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LIGHT RAIL EAST LINE TO BE BUILT IN TWO SECTIONS AS GOVERNMENT CLAIMS PROCEDURE WILL SAVE TIME AND MONEY

GAMING: MORGAN STANLEY FORECASTS 2022 GGR TO BE UNDER MOP45B

AFRAID OF NEEDLES? CHINA ROLLING OUT COVID-19 ORAL VACCINE



AP PHOTO



Malaysia About 30 members of a film crew who were trapped in a limestone cave in northern Malaysia during heavy rain yesterday have been rescued, police said. Two police officials, who spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to release information, confirmed that all of the people trapped in Tempurung Cave in Kampar district in Perak state were safely evacuated. They couldn't give further details.

AP PHOTO



United States will make full use of its military capabilities, "including nuclear, conventional and missile defense," to defend its allies Japan and South Korea, U.S. Deputy Secretary of State Wendy Sherman (pictured) said as she warned North Korea against escalating its provocations. Sherman said North Korea's repeated firings of ballistic missiles and artillery in recent weeks were provocative military actions. North Korea has described them as practice runs for the use of tactical nuclear weapons.

AP PHOTO



Russian President Vladimir Putin yesterday monitored drills of the country's strategic nuclear forces involving multiple practice launches of ballistic and cruise missiles in a show of force amid the heightened tensions with the West over the conflict in Ukraine. Russian Defense Minister Sergei Shoigu reported to Putin that the exercise was intended to simulate a "massive nuclear strike" by Russia in retaliation for a nuclear attack on Russia.

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GROUPS ON



New government guidelines on group travelers welcomed by investors

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FAI CHI KEI LOCKDOWN

Health authorities impose partial lockdown in Fai Chi Kei, Macau's most populous neighborhood, after a resident tested positive for Covid-19



P3

ALVIN CHANGES COUNSEL JUDGE PROMOTES MUSICAL CHAIRS AMONG DEFENSE LAWYERS

P5

TRAVEL RESUMPTION

NEW GOV'T MANDATES LIMIT GROUP TRAVELERS

LYNZY VALLES

IN anticipation of the upcoming resumption of e-visas and group travel visas to enter the city, the local government has announced guidelines on capacity limits and Covid testing frequency. This has led to rises in the city's gaming shares.

According to the Health Bureau's (SSM) new mandates, there will be a limit in the number of people participating in each tour, tour guides must take Covid-19 nucleic acid tests (NATs) once every seven days and both staff and participants must complete a 10-day travel history declaration.

Chief Executive Ho Iat Seng announced last month that tours will restart gradually from the provinces of Guangdong, Zhejiang, Jiangsu, Fujian and the municipality of Shanghai, with Guangdong being at the frontier.

Some travel agencies in China have unveiled Macau's travel packages in advance, which show that the earliest departure date is November 13.

According to the bureau, measures must include temperature checks, the wearing



of masks and recorded itineraries.

The SSM is also making it mandatory for operators of group tours to keep the contacts of their group participants for at least 14 days.

Group travelers who have been in contact with Covid-19 patients 10 days prior the arrival to the SAR will be prevented from entering, while those confirmed tourists will

be asked to declare their travel history for the past 10 days.

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

However, the city will continue to face headwinds amid

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

However, group tours have never been a major source of profit for Macau casinos because they do not spend large amounts.

STOCKS RALLY

The fresh mandates have led to a rise in gaming shares, with Wynn Macau's 4.73% rise leading, followed by Sands China (+2.33%) and Melco (+2.24%) and SJM Holdings (+2.07%).

Galaxy and MGM also rose slightly by 1.50% and 0.62%, respectively.

MGTO: WORK FOR PACKAGE TOURS UNDERWAY

WORK for the resumption of mainland group tourists to Macau is underway, Cheng Wai Tong, deputy director of the Macau Government Tourism Bureau, told the media on the sidelines of an event yesterday. The tourism industry is also ready to receive and organize groups, he said. Due to the new Covid-19 case recorded yesterday in Fai Chi Kei, the official said

that the bureau is in full adherence to Health Bureau guidelines. However, he emphasized that the Macau authorities have epidemic prevention plans, circuit breaker mechanisms, or countermeasures for stranded cases due to the epidemic. According to him, it still needs to be assessed whether the epidemic will affect mainland group tourists coming to Macau.

PUBLIC WORKS

LRT East Line to be built in two sections will 'save time and money'

RENATO MARQUES

THE Light Rapid Transit (LRT) Eastern Line that will link the Taipa Maritime Ferry Terminal at Pac On to the Border Gate, passing through Zone A of the new landfills, will be built in two separate sections, the government has announced.

According to the Public Works Bureau, this line construction will be divided into a southern section with a total length of 4.8 kilometers that links the current

terminal at Taipa Line at Pac On to Zone A and a northern section with a total length of 2.9 kilometers, that will link Zone A to the Border Gate.

Each of these construction sections will be undertaken through a separate public tender, a process that according to government officials will save the government time and money.

A total of three underground LRT stations will be built in the southern section of the line, which will also include the underwater tunnel

connecting Taipa Island to Zone A.

The longest construction period is expected to be 1,500 working days, being over five years of effective construction time, the deputy director of the Land and Urban Construction Bureau, Mak Tat Io explained in a presentation about the project to the public TV station.

In total, the Eastern Line will be almost eight kilometers long and will have a total of six LRT stations.



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ZERO-COVID

Non-jabbed Covid-19 patient detected in Fai Chi Kei, mass testing underway

ANTHONY LAM

A female asymptomatic 66-year-old patient who has not received any SARS-CoV-2 vaccines was detected as having Covid-19 yesterday in the northwestern district of Fai Chi Kei.

