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AP PHOTO



Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida donated religious offerings yesterday to a Tokyo shrine viewed by Chinese and Koreans as a symbol of Japanese wartime militarism, though he did not visit it in person. Kishida donated Shinto “masakaki” ornaments for Yasukuni Shrine’s biennial festival, as he has done since becoming prime minister last year.

Philippines Seven soldiers were killed when a tire on their truck burst in rainy weather, causing the vehicle to flip over and smash into a parked cement mixer in a central Philippine province, police said. Seven other soldiers were injured in the accident Sunday night in the coastal town of Uson in Masbate province while they were on their way back to their detachment after receiving food and other supplies at an army camp, police said. Some of the soldiers were also returning from an intelligence-gathering mission.

Pakistan More than half of the flood victims in Pakistan’s worst-hit Sindh province have returned to their homes over the past three weeks as the waters there gradually receded, officials said yesterday. The announcement came as Prime Minister Shahbaz Sharif visited the district of Jaccobabad in Sindh, from where he traveled to the city of Sohbatput in another flood-stricken province, Baluchistan, his office said.

Turkey and Greece yesterday exchanged more mutual recrimination over 92 migrants who were found stripped naked by Greek authorities at the two countries’ joint border, a day after the United Nations called for an investigation into the incident. Greek migration minister Notis Mitarachi on Saturday tweeted a photo of the naked migrants, some with bodily harm, accusing Turkey of pushing them into Greece and stripping them naked before doing so. The claim prompted the communications director of Turkey’s president, to accuse Greece of engaging in “fake news.”

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DOOR'S OPEN

China to further encourage foreign investment, push globalization, says CPC’s reform commission head Zhao Chenxin ▲ P6-7



AP PHOTO

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GRAND PRIX

FEW INTERNATIONAL RIDERS FOR GP SHOULD FORCE REGULATION CHANGE

RENATO MARQUES

THE low number of international riders interested in taking part in the 54th Macau Motorcycle Grand Prix, which returns to the Guia circuit this year after a two-year hiatus, should force changes to the preconditions allowing the race to take place.

According to Pun Weng Kun, president of the Sports Bureau and coordinator of the Macau Grand Prix Organizing Committee (MGPOC), there are only 10 entries for the reinstated motorcycle race this year, which would have contravened the Sporting Regulations when the race was last held in 2019.

At that time, regulation 12, paragraph 3 stated that "A minimum of 22 entries must be received for the race to run."

Changes to the eligibility and selection criteria of the riders for the GP might also be introduced, considering that as a consequence of the Covid pandemic, many of the events which theoretically determine selection and eligibility for the local race have been canceled or postponed.

Still, according to both Pun and Chong Coc Veng, coordinator of the MGPOC, among the foreign entries are riders from the UK, Portugal, Germany, Spain, Austria, Belgium, Switzerland, Finland, Czech Republic, and the Netherlands.

Sources among the inner circles of motorcycle racing hinted to the Times that the grid this year should include some familiar names in Guia, such as the alrea-

RENATO MARQUES



dy-confirmed Portuguese rider André Pires, Spanish Raul Torras, and German Didier Grams. They may also be joined by some new faces coming from the International Road Racing Championship (IRRC) which will likely include this year's superbike category champion Vincent Lonbois from Belgium, second runner up Lukas Maurer from Switzerland as well as SuperSport category winner and a regular face at Macau GP, the Czech Marek Cerveny.

Other names which are rumored to be among the sport's insiders include the Finn, Erno Kostamo who qualified for the race back in 2019 in the seventh position and finished ninth.

Questioned on the sidelines of the press conference announcing the 69th Macau Grand Prix, Pun confirmed that all foreign racers entering Macau to participate in the GP will have to undergo qua-

rantine under the same conditions as any other arrival from the same point of origin.

THE FOUR-DAY EVENT RETURNS THIS YEAR

With the final inclusion of the motorcycle race on the calendar of the Macau GP this year, the number of racing categories in the program has been raised to seven (one more than in 2020 and 2021). With this inclusion, the program is also returning to its original format, spanning over four days from Thursday (November 17) to Sunday (November 20).

In his speech, Pun noted that the government in general and the organizers in particular, expect that with these developments, the GP can attract a high number of visitors, and thus boost the local economy in several sectors.

"It is expected that the event can completely fulfill its role of

promoting Macau and tourism so that visitors can experience the dynamic image of our city as a capital of events, while promoting social and economic benefits

brought by the Grand Prix's wider impact [on the community]."

GAMING CONCESSIONAIRES CONTINUE TO SPONSOR THE GP

Without any notable new events in the program, apart from the return of the motorcycle race, the GP this year still consists of the main events: the Formula 4, the Macau GT Cup (GT3), and the Guia Race for touring cars (TCR). Each of these headliners will be respectively sponsored by Sands China, Galaxy Entertainment Group and Wynn Macau.

As title sponsors, the three will also contribute to a total budget of MOP180 million with MOP6.5 million each (MOP19.5 million).

The secondary races, including the Macau Touring Car Cup, the Greater Bay Area GT Cup, and the Macau Roadsport Challenge will be sponsored respectively by MGM Macau, Melco Resorts & Entertainment, and SJM. For the second-tier races, each of the title sponsors will contribute with a sponsorship amount of MOP3 million (MOP9 million in total).

In total, the amount of the sponsorship will reach MOP28.5 million – less than 16% of the event's total budget.

TCR ASIA TO RUN AS GUIA RACE

ONE of the most emblematic events of the local Grand Prix each year is the Guia Race of Macau for touring cars.

The race has been highlighted many times in the past as the Grand Finale of the worldwide touring car championships such as the World Touring Car Cup (WTCC), subsequently renamed WTCR. This year it will see its status significantly downgraded, running under the flag of the TCR Asia championship. Less international than other competitions, the TCR Asia has been running this year exclusively in

Chinese territory, with the championship consisting of six rounds. Macau will come as the fifth of these rounds before the season concludes in Shanghai on the first weekend of December. A special point of attraction could be the possible return of local racer Rodolfo Ávila, who currently sits in the fifth position of the championship with 37 points after just two events. Upcoming rounds are scheduled to take place on November 1 and 5, respectively at Zhuzhou (Hunan) and Shaoxing (Zhejiang).

WEATHER

Low chance of T8 today

TYPHOON Signal No. 3 was hoisted yesterday afternoon, with a "relatively low" chance of Signal No. 8 being issued today.

Typhoon Nesat, located over the northern part of the South China Sea, con-

tinues to move westward, but it will gradually turn southwest, crossing the northern part of the South China Sea, and will maintain a distance of about 400km south of Macau, according to the

Meteorological and Geophysics Bureau (SMG).

According to the weather bureau, the northeast monsoon will further intensify and move southward tonight, and Nesat will be close to Macau un-

til this morning.

"As it is not during high tide, and the chance of Nesat directly affecting Macau is low, significant flooding due to storm surges is unlikely in the inner harbor area," the bureau said.

The SMG also expects the temperature to gradually decrease, with the expected minimum temperature to fall to 17 degrees Celsius tomorrow. LV



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AL PRE-AGENDA

Lawmaker calls for more flexible property rental evaluation

ANTHONY LAM

BETTER modes of rental evaluation for commercial spaces at government housing estates will help improve the quality of living in these areas, lawmaker Ron Lam said at yesterday's pre-agenda speech at parliament.

Referring to the government's fast-paced development at the New Urban Zone A, Lam noted that there would only be three land plots designated for commercial use in the Zone.

In addition, he said that based on government plans released to date, commercial activities would likely occur in or rely on the underground shopping mall at the Light Rapid Transit stations and ground-level shops at housing estates.

However, he explained that the law governing rental evaluation for commercial spaces at government housing projects – Decree-Law No 28/92/M – had been in effect for over three decades. Pursuant to this law, such rentals are evaluated accounting for factors such as inflation.

Lam highlighted that this had led to rental hikes despite the lack of customers due to the low occupancy rate in certain government housing estates, increasing the financial burdens on these operators.

