbon, who is now a cybersecurity consultant, suspected the ransom had been paid or the data had been sold.

Another likely scenario was that the hacker was lying low for the moment while planning a different way to monetize the data, MacGibbon said.

"I've spent about 30 years dealing with criminals. I don't trust them," MacGibbon said.

"So I'd like to think that this criminal has suddenly found goodness and light and decided the heat was too much and I'm deleting all of the 10 million details. I'm a bit more suspicious than that," MacGibbon added. MDT/AP

THE
BUZZ

Russia is poised to formally annex areas of Ukraine where it has military control after referendums there reportedly endorsed Moscow's rule. But the ballots were widely discredited and earned the Kremlin no relief yesterday from international pressure over its assault on its neighbor.



USA President Joe Biden is set to host Pacific Island leaders for a two-day summit as the U.S. looks to counter China's military and economic influence in the region. Pacific Island leaders, meanwhile, see an even more pressing concern: climate change. Today [Macau time], Secretary of State Antony Blinken planned to kick off the summit with a luncheon for the Pacific Island leaders and other senior officials from the region. U.S. climate envoy John Kerry will hold a climate roundtable with the leaders.



USA Hurricane Ian rapidly intensified off Florida's southwest coast yesterday, gaining top winds of 155 mph, just shy of the most dangerous Category 5 status. Damaging winds and rain lashed the state's heavily populated Gulf Coast, with the Naples to Sarasota region at "highest risk" of a devastating storm surge. U.S. Air Force hurricane hunters confirmed Ian gained strength over warm Gulf of Mexico water after battering Cuba, bringing down the country's electricity grid and leaving the entire island without power.

Italy Swept away by Italian elections that are expected to see Giorgia Meloni soon form the nation's first far-right-led government since World War II were veterans of successful battles for civil rights, including divorce and abortion, as well as lawmakers still struggling for freedoms like same-sex marriage. Worried that the conservative tide of political sentiment might erode hard-won civil rights, Italy's women are mobilizing, organizing rallies in a dozen cities for today [Macau time] to raise their voices in defense of abortion rights.