Part of the city was anxious after the announcement by the Novel Coronavirus Response and Coordination Centre early yesterday afternoon, which was made in addition to the later announcement about regional mass SARS-CoV-2 nucleic acid test (NAT) drives.

Public health doctor and Health Bureau (SSM) official Leong Iek Hou devoted several minutes at the special press briefing yesterday to discussing the movements of the patient, but did not disclose her vaccination status.

Later, she was asked whether the patient was vaccinated and if she has developed any symptoms.

"As per our data, neither she or her cohabiting family members have been vaccinated with any SARS-CoV-2 vaccine," the public health doctor replied.

As of press time yesterday, her cohabiting family members, namely her sister and her son, have tested negative for the virus.

While admitting that the vaccine does not create complete immunity against the virus, she did not forgo the opportunity to persuade members of the public to get fully vaccinated, which she said included the booster shots as well.

"Although the vaccine does not guarantee you will avoid infection, what is more important is that the vaccine will help seismically lower the chances of developing severe cases and complications," she said.

The quality of information

dissemination yesterday also prompted public criticism.

Near noontime yesterday, news was dispersed in various social media or chat groups about a new patient in the area, leading to the lockdown of certain areas and a key area mass NAT drive. At present, the official social media page of the Response and Coordination Centre only announces that a new patient has been detected. No news about the mass test drive was announced.

About an hour before the press briefing yesterday, the official social media page eventually made an announcement about the key test drive, which came after many worried people residing or working in Fai Chi Kei had already rushed to take the test.

At the press briefing, SSM director and pulmonologist Alvis Lo admitted that his bureau was aware of the so-called leaked information, which he later emphasized as "not critically confidential."

The police, who also deployed a representative to the press briefing, admitted that crowds were seen at several test stations prior to the official announcement on the mass test.

When asked why the government did not conduct timely crisis management on the situation, such as issuing press releases to clarify the mass testing had not yet started, Lo boasted that the government's response to the situation yesterday morning was "very swift."

At 9 am yesterday, the SSM received notifications from their Zhuhai counterparts about the detection of positive results in a 10-in-1 test tube of test specimens. Of these 10 test takers, eight have had recent links to Macau. Therefore, according to the SSM

director, these eight people presented to the public hospital for individual tests.

It was then that the 66-year-old woman's infection was detected. Afterwards, the SSM conducted epidemiological investigations, before it identified the areas and groups of people needing to get tests. The government also needed to evaluate the suitable number of test stations.

"We had to finish all [of] these in a matter of four to five hours," Lo defended.

He then agreed that it would be ideal if no news had been prematurely released. Nonetheless, "a lot of people work in test stations. It is possible that they have inadvertently released the information to families and friends," he added.

To hold them accountable, in his opinion, was not necessary because the leak was not ill-founded. For the time being, he said, the main tactic would be to encourage the public to rely on official announcements.

DETAILS OF MASS NAT DRIVE

People living or working in the area confined by five roads are required to take a test each day from now until October 28. The area is surrounded by Avenida do Conselheiro Borja to the north, Avenida do Almirante Lacerda to the south, Avenida do General Castelo Branco to the east, as well as Rua Norte do Patane and Rua Sul do Patane to the west.

People who have stayed in the above area for more than half an hour on or after October 24, despite not living or working within the area, will be required to take the test too. The Response and Coordination Centre added that considering the higher infection risk in the area, nobody with aforementioned links to the area

would be exempt from the test.

To cooperate with this NAT drive, all operating sampling stations will continue to provide testing services. Six stations will extend their service hours to midnight on October 26, and then open from 9 am to midnight on October 27 and 28, namely Qingmao Port, Kon Chi Medical Service Centre, Leisure Area in Baía Norte do Fai Chi Kei, Trust Leisure Garden Bus Terminus, Macau Medical and Health Federation at Edifício do Bairro da Ilha Verde, as well as the former Macau Yat Yuen Canidrome.

The Response and Coordination Centre reminds test-goers that before heading to the NAT station, they must first perform a rapid antigen self-test (RAT) and declare the result via the Macau health code platform. Only those with a negative RAT results will be accepted by NAT stations.

If the RAT result is positive, regardless of existence of symptoms, an ambulance should be called. The declarant and co-habiting individuals must stay home and wait patiently to be transferred to the quarantine site by the designated ambulance. Relevant nucleic acid testing will be arranged for all such individuals by the government.

Furthermore, the Response and Coordination Centre once again reminds people to input their correct address during the application for a health code, so as to avoid being wrongly identified as close contacts.

Meanwhile, as with previous handling of people with yellow health codes, those within the test zone will be allowed to conduct regular activities, such as work or study, even if they bear yellow health codes.

The key area concerns about

26,000 people, judging from data collected through the Macau health code system, Lo disclosed yesterday.

FOOTPRINTS OF THE PATIENT

The aforementioned 66-year-old housewife has had her infection detected in a group sample in Zhuhai with a Cycle Threshold (CT) value at 32. After being retested at the public hospital in Macau yesterday, her infection was confirmed with a CT value at 16.6, which indicates a relatively high amount of virus.

The remaining seven test-takers with connections to Macau in the same group tested negative yesterday.

At the press briefing yesterday, Lo highlighted that it was highly likely that the infection was imported. About half-an-hour after the briefing, a spokesperson for the SSM updated the status to confirm that it was an imported infection.

Residing in Edf. Wang Heng in Fai Chi Kei, the sexagenarian had stayed home during the day on October 21, 22, 23 and 25. At about 6 p.m. on all four days, she departed from home for Zhuhai on foot through the Qingmao Border Checkpoint. In Zhuhai, she did grocery shopping at the Kang Zhi Yuan Supermarket in the Underground Shopping Mall. She took the same route back home afterwards.

On October 24, she stayed home except for a visit to the Royal Supermarket in Luen San Square in Fai Chi Kei at about 1:30 pm.