He cited the Ilha Verde Square Social Housing Estate as an example of the mechanism's inflexibility. Nearly 9,000 people reside in the estate, he said, but only two supermarkets – one large and one small – as well as a cafeteria, a

MACAU PHOTO AGENCY



convenience store and a pharmacy operate there. Many residents were required to travel to the Fai Chi Kei district to purchase their daily necessities.

He added that many shops were left vacant at the Seac Pai Van Government Housing District, warning the government that the same evaluation mechanism, if used on Zone A, was likely to result in the same situation.

Moreover, he said that although the government has announced the construction of facilities such as wet markets and food stalls within Zone A, no consultation has been conducted to date. This has led to residents in Macau worrying that it will be another Seac Pai Van, where there is only one major supermarket and a limited number of alternatives.

Therefore, he suggested the government abide by the Public Market Management System and facilitate beneficial competition between wet markets and supermarkets.

Lawmaker Che Sai Wang expressed his concerns for elderly people living alone. Last month, the city saw two elderly siblings living together pass away, due to an apparent lack of carers and support.

Although the Social Welfare Bureau (IAS) explained that the two siblings did not apply for any special social welfare, the lawmaker thinks that similar older adults may have other welfare or service needs. He added that incidents such as the passing of the two siblings proves that the public welfare system has un-

dressed flaws.

As such, the lawmaker suggests that the government proactively improve the reach of the public welfare system and introduce measures to identify the "invisible elderly" – those with few friends and limited interactions with the public. For example, he said that the public medical system – which has been operating near or even over capacity – should enquire with elderly service seekers about their residential status and subsequently provide them with information.

Mechanisms for easy communication should also be established to focus on older adults identified as being at risk. Che also called on the government to prepare short, medium, and long-term care plans for such people.

INDUSTRIAL SECTOR RECORDS RISE IN REVENUES

Receipts and Expenditure of establishments engaged in industrial related activities amounted to MOP10.39 billion and MOP7.54 billion respectively in 2021, up by 11.8% and 7.8% year-on-year. Data from the Statistics and Census Service (DSEC) shows that Gross Surplus grew by 24.0% year-on-year to MOP2.85 billion; Gross Value Added that measures the sectoral contribution to the economy went up by 6.8% to MOP4.93 billion. Gross Fixed Capital Formation also rose by 43.1% to MOP1.62 billion. However, major indicators showed decreases when compared to the pre-pandemic levels in 2019; among which, Receipts and Expenditure fell by 9.8% and 11.6% respectively, while Gross Surplus and Gross Value Added reduced by 4.6% and 7.1%.

UM RESEARCH TEAM DEVELOPS MAGNETISED E-SKIN

A research team at the University of Macau (UM) has designed a self-powered and multifunctional electronic skin (e-skin) that can not only mimic human skin in terms of tactile perception, but is also capable of quantitative recognition of 3D surface information. Led by Zhou Bingpu, an associate professor at the UM's Institute of Applied Physics and Materials Engineering (IAPME), the research results have been published in *Advanced Functional Materials*, a leading international journal in the field. With its high-capacity communication capability, the e-skin is expected to be applied in various scenarios, such as real-time health monitoring, recognition and reconstruction of micro-scaled topography, and underwater communication.

EMPLOYMENT

Gov't denies casinos are preparing to cut staff

THE government has refuted speculation that casino operators are preparing to cut staff once they obtain the renewed 10-year licenses from the government before the end of the year.

The rumor has circulated amid the ongoing tender process for the city's gaming concessions which are still under deliberation.

According to the Gaming Inspection and Coordination Bureau (DICJ), the government is committed to

protecting the rights of the gaming workers as well as stabilizing the job market.

The number of workers in the gaming sector has continued to decline, with the number of full-time employees plunging to 53,592 in the second quarter of the year.

The latest figures provided by the Statistics and Census Service (DSEC) show that the number of staff is down 2,176 year-on-year.

Of all gaming em-

ployees, dealers numbered 24,093, a drop of 550 year-on-year.

The gaming sector has long been suffering from a slump in revenue, as casinos lose millions of dollars each day.

Last week, a note issued by JP Morgan estimated that the sector has lost some USD1.5 billion in the third quarter of this year with the downturn in tourist arrivals and gaming revenues, as the city adheres to a zero-Covid policy. LV

MDT ARCHIVE





PLENARY

CIVIL SERVICE LAW UNDER REVIEW BY PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEE

ANTHONY LAM

THE bill to review the civil servant law was passed yesterday at its first reading in parliament with two abstention votes, but will nevertheless later be discussed at the committee level prior to its second reading.

In his introductory speech on the law review, Secretary for Administration and Justice André Cheong pointed out that if passed, the bill would be helpful in lessening excessive authorization, a term used to describe the current situation in which any policy or directive needs authority from each level before implementation.

Another major need for the law review, the secretary stressed, is that the law review would provide legal grounds for assigning civil servants to work at the Guangdong-Macao In-depth Cooperation Zone in Hengqin. He has also made similar comments on previous occasions.

Elaborating on the improvements to the issue of excessive authorization, Cheong said that the provision of everyday power being transferred from the supervisory entity to recipients, such as heads of bureaus, is included in the bill.

This is crucial to facilitate daily administration, the secretary said

in response to several lawmakers' questions, given that certain day-to-day matters are not currently within the bureau heads' authority. For example, he highlighted, the proposal will allow bureau heads to authorize annual leave transfers due to personal reasons of the applicants.

The bill also proposes that civil servants be legally allowed to work outside of their regular workplaces "to avoid conditions such as gathering of crowds due to endemics or pandemics." In addition, personal records will also be treated as valid in digital form if the bill becomes law.

Currently, there are four types

of mobility methods in the public service: reassignment, requisition, dispatch and reallocation. The first three are applicable for permanent staff and contractors.

It is proposed that the four methods be merged into two, with reassignment and dispatch retained. Their applicability will also be generalized to all civil servants. A movement of staff can take place prior to the career structure or ladder of the concerned staff member exists in the recipient bureau.

Regulations on internal transfer are also clarified in the bill, which will allow transfers to occur between general and special ca-

reers – the two types of career trajectories in the public service. The aforementioned reassignment and dispatch mechanisms will be applicable to all civil servants after the passing of the bill.

The eligibility for temporary regular assignments – which usually concern division, department or bureau heads – was also suggested to be expanded to suit the development of Hengqin, which is legally co-administered by both Guangdong and Macau. Currently, Macau civil servants assigned to Hengqin are considered to be on business trips, a situation which Cheong described as unreasonable.

The bill contains a proposal that concerns many civil servants as well as lawmakers. It proposes that in the future, when a reassignment or an internal transfer is deemed necessary in reality by a concerned senior official, the opinions of relevant heads of bureaus and civil servants will not be binding.

On the contrary, the current mode is that if the relevant civil servant is not willing to accept the move, it will not happen.

Defending the proposal, Cheong suggests that if no change is realized in this area, internal staff movement or transfers will remain as difficult as they are now. In fact, the current system allows a civil servant to refuse a designation to division or department head, which is sometimes not in the government's interest.

Cheong also emphasized that the bill aims at altering the mindset that a civil servant is hired by a particular bureau. In contrast, they are hired by the government, which should have the right to redistribute them.

José Pereira Coutinho and ally Che Sai Wang abstained from voting on the bill due to the lack of consultation with local civil servant groups and the disrespect to civil servants' rights to refuse reassignment.

IN a parliamentary plenary yesterday, the Legislative Assembly (AL) passed its budget for the fiscal year of 2023. The budget amounted to MOP198,208,000, a reduction of MOP265,000 from the initial budget of 2022.

Compared with the current fiscal year, the parliament will spend less on operations as well as facilities and equipment next year, about MOP1.5 million and MOP740,000 respectively. A smaller sum will be spent on vendor products and services, as well as on construction projects and IT equipment.

More money will be assigned to workforce ex-

AL passes own budget for the coming year

penses, given that some of the existing staff will see promotions within the coming year. Subsidies and other regular expenses will be maintained at current levels.