In addition, at 3 p.m. on October 23, she visited the Caritas Macau Food Bank at Ilha Verde. Between 5 p.m. and 6 p.m. on the same day, she took bus No. 1 from Avenida do General Castelo Branco to the Border Gate.

GUANGDONG TO ISSUE ANOTHER RMB2B IN OFFSHORE GOV'T BONDS IN MACAU

LYNZY VALLES

The Guangdong government will issue three-year offshore renminbi-denominated municipal government bonds in Macau tomorrow, with an expected issue size of RMB2 billion.

The Guangdong municipal bonds will be offered to institutional investors and are the second issuance of Guangdong Province offshore RMB-denominated municipal government bonds following their initial issuance in October 2021.

Back in September, the central government's RMB3 billion worth of renminbi-denominated bonds were listed in Chongwa (Macao) Financial Asset Exchange Co., Ltd. (MOX).

The central government first issued renminbi-denominated bonds with a face value of RMB2 billion in Macau in 2019.

"The MSAR government expresses sincere gratitude to the central government and the Guangdong go-

MDT ARCHIVE



vernment for their support," the SAR government said in a statement.

To facilitate the development of the bond market, the local government is accelerating the improvement of relevant 'soft' and 'hard' financial infrastructure including: the optimisation of Macau's Central Securities Depository (CSD) system and bond market-related regulations; initiating the legislation of securities-related laws and

regulations; expanding the financial talent pool; and introducing tax incentives.

In accordance with the SAR Budget for 2022, the preferential policy on exemptions from stamp duty and complementary tax of the related proceeds from bonds issued in Macau will be applicable to this issuance of offshore municipal government bonds by the Guangdong government.

GAMING

MORGAN STANLEY: 2022 GGR TO BE UNDER MOP45B

LYNZY VALLES

BROKERAGE firm Morgan Stanley has amended its forecast for the city's gaming sector in 2022 to just under MOP44.93 billion.

Analysts Praveen Choudhary and Gareth Leung based the forecast on their predictions that travel restrictions between Macau and the mainland will linger until the first quarter of 2023.

This is despite group tour visas and e-visas that are slated to resume from late October to early November.

The fresh forecast represents only about 15% of the 2019 figures.

However, the firm is optimistic that the casino sector will record revenues of some MOP124.29 billion, which amount to approximately 43% of 2019 levels.

Separately, Citibank has noted that the gaming revenues for the first 23 days of the month have amounted

to some MOP3 billion – a figure that is up 17% from the week prior.

According to the bank, the slow recovery comes amid travel restrictions as the mainland is recording a surge in Covid-19 cases, leading to district lockdowns, which have in turn hampered travel.

Citibank noted that it will maintain, however, its estimate of MOP4 billion of gaming revenues this month.

September has been another bleak month for the city's casinos as revenues plunged 49.6% year-on-year to MOP2.96 billion, another blow to the sector as China's lockdown continues across the country.

Although September's revenue rose 35% from the previous month, the base in August was very low as the sector suffered in the wake of the travel halt caused by the city's largest outbreak in mid-June to July.

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SUNCITY TRIAL

Alvin Chau lawyer replaced; Manuel Leong takes over from Leong Weng Pun

RENATO MARQUES

LAWYER Leong Weng Pun, who has been representing the former leader of the demised junket company Suncity Group, Alvin Chau, in the case currently on trial in the Court of First Instance (TJB), has been replaced by Manuel Leong Hon Man, the Times has learned from several sources.

It is not presently clear the reasons for the replacement of Leong, who was already representing the lawyer, Kuong Kuok On, who has officially taken Chau's defense in the case at the start.

The case includes a total of 21 defendants, including the junket mogul. It has resumed this week with a hearing involving several witnesses.

Chau is currently defending the charges against him, which include the founding and leadership of a criminal organization as well as illegal gambling and money laundering.



The change in lawyers took place on the return to trial from the judiciary holiday break.

Chau's new representative is a practice colleague of another lawyer on the case, Maria Inês Gomes, who represents Philip Wong, the former chief financial officer of Suncity Group.

Sources told the Times that

the replacement of Leong Weng Pun might be linked to the way in which presiding Judge Lou Heng Ha accused the previous defense lawyers of not respecting the court's decision to limit access to the courtroom. This decision was made due to a lack of space and the high number of defendants and defense lawyers.

At the start of the trial, the court decided that only one lawyer per defendant could be in the courtroom in addition to the assistant lawyers who represent the gaming concessionaires.

At the start of Tuesday's session, Judge Lou noted a letter from the Macau Lawyers Association (AAM) complaining about the lack of space in the courtroom.

The judge once again criticized the lawyers for complaining about the lack of space for the AAM, accusing them of disrespecting the rules by showing up at the courtroom and bringing together several assistants, adding that they were not following the government and the courts' guidelines on pandemic prevention and control measures.

At that time, and according to TDM, the assistant lawyer representing SJM in the case, Álvaro Rodrigues, which is also a member of the board of directors of the AAM, assured the judge that none of the lawyers had submitted any formal complaint to the association on

the case, but that the letter was from the association itself.

The topic was addressed by the president of the AAM, Jorge Neto Valente, at the opening of the judiciary year in his speech.

"It is not just about the appearance of the room - the smallness of the facilities - which could well have led the court to hold the trial in a space worthy of a public building with the appropriate size for the number of participants," but the fact that the restrictions in force are ultimately causing a "limitation on the rights of the defense and the defendants, and that is not acceptable," Valente said.

In Tuesday's court session, the lawyer of the 13th defendant, Fong Kin Fao, joined the list of lawyers whom the judge threatened to prevent from speaking in court, which already included the lawyer, Pedro Leal.

Judge Lou was not happy with Fong's questions to a witness on the stand and threatened him with censure.

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COVID-19

AFRAID OF NEEDLES? CHINA ROLLING OUT ORAL VACCINE

KEN MORITSUGU, BEIJING

THE Chinese city of Shanghai started administering an inhalable COVID-19 vaccine yesterday in what appears to be a world first.

The vaccine, a mist that is sucked in through the mouth, is being offered for free as a booster dose for previously vaccinated people, according to an announcement on an official city social media account.

Scientists hope that such “needle-free” vaccines will make vaccination more accessible in countries with fragile health systems because they are easier to administer. They also may persuade people who don’t like getting a shot in the arm to get inoculated.

China wants more people to get booster shots before it relaxes strict pandemic restrictions that are holding back the economy and are increasingly out of synch with

the rest of the world. As of mid-October, 90% of Chinese were fully vaccinated and 57% had received a booster shot.

A video posted by an online Chinese state media outlet showed people at a community health center sticking the short nozzle of a translucent white cup into their mouths. The accompanying text said that after slowly inhaling, people hold their breath for five seconds, with the entire procedure

completed in 20 seconds.

“It was like drinking a cup of milk tea,” one Shanghai resident said in the video. “When I breathed it in, it tasted a bit sweet.”

A vaccine taken in the mouth could also fend off the virus before it reaches the rest of the respiratory system, though that would depend in part on the size of the droplets, one expert said.

Larger droplets would train defenses in parts of the mouth and throat, while smaller ones would travel further into the body, said Dr. Vineeta Bal, an immunologist in India.

Chinese regulators approved the vaccine for use as a booster in September. It was developed by Chinese biopharmaceutical company CanSino Biologics Inc. as an aerosol version of the company’s one-shot adenovirus vaccine, which uses a relatively harmless cold virus.

The traditional one-shot vaccine has been approved for use in more than 10 markets including China, Hungary, Pakistan, Malaysia, Argentina and Mexico. The inhaled version has received a go-ahead for clinical trials in Malaysia, a Malaysian media report said last month.

Regulators in India have approved a nasal vaccine, another needle-free approach, but it has yet to be rolled out. The vaccine, developed in the U.S. and licensed to Indian vaccine maker Bharat Biotech, is squirted in the nose.

About a dozen nasal vaccines are being tested globally, according to the World Health Organization.

China has relied on domestically developed vaccines, primarily two inactivated vaccines that have proven effective in preventing death and serious disease but less so than the Pfizer and Moderna vaccines at stopping the spread of the disease.

Chinese authorities also have not mandated vaccination — entering an office building or other public places requires a negative COVID-19 test, not proof of vaccination. And the country’s strict “zero-COVID” approach means that only a small proportion of the population has been infected and built immunity that way, compared to other places.

As a result, it’s unclear how widely COVID-19 would spread if restrictions were lifted. The ruling Communist Party has so far shown no sign of easing the “zero-COVID” policy, moving quickly to restrict travel and impose lockdowns when even just a few cases are discovered.

Authorities yesterday ordered the lockdown of 900,000 people in Wuhan, the city where the virus was first detected in late 2019, for at least five days. In remote Qinghai province, the urban districts of Xining city have been locked down since last Friday.

In Beijing, Universal Studios said it would close its hotels and attractions “to comply with pandemic prevention and control.” The city of more than 21 million people reported 19 new cases in the latest 24-hour period. **MDT/AP**

SHIPPING

Germany finds compromise over Chinese stake in Hamburg port

GERMANY’S government agreed on a compromise yesterday that will allow a Chinese shipping group to take a smaller stake in the operator of the country’s biggest container terminal following concerns the deal might pose a national security risk.

German Chancellor Olaf Scholz’ Cabinet agreed to allow COSCO Shipping to only acquire a stake below 25% - instead of the previously planned 35% — in the Tollerort terminal of Hamburg port logistics company HHLA, the Ministry for Economic Affairs said in a statement.

The ministry said the decision was made to prevent a “strategic investment” by COSCO in the terminal and “reduces the acquisition to a purely financial investment.”



The Terminal Burchardkai at the port in Hamburg

“The reason for the partial prohibition is the existence of a threat to public order and safety,” the ministry said.

The 25% threshold cannot be exceeded in the future without a new investment review process, the

German ministry said. It added that COSCO is prohibited from contractually granting itself veto rights over strategic business or personnel decisions.

The question of whether Chinese participation in the port should be permi-

tted had produced a political dispute as Germany wrestled with the consequences of its dependence on Russian natural gas.

Lawmakers from the Green party and the Free Democrats, which formed a governing coalition last

year with Scholz’ Social Democrats, openly criticized the original proposal last week. Six German government ministries initially rejected it on the grounds that COSCO, already the port’s biggest customer, could get too much leverage.

Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Wang Wenbin reacted to the latest developments during a regularly scheduled news conference.

“Cooperation should be mutually beneficial,” Wang said. “We hope the relevant party will see practical cooperation between China and Germany in a rational manner and stop unwarrantedly hyping the issue.”

Scholz, who is set to travel to China early next month with a delegation of German business representatives, was in favor of COSCO’s participation in an HHLA deal, German media reported.

Foreign Minister Annalena Baerbock had argued that Berlin needed to avoid repeating with China the mistakes it made with

Russia. German President Frank-Walter Steinmeier also warned against becoming too dependent on China.

“We have to learn lessons and learning the lesson means we have to reduce unilateral dependencies wherever possible, and that applies to China in particular,” Steinmeier told public broadcaster ARD during a Tuesday visit to Ukraine.

German intelligence agencies said earlier this month that China’s financial might could become a risk for Germany, particularly because of the strong economic and scientific ties between the two countries.