Lawmakers Leong Sun Iok and Lei Leong Wong questioned how it would be ensured that parliamentary staff would receive overtime compensation as deserved. To this, Leong Soi U, secretary-general of the parliament's Administrative Council, provided assurance that the allotted sum should be sufficient. In the event

that the budgeted amounts were insufficient, a budget overhaul would not be required. Instead, sums from other areas could be adjusted to support extra sums.

The secretary-general also assured that the parliament's computer systems have either been updated or upgraded this year, so the reduced budget for IT equipment should not impact service quality.

Leong also disclosed that two members from the parliament's staff will retire in the coming year. **AL**



ANTHONY LAM

XX CPC NATIONAL CONGRESS

Ho Iat Seng to fully implement 'spirit of national congress report'

THE SAR government will lead sectors of the local community to "earnestly study, understand, and fully implement the spirit of the 20th CPC National Congress report," said Chief Executive Ho Iat Seng.

On Sunday, China opened the Communist Party of China (CPC) National Congress, the quinquennial party conference, in Beijing at the Great Hall of the People.

According to Ho, the report "scientifically outlined goals and tasks for the development of the CPC and the country" for the next five years and beyond.

"For a long time, the Central Government with President Xi Jinping at the core, has been far-sighted,



and had feelings of affection regarding Macau," said Ho, as cited in a statement issued by the Government Information Bureau.

He added that Beijing has introduced a number of policies and measures to benefit Macau, "supporting the MSAR in maintaining good momentum for long-term and stable development."

The Chief Executive said that the report at the 20th

CPC National Congress had mentioned that the 'One country, two systems' principle was a major initiative under socialism with Chinese characteristics and was the "best institutional arrangement for Hong Kong and Macau to maintain long-term prosperity and stability following their return to the motherland."

"These efforts set out a clear path for the long-term

implementation of the 'one country, two systems' principle with Macau characteristics, and boosted the confidence of the Macau public in the city's development," said Ho.

In the report, Xi Jinping said that his government would "support Hong Kong and Macau in growing their economies, improving their people's lives, and resolving deep-seated issues and problems in economic and social development, and promote long-term prosperity and stability in the two special administrative regions."

The weeklong meeting is expected to reappoint Xi as leader and reaffirm the party's commitment to his policies for the next five years. LV

GBA

PAYMENTS, AGREEMENTS MADE ONLINE TO INTEGRATE ZHUHAI-MACAU SOCIAL SECURITY

STAFF REPORTER

ELIGIBLE Macau residents and mainland people working in Greater Bay Area are now able to pay online for social security insurance and sign tripartite agreement issues as well as access consulting services on insurance payment and related policies at the Industrial & Commercial Bank of China (ICBC)'s branches in Macau.

"Cross-border integrated processing" of social security business involving Macau was agreed to earlier this week by the Zhuhai Municipal Taxation Bureau, Guangdong-Macao In-Depth Cooperation Zone Hengqin Taxation Bureau, ICBC (Macao), and multiple departments in Zhuhai and Macau.

Only last year, the provincial taxation authority

launched a WeChat mini program "Guangdong Tax Connect" for users to register for social security insurance and entrust a bank for payment. What's more, a V-Tax remote tax processing self-service outlet was set up at Guangdong-Macao Industrial & Commercial Service Center in Macau.

Cross-border processing saves the time and cost for Macau residents and mainland migrant workers and promotes further integration of Zhuhai and Macau in terms of livelihoods.

Currently, there are 70,000 Macau residents covered by basic medical insurance in Zhuhai, while 2,000 mainland migrant workers to Macau participate as flexible employees in social security insurance in the city.

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OPINION

China Daily

Editorial, China Daily

REPORT SETS COURSE FOR SOCIALIST PATH

The 20th National Congress of the Communist Party of China convened in Beijing on Sunday. In the report Xi Jinping delivered at the opening session, he objectively summarized the progress of the Party and the nation over the past five years and the past 10 years of the new era, and provided a guideline for their joint development in the foreseeable future.

In doing so, he ushered the country onto the next stage of its journey of rejuvenation, setting the country's sights firmly on the goal of building China into a great modern socialist country in all respects.

Over the past decade, under the leadership of the CPC Central Committee, with Xi at its core, the nation has stayed united and responded effectively to the momentous challenges it has faced.

Today, although the world has entered a new period of turbulence and change, the nation can forge ahead with confidence and determination knowing that it is on the right road and that under the leadership of the Party it can secure new successes.

The path and development philosophy that have enabled China to weather the storm of COVID-19 and resist external attempts to blackmail, contain, blockade and exert maximum pressure on the country are crystallized in Xi Jinping Thought on Socialism with Chinese Characteristics for a New Era.

Characterized by the awareness that all things are interrelated and a problem-oriented approach that always puts people's interests first, the Thought upholds fundamental principles while breaking new ground. It firmly safeguards the dignity and core interests of the country, while keeping it well-positioned to navigate its ongoing profound transformation.

While China's transformation contains elements that are common to the modernization processes of all nations, it has features that are unique to the Chinese context. But these endow it with global significance as it offers Chinese wisdom and solutions gained from the experience of exploration and practice.

China's modernization is a task of unparalleled difficulty and complexity, as it involves a huge population, 1.4 billion, a number that is larger than the combined population of all developed economies in the world today. It is a task that can only be realized by fostering a firmer sense of purpose, fortitude and self-belief in pursuing high-quality development.

That said, China will never yield to any external coercion, containment or bullying that aims to derail its development. Meanwhile, it will unswervingly expand its opening-up and contribute to the common development of less-developed countries to make the international order fairer.

It should be noted that, fundamentally different from Western political parties that represent special interests, the CPC has always dedicated itself to securing better lives for the Chinese people.

Despite vicissitudes, it always remains resolutely committed to the cause of peace and development for humanity. That explains the perseverance and determination it has demonstrated in contributing to world development and fighting against headwinds and side winds.

Xi calls on Chinese to pull together one mind to realize national rejuvenation

XINHUA REPORTERS, BEIJING

Xi Jinping yesterday called on all Chinese people to stay united as "a piece of hard steel" under the leadership of the Communist Party of China (CPC) and pull together with one mind to power the giant ship of national rejuvenation through the wind and waves to reach its destination.

Xi made the remarks when he joined a group discussion with delegates from South China's Guangxi Zhuang autonomous region who are attending the 20th CPC National Congress.

Xi said the 20th CPC National Congress further points out the direction for the development of the Party and the country's cause, and serves as a political declaration and program of action for the Party to unite Chinese people to uphold and develop socialism with Chinese

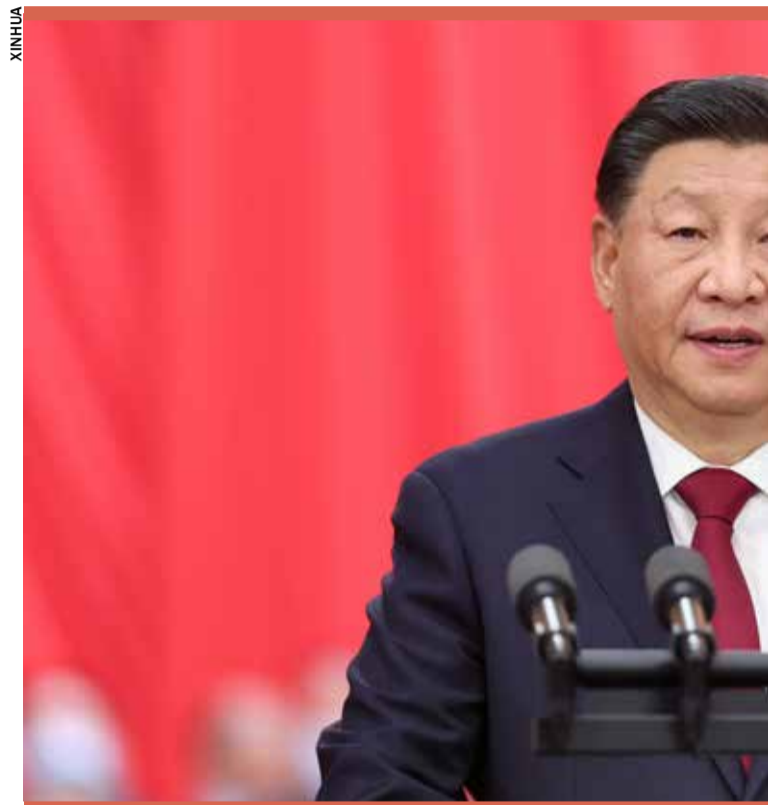
characteristics.

Five delegates from Guangxi shared their views on the report to the 20th CPC National Congress delivered by Xi at the opening of the congress on Sunday. They expressed unanimous endorsement of the report.

Xi joined the delegates in a lively discussion. After listening to their comments, Xi said he is pleased to participate in the discussion as a fellow delegate of the Guangxi delegation.

Hailing the tremendous changes Guangxi has undergone in the past decade, Xi said that such achievements are a vivid epitome of the great changes taking place in China in the first ten years of the new era.

The cause of the Party and the country has withstood potential dangers and overcome difficulties over the past decade, achieving a series of breakthroughs and yielding landmark results one after another, Xi said.



The major policies, principles, plans and decisions of the CPC Central Committee have proven to be in every way correct. The path of socialism with Chinese characteristics is suited to China's realities, reflects the will of the Chinese people, and responds to the call of the times, he said.

Xi called on CPC members

ECONOMY

China to further encourage foreign investment, push globalization

CHINA will further intensify its efforts to encourage foreign investment, an official with the country's top economic planner said yesterday.

Zhao Chenxin, deputy director of the National Development and Reform Commission, made the remark at a press conference on the sidelines of the ongoing 20th National Congress of the Communist Party of China.

He also noted that the Chinese economy has posted a notable trend of recovery in the third quarter (Q3) of this year.

On the other hand, Zhao was adamant on China's will to "unswervingly" expand all-around opening up and push economic globalization toward being more open, inclusive, balanced and beneficial to all.

"There has been misunderstanding about the new pattern of development that



Zhao Chenxin, deputy director of the National Development and Reform Commission

is focused on the domestic economy and features positive interplay between domestic and international economic flows," Zhao clarified.

He said it is wrong to think that by focusing on the domestic economy China will scale back its opening-

up efforts or even turn to a "self-sufficient economy."

Economic globalization has become an irreversible trend, he said, adding that China is already deeply integrated into the global economy and the international system, and the industries of China and many other

countries are highly interconnected and interdependent.

He said fostering a new pattern of development is important for China to achieve development that is of higher quality and is more efficient, fair, sustainable and secure. XINHUA

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to firm up confidence in history, exhibit greater historical initiative, and perform their duties well for history and the people on the road ahead.

To study and implement the Party's innovative theories, one must understand and grasp their worldview and methodology, he said. The report submitted

to the 20th CPC National Congress stresses that the entire Party must put the people first, maintain self-confidence and stand on our own feet, uphold fundamental principles and break new ground, adopt a problem-oriented approach, apply systems thinking, and maintain a global vision.

Xi urged efforts to gain a good command of the above-mentioned six points and make good use of them while implementing the Party and the country's work in various fields and throughout the process.

The CPC has succeeded in advancing and expanding Chinese modernization in the new era, Xi said, adding that the report to the Party congress expounds on the Chinese characteristics and essential requirements of Chinese modernization.

Chinese modernization is rooted in China and is suited to the country's realities, Xi said.

He called for forging ahead with confidence, upholding fundamental principles and breaking new ground, and striving to open new chapters in building a modern socia-

list country in all respects.

The CPC Central Committee has made advances in exercising full and rigorous Party self-governance since the 18th CPC National Congress, waged a battle against corruption on a scale unprecedented in history, and rolled out a raft of policies and measures to push forward self-reform, Xi said.

The Party must persevere with self-reform to ensure that it will never change its nature, its conviction, or its character, and that it will remain the strong leadership core in building socialism with Chinese characteristics, Xi said.

Only in unity and through endeavors can we succeed. Currently, the most important task is to roll up sleeves and get down to work to ensure the solid implementation of major decisions and plans made during the 20th CPC National Congress, Xi said.

Xi called on Party committees and governments at all levels of Guangxi to bring together cadres and people of all ethnic groups and lead them in breaking new ground for Guangxi's development in the new era. XINHUA

WHAT DELEGATES SAY

Wang Yaping, China's first female spacewalker who has taken part in two spaceflights

The selection for the fourth group of astronaut candidates has now begun. We expect young people with aspirations for space exploration to join us. Meanwhile, our Tiangong space station will soon be completed and we look forward to welcoming foreign astronauts who will work together with us on our Tiangong to explore the universe.



Lin Zhanxi, chief scientist of the National Juncao Technology Research Center and a professor at Fujian Agriculture and Forestry University

China's technique of growing 'juncao,' the herbal plant used in the growing of edible mushrooms, has contributed to global poverty reduction. The technique was promoted from East China's Fujian province to other areas in the country and has even reached countries across the world. The technique has been promoted to 106 countries and regions around the world. More than 12,000 Chinese experts have been trained to promote the technique worldwide, contributing Chinese wisdom to the achievement of the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals by 2030.



Wu Dajing, Winter Olympic gold medalist

We now have more than 300 million people involved in winter sports and related activities and as many as 1,400 indoor ice rinks as far as I know. I've seen children born in the warmer southern cities grow interested in winter sports and learn to enjoy skating after watching us compete at Beijing 2022. This has motivated me to make further contributions to the development of winter sports by continuing training and competing at my best while taking part in more grassroots promotion events.



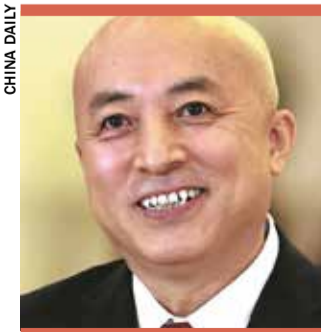
Zulhayat Ismayil, vice-president of Kashgar University

The improvements in education at all levels in the Xinjiang Uygur autonomous region have helped young people have a brighter future. The quality of higher education in Xinjiang has significantly improved in the past 10 years. As an increasing number of young people chose to study in other parts of China, more and more people have come to Xinjiang to study. China's development strategy has placed Xinjiang — an inland region — at the front line of opening-up. And the region has become a key logistics hub for the Belt and Road Initiative and attracted a lot of talent.



Wang Xudong, director of the Palace Museum

Protecting the cultural heritage of mankind is safeguarding a peaceful and prosperous world. There are many differences among various cultures, but, as the Chinese tradition highlights, we should seek common ground while preserving differences. It is an idea that should be commonly respected in the modern era. Communication can strengthen mutual trust among people and cultural relics can play a key role in that communication because it connects our past, present and future.



AGRICULTURE

COUNTRY HAS STRONGER CAPABILITY OF ENSURING FOOD SECURITY: OFFICIAL

CHINA has been improving its capability of ensuring food security over the past decade, with higher annual grain output and stable market operation, an official said yesterday.

With a sound food security situation, "China has guaranteed that its food supply remains firmly in its own hands," Cong Liang, head of the State Grain and Reserves Administration, told a press conference.

China's grain output has stayed above 650 million tonnes for seven solid years. In 2021, the figure hit a new high of 682.85 million tonnes.

As evidence of the capability of ensuring food security, China's farmland totals 128 million hectares, its standard warehouses boast 700 million tonnes of grain storage capacity, and the number of emergency-responding grain processing enterpri-



Cong Liang, head of the State Grain and Reserves Administration

ses reaches 6,000.

While global food markets were unstable in recent years, China's market has kept sufficient supply and stable operation, effectively meeting people's needs and contributing to healthy economic development and social stability, Cong said, adding that China will

continue to be well-positioned for ensuring food security.