At a hearing with lawmakers, the head of Germany’s domestic intelligence agency, Thomas Haldenwang, made a comparison with the current geopolitical turmoil from the war in Ukraine, saying that “Russia is the storm, China is climate change.”

COSCO also holds stakes in several other European ports, including the Greek port of Piraeus. **MDT/AP**

MYANMAR

UN envoy says crisis deepens, taking 'catastrophic toll'

EDITH M. LEDERER,
UNITED NATIONS

THE U.N. special envoy for Myanmar warned yesterday [Macau time] that the political, human rights and humanitarian crisis in the military-ruled Southeast Asian nation is deepening and taking "a catastrophic toll on the people."

Noeleen Heyzer told the U.N. General Assembly's human rights committee that more than 13.2 million people don't have enough to eat, 1.3 million are displaced and the military continues operations using disproportionate force including bombings, burnings of homes and buildings, and the killing of civilians.

Heyzer's briefing was her first at the U.N. in New York since she visited Myanmar in August and met the head of the military government, Senior Gen. Min Aung Hlaing.

She said the meeting "was part of broader efforts by the U.N. to urgently support a return to civilian rule." She stressed that "there is a new political reality in Myanmar: a people demanding change, no longer willing to accept military rule."

Heyzer said she made six requests during the meeting with the military's commander-in-chief, including to end aerial bombing and the burning of civilian infrastructure; deliver humanitarian aid without discriminating; release all children and political prisoners; institute a moratorium on executions; en-



United Nations special envoy for Myanmar Noeleen Heyzer

sure the well-being of and allow meetings with the country's imprisoned former leader Aung San Suu Kyi; and create conditions for the voluntary and safe return of over 1 million Rohingya refugees who fled to Bangladesh to escape military crackdowns.

Myanmar for five decades had languished under strict military rule that led to international isolation and sanctions. As the generals loosened their grip, culminating in Suu Kyi's rise to leadership in 2015 elections, the international community responded by lifting most sanctions and pouring investment into the country.

That ended with the military's Feb. 1, 2021 coup following November 2020 elections in which Suu Kyi's National League for Democracy party won overwhelm-

ingly and the military contested as fraudulent.

The takeover was met with massive public opposition, which has since turned into armed resistance that some U.N. experts, including Heyzer's predecessor, Christine Schraner Burgener, have characterized as civil war.

Much of the international community, including Myanmar's fellow members in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, have expressed frustration at the hard line the generals have taken in resisting reform. Myanmar's rulers agreed to a five-point ASEAN plan in April 2021 to restore peace and stability to the country but the military has made little effort to implement the plan.

The plan calls for the immediate cessation of violence, a dialo-

gue among all concerned parties, mediation of the dialogue process by an ASEAN special envoy, provision of humanitarian aid through ASEAN channels and a visit to Myanmar by the association's special envoy to meet all concerned parties. Heyzer and ASEAN special envoy Prak Sokhonn, a Cambodian minister, have both visited Myanmar but neither was allowed to meet Suu Kyi.

Heyzer told the human rights committee there are some avenues to pursue.

"While there is little room for the de-escalation of violence or for 'talks about talks' in the present zero-sum situation, there are some concrete ways to reduce the suffering of the people," she said.

Heyzer said she has been working "extremely closely" with

the ASEAN envoy and the ASEAN chair, but she was critical of its five-point consensus, which doesn't deal with the Rohingya or how best to return Myanmar to civilian rule.

Another issue that is critical, she said, is that the humanitarian aid under the five-point plan "actually works through the channels of the military, and it doesn't quite reach the people that are most in need."

Heyzer said that since many more people will be forced to flee Myanmar to escape violence, she will keep pressing ASEAN "to develop a regional protection framework for refugees and forcibly displaced persons."

"The recent forced return of Myanmar nationals, some of whom were detained on arrival, underlines the urgency of a coordinated ASEAN response to address shared regional challenges caused by the conflict," she said.

On the humanitarian front, Heyzer said key armed ethnic organizations and the opposition National Unity Government appealed to her to convene a forum "to facilitate protection and humanitarian assistance to all people in need, in observance of international humanitarian law."

She said the plight of the Rohingya, and other forcibly displaced from Myanmar, "remains desperate, with many seeking refuge through dangerous land and sea journeys."

Violence between the Arakan Army and the government in northern Rakhine state, where the Rohingya fled from but where hundreds of thousands of Rohingya still live, "has escalated to levels not seen since late 2020, with significant cross-border incursions," she said.

Heyzer said this is endangering all communities, harming conditions for the return of Rohingya, and "prolonging the burden on Bangladesh." **MDT/AP**

NEW ZEALAND

Women lawmakers outnumber men for first time



New Labour MP Soraya Peke-Mason smiles during her maiden speech at Parliament in Wellington

FOR the first time in New Zealand's history, a majority of lawmakers are women.

Soraya Peke-Mason from the liberal Labour Party was sworn in to Parliament this week, replacing former Speaker Trevor Mallard, who left to become ambassador to Ireland. With the resignation of another male lawmaker, it has tipped the balance in Parliament to 60 women and 59 men.

"Whilst it's a special day for me, I think it's historic for New Zealand," Peke-Mason told reporters.

The milestone places New Zealand among a half-dozen nations in the world that this year can claim at least 50% female representation in their parliaments, according to the Inter-Parliamentary Union. Other nations include Cuba, Mexico, Nicaragua, Rwanda and the United Arab Emirates.

Globally, about 26% of lawmakers are women, according to the union.

New Zealand has a history of strong female representation. In 1893, it became the first nation to

allow women to vote. Current Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern is the nation's third female leader, and women currently also hold a number of other top roles including chief justice of New Zealand's Supreme Court and governor-general.

"I'm just really pleased that my daughters are growing up in a country where women being equally represented in public life is just normal," said Nicola Willis, the deputy leader of the conservative National Party.