China will unswervingly expand all-around opening up and push economic globalization toward being more open, inclusive, balanced and beneficial to all, Zhao said.

"There has been misunderstanding about the

new pattern of development that is focused on the domestic economy and features positive interplay between domestic and international economic flows."

id it is wrong to think that by focusing on the domestic economy China will scale back its opening-up efforts or even turn to a "self-sufficient economy," said Zhao.

Economic globalization has become an irreversible trend, he said, adding that China is already deeply integrated into the global economy and the international system, and the industries of China and many other countries are highly interconnected and interdependent.

He said fostering a new pattern of development is important for China to achieve development that is of higher quality and is more efficient, fair, sustainable and secure. XINHUA

PUTIN'S WAR

Ukrainians' resilience persists despite new Russian barrage

SABRA AYRES
& JUSTIN SPIKE, KYIV

WHEN massive, coordinated Russian bombardments shook cities and towns across Ukraine a week ago to trigger a new phase in the Kremlin's war, one strike left a huge crater in a popular Kyiv children's playground and ripped open a central intersection.

The next day, traffic flowed over the newly asphalted road, and life in the capital had returned to near normal. The response to Russia's new wave of attacks was to get back to work, stroll in the warm autumn sun and tend to final harvests from summer vegetable gardens.

A similar scene played out in the central Ukrainian city of Dnipro that day, where city workers repaired a road overnight after it was destroyed by shelling in that coordinated attack.

"We worked all night, gritting our teeth," wrote Dnipro Mayor Borys Filatov on Facebook the day after the Oct. 10 attack. The post included before and after photos of where the strike had hit and the completed repairs.

"We will restore and rebuild everything. But our hatred will live for centuries," he said.

Ukrainians' resilience in the nearly 8-month-old war continues to be unwavering, despite an uptick in attacks that are seen as Russian President Vladimir Putin's vengeful response to an explosion that damaged a Moscow-built bridge to the Kremlin-annexed Crimean Peninsula on Oct. 8.

Russian missiles and Iranian-made drones struck at least 10 regions across the country two days later, targeting critical infrastructure such as power plants and waterworks in major urban centers. The barrage left 19 dead and more than 100 wounded in the most extensive attacks since the early days after the Russian invasion began on Feb. 24.

Yesterday, explosives-laden suicide drones struck Kyiv, setting buildings ablaze and sending residents running for cover. City life quickly resumed, though hours later air raid sirens were triggered again, and metro stations filled up with worried but calm residents.



A medical worker runs past a burning car after a Russian attack in Kyiv

The strikes were an intensified version of what has been a shift in Russian tactics aimed at making life more difficult for Ukrainians, particularly for those far from the front lines.

But the more the Kremlin threatens to make the upcoming winter intolerable, the more Ukrainians seem to unite in their intent to defeat Putin.

The Ukrainian government is urging a national reduction of energy consumption and, in some regions, implementing rolling blackouts as repairs are done to damaged power stations and facilities.

Ukrenergo, the state energy company, reported that on Oct. 15, residents of the Kyiv region had reduced their daily average electricity consumption by 7%, allowing the utility to avoid forced blackouts.

"This is a direct result of the fact that Ukrainians deliberately limited the use of electrical appliances in the evening hours," the company said in a Facebook post Sunday.

Danylo, 20, a student in Kyiv, said he has reduced his electricity use at home "because we understand that this is a way to protect ourselves from complete loss."

Danylo, who declined to give his last name, added: "Now, it is a trend to work for a common victory," he said.

Similar resilience also can be seen emerging from the devastation and ruins along the front lines in eastern and southern Ukraine.

After retreating from eastern regions like Kharkiv, Rus-

sia has focused its strikes on Zaporizhzhia, Mykolaiv and surrounding towns nearly every night as a Ukrainian counteroffensive makes steady gains in the partially occupied southern flank.

Of all the Ukrainian areas that have paid a high price in the war, the Saltivka neighborhood on the northeastern edge of Kharkiv, the country's second-largest city, has borne some of the greatest burdens.

The area's residential blocks were once home to about a third of Kharkiv's 1.4 million residents. But as Russian forces launched the invasion, they swept in to reach the neighborhood's edge and pummeled it with rockets and artillery. Dozens were killed.

Saltivka, especially its northern reaches, was pounded for months until scarcely a building remained without major damage, leaving vast swaths of the area virtually uninhabitable. Tens of thousands were forced to flee.

Those who remained wander now like ghosts among the charred skeletons of what was once one of Ukraine's largest residential areas. Despite what they've lost, many say they are unwilling to compromise with Russia to stop the fighting.

"Without victory, there is no Ukraine," said Hryhorii Ivanovich, 67, as he applied rebuilt a brick wall on his balcony that was destroyed by a Russian rocket, along with the front half of his living room. "There is no compromise, only Ukrainian

victory."

Maintaining such resolve, however, is more difficult for those who have lost a loved one in the war.

Lyubov Mamedova, whose son was killed this month by a Russian land mine, said he had enthusiastically signed up to fight at the beginning of the war, certain that Ukraine would defeat the invaders.

Mamedova, between fits of tears, said Ukraine must continue to protect its freedom, something she said was important to her son.

"We will fight," she said. "He always said, 'Victory is ours.'"

While many Ukrainians remain steadfast in their determination to drive Russia out by military means, some believe a political solution must be sought to end the bloodshed.

Oleh Postavnychi, 39, was filling water bottles from a public faucet in a courtyard near his home in Saltivka, where he's remained since the war began despite his apartment being significantly damaged.

A diplomatic solution needed to be reached to halt the violence, Postavnychi said, but not one that cedes any Ukrainian lands.

"We need to find some compromise because neither (the Russians) nor us need this war," he said. "Normal people shouldn't suffer ... but we can't give them our territories. These are our territories. They were conquered not only by our great-grandfathers but our great-great-grandfathers." MDT/AP

this day in history

1989 EAST GERMANY LEADER OUSTED



The Communist leader of East Germany, Erich Honecker, has been forced to step down as leader of the country.

After 18 years in power he will be replaced by Egon Krenz, currently the head of internal and external security for the Politburo.

The official reason for his departure is said to be "ill health" but failure to deal with the tide of discontentment sweeping the country and the party is thought to be the real reason.

Up to 120,000 people marched in Leipzig on Monday to protest against a lack of political reforms and thousands of people are continuing to leave the country in search of better opportunities.

The recent visit of Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev is also being seen as a contributing factor to the downfall of Mr Honecker.

The Soviet leader was highly critical of the East German leadership saying there was a need for people to feel involved with their country and to have their opinions taken seriously.

The placement of Mr Krenz is being seen by the opposition as a change of tactics rather than a change of direction.

The banned opposition movement New Forum said: "Krenz's appointment shows the Communist party has no intention of sharing power. Reform under him is unlikely."

Mr Krenz, who at 55 is the youngest member of the Politburo, has been groomed to take over for more than a decade by Mr Honecker.

The news has so far received mixed reactions.

Student Steffi Muller, referring to the official announcement that "health reasons" were the cause for the departure said: "They were really referring to the health of the country - we were dying on our feet under Honecker."

Rainer Eppelmann, an East Berlin vicar said: "Krenz must show that he has the will to change things, and not only cosmetically."

Mr Honecker was expected to retire next year, following the country's 40th anniversary celebrations.

Courtesy BBC News

IN CONTEXT

In November 1989, in a bid to bolster the political regime, the Berlin Wall, set up under the personal supervision of Erich Honecker, was torn down on the orders of Egon Krenz. It was not enough to stop people leaving East Germany and on 3 October 1990 the two Germanys merged to form a new united country. A new administration took over in the reunified Germany, led by Helmut Kohl. In 1990 Mr Honecker was charged with high treason, abuses of power and corruption. Proceedings against him were suspended, due to his ill health, and he was allowed to go into exile in Chile where he died in 1994.

MACAU'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

YOUR STARS

ARIES
 Mar. 21-Apr. 19
 Implement your ideas into your projects at work. You may have been too agreeable to someone who just wanted to use you. You must make sure that all your personal documents are in order.

TAURUS
 Apr. 20-May. 20
 You may find it difficult to communicate. You are best to keep your cash in a safe place. Your mate may be distressed if you refuse to make a commitment.

GEMINI
 May. 21-Jun. 21
 Try to keep a low profile. Concern yourself with legal matters and formulating contracts rather than finalizing your objectives. This is a great day for a trip.

CANCER
 Jun. 22-Jul. 22
 You can get a great deal accomplished if you bring work home. Have some fun, but draw the line if someone tries to fast talk their way into your heart.

LEO
 Jul. 23-Aug. 22
 You'll be an emotional basket case today. Don't take any comments too seriously. Limitations at work might set you back. Physical limitations are possible if you aren't careful.

VIRGO
 Aug. 23-Sep. 22
 Much can be accomplished if you compromise. Your high enthusiasm will be sure to inspire anybody around you. Don't evade issues or twist the truth around.

LIBRA
 Sep. 23-Oct. 22
 Your home environment appears to be a little shaky. You must get out and mingle. You can ferret out secret information if you just listen to what others have to say.

SCORPIO
 Oct. 23-Nov. 21
 If you put your mind to it, you could entertain or host a multitude of social events. People you live with will not be terribly happy with you regardless of what you do today.

SAGITTARIUS
 Nov. 22-Dec. 21
 You will be misinterpreted if you get involved in other people's problems. You should consider submitting some of your written work for publication. Let your boss know your goals.

CAPRICORN
 Dec. 22-Jan. 19
 Travel will be on your mind; however, be careful and proceed with caution as minor accidents will cause delays. Emotional deception is evident. You must try to help.

AQUARIUS
 Jan. 20-Feb. 18
 Take a long look at your present direction and consider your professional options. You will do best to entertain those you wish to close deals with.

PISCES
 Feb. 19-Mar. 20
 Think twice before you volunteer information. Romantic encounters will be full of excitement. You can't make things better if you don't know what to fix.

The Born Loser by Chip Sanson



SUDOKU

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

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

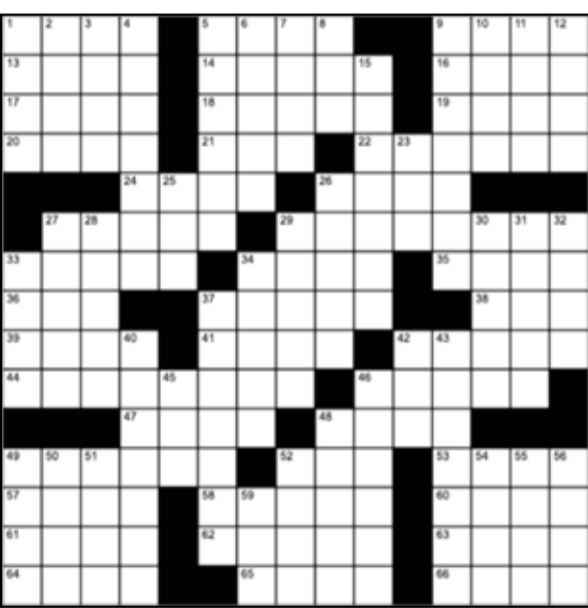
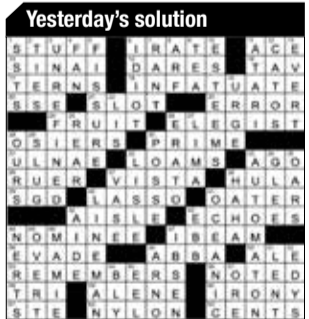
WEATHER

	MIN	MAX	CONDITION
CHINA			
Beijing	2	17	fine
Changchun	-2	10	fine
Chengdu	14	23	cloudy
Chongqing	16	27	cloudy
Fuzhou	18	22	overcast
Guangzhou	15	23	overcast
Guiyang	10	20	fine
Haikou	25	26	rain
Hangzhou	12	19	cloudy
Harbin	-4	8	fine
Hefei	7	18	fine
Nanjing	9	18	fine
Shanghai	12	19	fine
Taipei	19	20	rain
Wuhan	9	21	fine
Hong Kong	21	23	rain
WORLD			
Moscow	7	10	rain
Frankfurt	11	20	rain
Paris	14	22	fog
London	12	18	fog
New York	4	13	overcast

CROSSWORDS

ACROSS 1- Sewing case; 5- Blue dye source; 9- Ovid, e.g.; 13- Give notice; 14- Winter drink; 16- Dominion; 17- Periods; 18- Bungling; 19- Environmental sci.; 20- Tar; 21- Golden, in France; 22- Computer expert; 24- Nile wader; 26- One with a glazed look, perhaps; 27- Museum piece; 29- Dampness; 33- Distributed cards; 34- Charge per unit; 35- Switch back?; 36- French pronoun; 37- All-night parties; 38- Film director Lee; 39- Floor coverings; 41- Clarinet cousin; 42- Terra ____; 44- Affecting the whole body; 46- Lover of Juliet; 47- Mild oath; 48- Start of something small?; 49- Regular customer; 52- ____-relief; 53- Recipe amt.; 57- Neat as ____; 58- Large piece; 60- Pull apart; 61- Bausch & Lomb brand; 62- Uneven; 63- Upper hand; 64- Dutch cheese, wrapped in red wax; 65- Checked out; 66- Thought-provoking;

DOWN 1- More than one female sheep; 2- Skater Lipinski; 3- Caspian Sea feeder; 4- Infuse; 5- Like toxic rainfall; 6- Taboos; 7- Bakery worker; 8- Prune; 9- Go before; 10- "That smarts!"; 11- "The Time Machine" race; 12- Prefix with conference; 15- Occasionally; 23- Certain Ivy Leaguer; 25- Mouthpiece of a bride; 26- Private student; 27- Cooperative race; 28- Bridge positions; 29- Ruin; 30- Beside oneself; 31- Scout master?; 32- Indian exercise method; 33- Dulls; 34- Violently intense; 37- Love affair; 40- Breastbone; 42- Chile ____ came; 43- Left out; 45- Feeling of self-importance; 46- Dared; 48- The house of a parson; 49- Trim; 50- Imitated; 51- Singer Turner; 52- Anchored float; 54- "Venerable" English monk; 55- Saltimbocca seasoning; 56- Type of school or cook; 59- Charlemagne's realm; Abbr.;



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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 HKD 12,500,000 3 beds 2 bath

Carpark FOR SALE
 HKD 1,380,000-HKD 1,600,000

AD

ECONOMY

GLOBAL SHARES MOSTLY HIGHER AS MARKETS EYE CHINA MEETING

YURI KAGEYAMA, TOKYO

GLOBAL shares were mostly higher yesterday as investors kept their eyes on a weeklong Communist Party congress in China.

Britain's new Treasury chief was due to announce details of his tax and spending plans today [Macau time], two weeks ahead of schedule, in a bid to calm markets roiled by the government's economic policies.

Chancellor of the Exchequer Jeremy Hunt was expected to ditch more of the measures announced by the government of Prime Minister Liz Truss on Sept. 23. Since then, the prime minister's libertarian economic policies have triggered a financial crisis, emergency central bank intervention, multiple U-turns and the firing of her Treasury chief.

In Asia, the meeting of China's ruling Communist Party opened Sunday and is expected to reappoint Xi Jinping as leader for the next five years. Analysts expect the meeting will reaffirm Xi's grip on power and stronger state control over the economy. They expect no change to Beijing's "zero-COVID policy."

"Fresh updates from China's Party Congress are being scrutinized, with the emphasis on technological advancement and national security seemingly brought up as high priorities for China's longer-term direction. Further de-coupling from U.S. technology seems to be the story," Yeap Jun Rong, a market strategist at IG in Singapore, said in a commentary.