Marama Davidson, co-

-leader of the liberal Green Party, was more blunt.

"About blimmin' time," she told reporters.

Ardern cautioned that the situation for women in many other countries was precarious.

"As we step forward, it feels as if we watch so many women experiencing a rapid slide backwards in progress," she said.

And reaching gender parity could prove only transitory. Opinion polls indicate that New Zealand's conservative parties, which currently have a lower proportion of women than their liberal rivals, are poised to make gains during next year's general election. **MDT/AP**

PUTIN'S WAR

Opposition leader says Belarus shouldn't fight for Russia

YURAS KARMANAU
& DASHA LITVINOVA,
TALLINN

AN opposition leader in exile from Belarus said yesterday [Macau time] that her country's soldiers should lay down their arms if they are deployed to Ukraine under pressure from Russia.

Russia used Belarus as a staging ground for troops and weapons when it invaded Ukraine eight months ago. Concerns persist that the authoritarian president of Belarus, Alexander Lukashenko, might agree to send his own troops south into Ukraine.

Opposition leader Sviatlana Tsikhanouskaya, who has been in exile in Lithuania since 2020, said the leadership of Belarus has become a hostage of powerful allies in Moscow who provide political and economic support. She opposes the direct involvement of Belarus in the war.

"If it happens that under pressure, under threats, Belarusian troops will be deployed, we're urging our soldiers to lay down their arms, join the guerillas, change sides, join the Ukrainian military," Tsikhanouskaya said during a visit to Estonia.

Moscow has pumped billions of dollars into shoring up the Soviet-style, state-controlled economy of Belarus with cheap energy and loans. Lukashenko, who has been president since 1994, survived the largest mass protests in the country's history following a 2020 presidential election that the opposition and the West denounced as rigged.

Tsikhanouskaya ran against Lukashenko in that election, and many believed she won. She was forced to leave Belarus under pressure from the government.

"Lukashenko, of course, is very dependent on the Kremlin, because it is the Kremlin that helped him in 2020 to hold on to power, and right now he is paying his debt to the Kremlin," Tsikhanouskaya told The Associated Press.

Lukashenko has publicly supported Russia's attack on Ukraine, drawing inter-



Belarus exiled opposition leader Sviatlana Tsikhanouskaya speaks during her interview with AP in Tallinn, Estonia

national criticism and sanctions against Minsk. Still, he has repeatedly rebuffed speculation that Belarus would send its own soldiers to fight alongside Russia.

Earlier this month, however, Belarusian authorities announced the establishment of a joint "regional grouping of troops" with Russia and said some 9,000 Russian soldiers would be stationed in Belarus.

Tsikhanouskaya said there currently was no evidence of a planned Belarusian deployment in Ukraine. The 1,000-kilometer Belarus-Ukraine border has been mined, she pointed out, and "the Ukrainian forces are also prepared for the possible offensive" from Belarus.

She also spoke out against Belarus storing Russian nuclear weapons — a possibility Lukashenko also has mentioned.

"A possible scheme they have is following: if the irrational thinking of Putin, all of the sudden, leads to doing this terrible thing with terrible outcome, it will be done from the territory of Belarus, (so Putin can) demonstrate that I'm not alone like this,

I have an ally," Tsikhanouskaya predicted.

In the meantime, hundreds of Belarusians volunteered to fight in Ukraine as part of the Kastus Kalinousky regiment. A separate guerilla movement in Belarus has disrupted the movement by rail of Russian military equipment.

"It [was] the Kremlin that helped Lukashenko in 2020 to hold on to power, and right now he is paying his debt to the Kremlin.

SVIATLANA TSIKHANOUSKAYA
BELARUS OPPOSITION LEADER

"A guy who in 2020 took his shoes off to stand on a bench (during a demonstration) is fighting in the Kalinousky regiment now," Tsikhanouskaya said. "We see that Belarusians are not all that patient... But I remain committed to peaceful change."

Tsikhanouskaya has formed a Cabinet in exile, and two former high-level security officials joined it. She invited Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy to form "an alliance with the

democratic Belarus" but has not yet received a response.

Still, Tsikhanouskaya said, one "should view Belarus as occupied territory."

"Now is not the time to compare our pains," Tsikhanouskaya said. "We are now in the same boat. Of course, the situation is completely different; there is ... a terrible

war there while in Belarus there are political and military repressions. But we draw on the fact that Russia considers neither Ukraine, nor Belarus sovereign independent states."

Lukashenko harshly suppressed mass antigovernment protests triggered by his 2020 reelection. Police arrested 35,000 people and brutally beat scores. Tsikhanouskaya told the AP that 150,000-200,000 Belarusians have left the country, and 1,349 political prisoners are currently behind bars.

They include the co-winner of this year's Nobel Peace Prize, Ales Bialiatski, founder of Belarus' most prominent human rights group, and opposition politician Siarhei Tsikhanouski, who is Tsikhanouskaya's husband. **MDT/AP**

this day in history

1950 HUNT FOR MISSING ATOMIC SCIENTIST

The British intelligence service MI5 has been brought into the hunt for the missing atomic scientist Bruno Pontecorvo who has not been seen for about seven weeks.

Professor Pontecorvo and his family arrived in Finland at the beginning of September but they have since disappeared. There is speculation the family may have gone to the Soviet Union.



The professor had recently left his post as a principal scientific officer at Harwell atomic research station in Oxfordshire and was due to begin a new job at Liverpool University in January.

His disappearance comes just 10 months after another Harwell scientist, Klaus Fuchs, confessed in January to spying for the Soviet Union.

The Minister of Supply, George Strauss, has told MPs the professor had had only limited access to "secret subjects" for some time.

But he admitted it would have been possible for the professor to gather information, at Harwell or while he was in Canada, which could be of value to the enemy.