Japan's benchmark Nikkei 225 slipped 1.2% to finish at 26,775.79. Australia's S&P/ASX 200 dipped 1.4% to 6,664.40. South Korea's Kospi rebounded to gain 0.3% to 2,219.71. Hong Kong's Hang Seng rose 0.5% to 16,662.19, while the Shanghai Composite rose 0.4% to 3,084.94. In Mumbai, the Sensex gained 0.8%.

In currency trading, the U.S. dollar rose to 148.64 Japanese yen from 148.63 yen. That's a nearly 32-year low for the yen against the dollar.

Clifford Bennett, Chief Economist at ACY Securities, noted the U.S. dollar will likely continue to rise as interest rates are pushed higher to counter inflation. That's a hardship for countries facing steep increases in costs for imports and for debt

repayments.

"The outlook is grim. The economic horizon is dark," he said of the American economy. "The U.S. dollar will continue to strengthen for the moment, particularly against other Western currencies."

The euro cost 97.47 cents, up from 97.21 cents.

Japan's industrial production for August showed moderate signs of improvement, the government said. Industrial production rose 3.4% from the previous month, and 5.8% from the previous year, according to Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry data released yesterday.

Worries about inflation, though cooling in some parts of the economy around the world, remain overall. A report

last week showing U.S. consumers' expectations for inflation was another signal the Federal Reserve may keep aggressively raising interest rates, although that strategy raises the risks of a recession.

The Fed has already raised its benchmark interest rate five times this year, with the last three increases by three-quarters of a percentage point. Wall Street expects another raise of three-quarters of a percentage point at its next meeting in November.

In energy trading, benchmark U.S. crude added 95 cents to \$86.56 a barrel in electronic trading on the New York Mercantile Exchange. U.S. crude oil prices fell 3.9% on Friday. Brent crude, the international standard, added \$1.05 to \$92.68 a barrel. **MDT/AP**

RIDE-HAILING

UBER EATS, LEAFLY TEAM UP TO DELIVER CANNABIS IN TORONTO

FOOD delivery app Uber Eats and Leafly have joined forces with local suppliers to offer cannabis delivery in Toronto starting yesterday.

The companies say it's the first time cannabis delivery will be offered on a major third-party delivery platform.

Customers 19 years and older can place the order through the Uber Eats app, where it will be directed to one of three local cannabis retailers: Hidden Leaf, Minerva or Shiva's Rose. The delivery will be made by a government-certified employee who will verify the age and sobriety of the customer upon arrival.

In addition to keeping impaired drivers off the roads, Leafly and Uber Eats say the new delivery service will help combat the illegal underground market, which they say makes up more than 50% of nonmedical cannabis sales in Ontario.

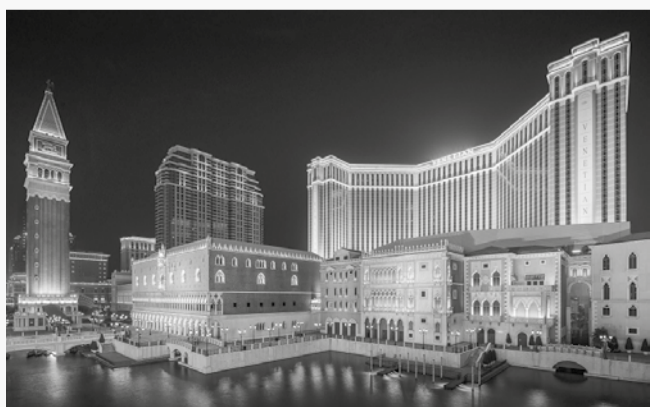
Leafly, based in Seattle, is an online cannabis marketplace and information resource.

Uber Eats is part of San Francisco-based ride-hailing company Uber and has partnerships with 825,000 restaurants and merchants in more than 11,000 cities around the world. **MDT/AP**



CORPORATE BITS

Sands Resorts Macao declared 'Best Resort in China' by TTG



Sands Resorts Macao has once again been honored as 'Best Resort in China' at the 15th Annual TTG China Travel Awards.

With three European-themed properties – The Venetian Macao, The Parisian Macao and The Londoner Macao, Sands Resorts Macao impresses visitors with recreations of Europe's most picturesque landmarks.

Kris Kaminsky, senior vice president of Hotel Operations, Sands China Ltd. said, "We are committed to creating unique and diverse travel and leisure experiences. Winning this prestigious industry award again not only recognizes the dedication and professionalism of our team members, but also motivates us to further refine our hotel products and services."

TTG China Travel Awards has been recognizing the best players in Greater China's travel industry since 2008. The annual event recognizes superlative travel firms, including airlines, hotels and resorts, serviced residences and travel services.

Wynn donates MOP300,000 to Welfare Shop Project



Wynn has maintained its support for the Welfare Shop Project of Macau Holy House of Mercy with a donation of MOP300,000, as well as sponsoring the distribution of food hampers to 375 un-

derprivileged families last week.

This marks ten consecutive years of Wynn contributing to the meaningful operation of the group's Welfare Shop Project, according to a

statement issued by the gaming operator.

This year, about 35 Wynn volunteers distributed 375 food baskets containing food and daily necessities to underprivileged families at the Welfare Shop Project of Macau Holy House of Mercy to help address their day-to-day needs. In addition, Wynn also provided each beneficiary family with a shopping trolley, designed by Wynn with heat preservation functionality, and a supermarket cash voucher worth MOP100 as a token of appreciation.

Wynn has donated a total of MOP2.9 million to the Welfare Shop since its establishment.

FOOTBALL

World Cup host Qatar wins rights for 2023 Asian Cup

WITH the World Cup in Qatar just weeks away, the country was selected yesterday as host of the 2023 Asian Cup by the Asian Football Confederation.

Qatar beat bids from South Korea and Indonesia in a short-notice contest to replace China and host a tournament that could yet be played in 2024.

The 2023 Asian Cup is set in the FIFA-managed calendar of national-team soccer games to be played from June 16 to July 16 — when the desert heat in Qatar is so extreme that the World Cup had to be moved to November and December.

Qatar hosted the 2011 Asian Cup in January that year and now becomes the first country to host the continental championship three times after also staging the event in 1988.

The Qatari men's team will be aiming to defend the title it won in 2019 in the United Arab Emirates.

China was originally scheduled to hold the 24-team event in 2023 but gave up hosting rights in May because of the country's "Zero-COVID" policies to contain the COVID-19 pandemic, leaving the AFC looking for replacements.

"Given the short lead time in preparation, we know that the hard work begins immediately but with their existing world-

AP PHOTO



AFC president Sheik Salman bin Ebrahim Al Khalifa of Bahrain

-class infrastructure and unrivaled hosting capabilities, we are confident that Qatar will stage a worthy spectacle befitting the prestige and stature of Asia's crown jewel," AFC President Sheik Salman bin Ebrahim Al

Khalifa said in a statement.

Qatar's win yesterday offered good news for neighboring Saudi Arabia which is bidding to host the 2027 Asian Cup, in a contest that is now a two-bid race with India.

That 2027 contest originally included Qatar and Iran, whose soccer federation withdrew its candidacy last Thursday, the AFC said. No reason was cited, although Iran has experienced a month of street protests in support of wo-

men's rights after the death in police custody of 22-year-old Mahsa Amini,

"In the All India Football Federation and the Saudi Arabian Football Federation, we have two exemplary bids," Sheik Salman said.

The AFC will need to seek FIFA agreement and likely a decision from the sport's world body's ruling Council to amend the international match calendar and find new dates for the 2023 Asian Cup.

That process could raise tension with European clubs which typically object to soccer's continental championships being moved to their midseason from June slots.

The FIFA calendar mandates the game dates and tournament periods when clubs must release their players who have been selected for national teams.

However, fewer Europe-based players are needed for the Asian Cup than had to leave their clubs for the African Cup of Nations that was played in Cameroon in January. That tournament also was moved from an intended slot in June.

The influential European Club Association is led by a Qatari who is a close friend of the country's Emir. The Switzerland-based club group's chairman is Nasser al-Khelaifi, the president of Paris Saint-Germain. **MDT/AP**

AD

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山度士 Alvaro Rodrigues °
馬天龍 Nuno Sardinha da Mata °
趙魯 Zhao Lu °•
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杜力信 Nelson de Azevedo
莫永誠 Rui Velez de Moura
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OPINION

China Daily
Ken Moritsugu, MDT/AP



CHINA'S PARTY CONGRESS PROMISES CONTINUITY, NOT CHANGE

The overarching theme emerging from China's ongoing Communist Party congress is one of continuity, not change.

The weeklong meeting, which opened Sunday, is expected to reappoint Xi Jinping as leader, reaffirm a commitment to his policies for the next five years and possibly elevate his status even further as one of the most powerful leaders in China's modern history.

This is not an inflection point for the party. That happened 10 years ago when it named Xi as leader, though it wasn't evident at the time.

Since then, Xi has reoriented China both domestically and internationally. The military has staked claims to disputed territory while diplomats have become more assertive, saying China won't be bullied by the U.S. and others.

Xi has brought back stronger state control over the economy and society. An unprecedented crackdown on corruption has brought down hundreds of senior officials, including eventual political rivals.

All of that is here to stay — that was the message from a 1-hour-and-45-minute party report that Xi delivered to the opening session on Sunday.

Willy Lam, a senior fellow with the Jamestown Foundation think tank, noted the report described a "Chinese-style modernization" that must conform to socialist values.

"China will stick to its own road," the Hong Kong-based Lam said. "It will not borrow any measures or governance style from foreign countries."

The economy is struggling under the weight of severe COVID-19 restrictions imposed by Xi's government, a sharp real estate slowdown and the fallout from the conflict in Ukraine.

Xi has already consolidated power. The question is whether he will gain even more power — and how.

Practically, he has placed himself in charge of the military, foreign policy, the economy and most other matters through a series of party working groups that he heads.

Symbolically, his ideology, known as Xi Jinping Thought, was enshrined in the party congress at the previous congress in 2017.

Another amendment to the constitution is on the agenda for this week's congress. No details have been divulged, but analysts say it could further raise his status in the party.

It is customary for the party to unveil its top leadership for the next five years the day after the congress closes, with the small group named to the Politburo Standing Committee identified for the first time when they parade out on stage.

Xi is widely expected to be at the top, getting a third five-year term. The others named to the Standing Committee, which currently has seven members, could offer clues to Xi's future and the direction of policy.

No obvious successor was picked for the current Standing Committee in 2017.

With most of this week's sessions behind closed doors, none of this is likely to be known until the weekend. Any amendment to the constitution would typically be announced at the closing session on Saturday, and the new leadership paraded out on Sunday.

Many Chinese are weary of pandemic restrictions that have disrupted their lives and the economy. For them, the more immediate question is whether there will be any easing after the party congress.

The answer is probably not immediately, and when changes do come, they will most likely be gradual.

Party officials are expected to remain cautious about opening up even after the congress, as it is uncertain how widely COVID-19 will spread when travel and other restrictions are eased.

Plus there's always another major event to worry about. As a follow-up to the party congress, China's legislature will meet next year, probably in March. Many Chinese are preparing to wait and see at least until after that.

[Abridged]

CHINA PARTY SAYS NEARLY 5 MILLION MEMBERS PROBED FOR GRAFT

China's ruling Communist Party says it has probed almost 5 million members for possible corruption over the last decade, with formal criminal cases brought against 553.

Whether that will curb an widening economic slowdown and restore faith in the authoritarian system remains unclear.

The party has 96 million members and has long run its own internal system of keeping cadres in line through a mix of offering privileges and threatening severe punishment for taking bribes, selling offices or otherwise abusing their authority.

At a new briefing yesterday on the sidelines of the party's national congress deputy secretary of the party's Committee for Discipline and Inspection Xiao Pei said 207,000 party officials in total had been handed some form of punishment in the 10 years since party leader Xi Jinping took power.

Xiao said figures show most of those caught up by anti-graft investigators had been long-term offenders and just 11% of those punished had committed their first offense in the past five years.

THE BUZZ



RM (center) accompanied by other K-pop supergroup BTS members at the White House in Washington, last May

AGENCY SAYS BTS MEMBERS WILL SERVE IN SOUTH KOREA'S MILITARY

KIM TONG-HYUNG, SEOUL

The members of K-pop band BTS will serve their mandatory military duties under South Korean law, their management company said yesterday, effectively ending a debate on whether they should be granted exemptions because of their artistic accomplishments.

Big Hit Music said the band's oldest member, Jin, will revoke his request to delay his conscription at the end of the month and undertake the required steps. The six other BTS members also plan to serve in the military and are "looking forward to reconvening as a group again around 2025 following their service commitment," the company said in a statement.

No further information on the timing of their service was given. The band members performed together in Busan over the weekend in support of the city's EXPO bid, which will be their last concert as a group until they finish serving in the military, according to their label.

Hybe Corp., the parent company of Big Hit, said in an email to The Associated Press that each member of the band for the time being will focus on individual activities scheduled around their military service plans.

In a letter to sharehol-

ders, Hybe CEO Park Jiwon downplayed financial concerns related to the BTS hiatus, saying it has a broad enough lineup of artists, including other popular K-pop groups such as Le Sserafim and NewJeans and Western performers Justin Bieber and Ariana Grande.

"We have always been aware of the eventuality of mandatory military service, and we have long been making preparations to be ready for this moment," Park wrote. "In the short term, individual activities for several of the members are planned into the first half of 2023, and we have secured content in advance, which will enable BTS to continue their engagement with fans for the foreseeable future."

The announcement came after Lee Ki Sik, commissioner of the Military Manpower Administration, told lawmakers this month that it would be "desirable" for BTS members to fulfil their military duties to ensure fairness in the country's military service.

After enlisting, Jin and other BTS members will receive five weeks of combat training before being assigned to specific units and duties, according to officials at the Military Manpower Administration, who stressed that the singers would go under the same process as other South Korean men.

While South Korea's military for years had assigned enlisted entertainers to duties related to producing radio and TV material promoting the military, the "entertainment soldier" system was retired in 2013 following complaints over fairness.

Defense Minister Lee Jong-sup said in August that if BTS members join the military, they would likely be allowed to continue practicing and to join with the group for tours overseas.

Whether the BTS members must serve in the army had been a hotly debated issue in South Korea as Jin faced possible enlistment early next year. Jin turns 30 in December, the age at which men can no longer delay enlistment. Other members are currently between 25 and 29 years old, with Suga turning 30 in March.

Under South Korean law, most able-bodied men are required to perform 18-21 months of military service, but special exemptions had been granted for athletes and artists who excel in certain international competitions that have been tied to national prestige.

The band — its other members being J-Hope, RM, Jungkook, V and Jimin — launched in 2013 and has a legion of global supporters who call themselves the "Army." MDT/AP



UK The new Treasury chief ripped up the government's economic plan yesterday, dramatically reversing most of the tax cuts and spending plans that Premier Liz Truss announced less than a month ago. The move raises more questions about how long the beleaguered British leader can stay in office. In a televised address, Chancellor of the Exchequer Jeremy Hunt (pictured) said he was scrapping "almost all" of Truss' tax cuts, along with her flagship energy policy and her promise that there will be no public spending cuts.



Nigeria The death toll from floods this year has increased to 603 as local authorities race to get relief items to hundreds of thousands being evacuated from their submerged homes. More than 1.3 million people have been displaced by the disaster, which has affected people across 33 of Nigeria's 36 states, the nation's humanitarian affairs ministry said yesterday [Macau time]. At least 340,000 hectares of land also have been affected, worsening fears of food supply disruptions.



Ugandan activists launched a legal challenge yesterday to controversial new legislation criminalizing some internet activity in the East African country. Their petition to the constitutional court argues that the description of computer-related crimes in the bill enacted with President Yoweri Museveni's signature last week violates the right to freedom of expression and criminalizes some digital work, including investigative journalism.