He said Professor Pontecorvo had been screened several times in the last few years by security officers.

Professor Pontecorvo was born in Italy, moved to France in 1936 and from there to the United States in 1940.

In 1943 he became a member of the joint Anglo-Canadian atomic energy team at Montreal.

He was posted to Harwell in January 1947.

Information on Professor Pontecorvo's disappearance has been passed to the United States.

The professor's sister, Anna Pontecorvo, who lives in Hampstead in north London, travelled with her brother, his wife and three sons to France and Italy in July.

She said her brother had not mentioned any plans to go to Russia during the time she spent with them.

However, a passenger in the airliner which took the family from Stockholm to Helsinki said that during the flight the Pontecorvos' five-year-old son Antonio had told him they were going to Russia.

There are direct flights from Helsinki to Leningrad and Moscow.

Courtesy BBC News

IN CONTEXT

Bruno Pontecorvo's post as Professor of Experimental Physics at the University of Liverpool was cancelled.

Confirmation he had fled to Moscow came in March 1955 when he appeared at a news conference in Russia.

He wrote an article in the Soviet newspapers Pravda and Izvestia saying his family had been granted refuge in the Soviet Union, where he was working with the Institute of Physical Problems of the Soviet Academy of Science.

He said he was involved in research into the use of atomic energy for peaceful purposes and had left the West because in his view it was intent on "new war using atomic and nuclear weapons as a means for achieving world domination".

Documents released by the Public Records Office under the 50-year rule revealed an administrative blunder had led to Professor Pontecorvo being given security clearance to work at Harwell - even though a search of his home in 1943 had uncovered many documents on communism.

He was awarded the Lenin prize for nuclear research in 1963. He died in 1993.

MACAU'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

YOUR STARS

ARIES
Mar. 21-Apr. 19
You can travel for business or pleasure. You will find that social activities will lead you into passionate meetings. Someone you live with will be quite unreasonable today.

TAURUS
Apr. 20-May. 20
Don't exaggerate. There'll be difficulties if you spend too much. You will have the discipline to make changes you feel are necessary. Try not to be overly generous.

GEMINI
May. 21-Jun. 21
You will be well looked upon due to your compassionate and giving nature. Pleasure trips will be favorable and bring about possible romance.

CANCER
Jun. 22-Jul. 22
You will have a tendency to exaggerate, which will lead to major confrontations with loved ones. Get involved in groups that are creative in nature.

LEO
Jul. 23-Aug. 22
Strength will come from your ability to overtake just about any one. You will find the perfect outfit if you shop today. You may want to take a look at courses offered at a local institute.

VIRGO
Aug. 23-Sep. 22
Travel will be fun, but expect it to cost you. This is not the best day to visit relatives who get on your nerves. Opportunities for financial gains through investments and games of chance are likely.

LIBRA
Sep. 23-Oct. 22
You can make money if you're willing to push your ideas on those in a position to support your efforts. Try not to be overly generous. You should be setting up interviews or sending out your resume today.

SCORPIO
Oct. 23-Nov. 21
You will not impress others by being foolishly generous. Travel should be on your mind. Real estate investments will be extremely profitable in the long run.

SAGITTARIUS
Nov. 22-Dec. 21
You need some help today. Romantic relationships could be under pressure. Concentrate on getting ahead financially and let your personal life settle down for a while.

CAPRICORN
Dec. 22-Jan. 19
You may find a rare antique today. Situations you can't change should be forgotten for the present. It might be time to do some of those chores at home.

AQUARIUS
Jan. 20-Feb. 18
Keep calm. Someone around you is bouncing off the walls. You can make or break your personal relationship today. Don't be afraid to say what's on your mind.

PISCES
Feb. 19-Mar. 20
Your determination and sheer desire to do your own thing will be successful. Your confidence is growing and advancement is apparent.

The Born Loser by Chip Sansom



SUDOKU

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

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

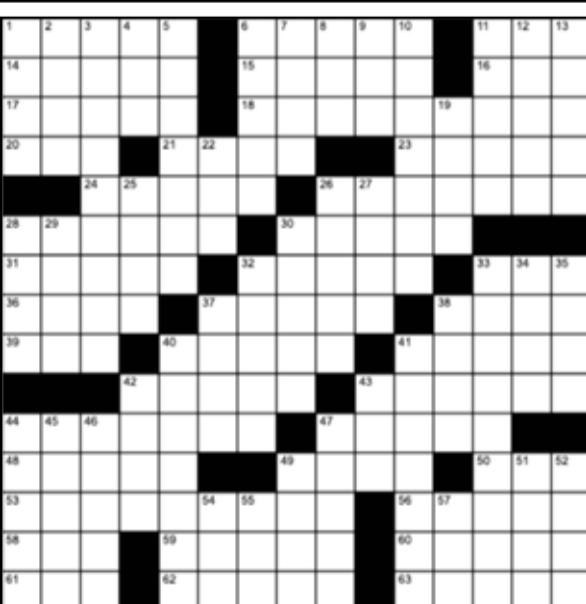
WEATHER

	MIN	MAX	CONDITION
CHINA			
Beijing	10	16	rain
Changchun	5	12	rain
Chengdu	14	20	cloudy
Chongqing	17	19	rain
Fuzhou	17	26	cloudy
Guangzhou	17	30	fine
Guiyang	14	20	overcast
Haikou	22	28	cloudy
Hangzhou	15	20	overcast
Harbin	1	9	rain
Hefei	13	17	rain
Nanjing	14	17	rain
Shanghai	15	21	overcast
Taipei	19	23	cloudy
Wuhan	16	19	cloudy
Hong Kong	24	27	fine
WORLD			
Moscow	4	6	rain
Frankfurt	12	21	overcast
Paris	17	24	overcast
London	14	20	rain
New York	7	18	fine

CROSSWORDS

ACROSS 1- ___ de Leon; 6- Relinquish; 11- Peke squeak; 14- City on the Missouri; 15- "All My Children" vixen; 16- Peer Gynt's mother; 17- Spanish Mister; 18- Capital of Tennessee; 20- Med. specialty; 21- Missing; 23- Really bother; 24- Helpful; 26- Simulated military operation; 28- Hosted; 30- Pipe cleaner; 31- Member of a motorcycle gang; 32- ___ Ark; 33- ___ alai; 36- Up and ___; 37- Awkward boos; 38- Hire; 39- Are we there ___?; 40- Place on a scale; 41- Circumference; 42- Newly made; 43- Excite; 44- Divine; 47- Castle water pits; 48- Current location; 49- Hard to hold; 50- High-pitched; 53- Possible; 56- Inuit dwelling; 58- Tolkien ogre; 59- Minimum; 60- Bergen dummy; 61- Word used to precede a woman's maiden name; 62- Politico Kefauver; 63- Moist;

DOWN 1- Attitude; 2- Prophetic sign; 3- New England summer resort island; 4- Comic Margaret; 5- Prior; 6- Slow on the uptake; 7- Quod ___ demonstrandum; 8- Fire starter?; 9- ___ bin ein Berliner; 10- Inns; 11- Seaport in the Crimea; 12- Religion of the Muslims; 13- Golfer Calvin; 19- Emilia's husband; 22- On in years; 25- Abound; 26- Anger; 27- Contented sighs; 28- Auction site; 29- Microscopic arachnid; 30- Paste; 32- Racket; 33- Capital of Israel; 34- Farm dwellers; 35- Spillane's "___ Jury"; 37- Vichysoise ingredient; 38- Civil disturbance; 40- Crease in the skin; 41- Like grandpa's hair?; 42- Custardy dessert; 43- "You've got mail" co.; 44- Boarded; 45- Earth tone; 46- Thaw before takeoff; 47- Confronts; 49- Different; 51- Actress Singer; 52- Sweeney ___; 54- DDE's rival; 55- Cave dweller; 57- Bearded grazer;



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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AD

KIM TONG-HYUNG,
SEOUL

TECH

SOUTH KOREAN CHIPMAKER SK HYNIX WORRIES ABOUT CHINA FUTURE

SOUTH Korean computer chipmaker SK Hynix said yesterday it might be forced to sell its manufacturing operations in China if a U.S. crackdown on exports of semiconductor technology and manufacturing equipment to China intensifies.

SK Hynix's chief marketing officer, Kevin Noh, raised those concerns during a conference call yesterday after the company reported its operating profit dropped 60% in the last quarter from 2021, a decline it blamed on a deteriorating business environment.

Global inflation amplified by Russia's war on Ukraine and rising interest rates imposed by central banks to counter surging prices have slowed consumer spending on the kinds of high-tech products requiring computer chips. SK Hynix and other semiconductor makers are

AP PHOTO



also navigating new U.S. restrictions on exports of advanced semicon-

ductors and chipmaking equipment to China. Such limits were in part

imposed to prevent use of American advanced technology in China's military development.

SK Hynix said this month that the U.S. Department of Commerce granted the company a one-year exemption from such requirements, allowing it to provide equipment and other supplies to its Chinese factories making memory chips.

Other major chip and chip-manufacturing equipment makers like Samsung and Taiwan's TSMC are thought to have also gotten exemptions.

SK Hynix may find it difficult to equip its manufacturing line in the eastern Chinese city of Wuxi with the most advanced chipmaking machines, including extreme ultraviolet lithography (EUV) systems, Noh said. He said SK Hynix doesn't expect major disruptions at the plant at least until the late 2020s, but things could quickly turn for the worse if Washington refuses to extend temporary exemptions at some point and begins to fully enforce its export controls.

"If it becomes a situation where we would have to obtain (U.S.) license on a tool-by-tool basis, that will disrupt the supply of equipment

... and we could face difficulties in operating (Chinese) fabrication facilities at a much earlier point than the late 2020s," Noh said.

"If we face problems that make it difficult for us to operate our Chinese fabrication facilities including the Wuxi plant, we are considering various scenarios, including selling those fabrication facilities or their equipment or bringing them to South Korea," Noh said.

He said those contingency plans would apply to a "very extreme situation," and the company hopes to avoid such problems and operate as normal.

Citing an "unprecedented deterioration" in market conditions, SK Hynix said it would cut its investment next year by more than 50% as it anticipates supply will continue to exceed demand for the time being. The country's operating profit for the three months through September was at 1.65 trillion won (\$1.16 billion), compared to 4.17 trillion won (\$2.92 billion) during the same period last year. Revenue fell 7% to 10.98 trillion won (\$7.7 billion).

Some experts say that the U.S.-China technology standoff could force SK Hynix and Samsung

Electronics, another major South Korean chipmaker, to significantly modify their Chinese operations over the next few years.

According to market analysis firm TrendForce, SK Hynix's Wuxi plant accounts for about 13% of the world's total DRAM production capacity. About 40% of Samsung's NAND flash chips are reportedly produced from its factory in the Chinese city of Xi'an, accounting for around 10% of global production.

"The existing (principles) we accepted as common sense, such as finding a certain region where we could produce most efficiently at the cheapest cost and shipping those products globally, are becoming increasingly uncertain as (our) decision making is being influenced by various layers of factors beyond just business," Noh said.

Samsung, the world's largest provider of memory chips, is widely believed to have received a similar exemption from the U.S. restrictions, although the company has not publicly confirmed it. Noh during the call said SK Hynix's "competitors" have also been granted the U.S. waivers, in a possible reference to Samsung and Taiwan's TSMC. **MDT/AP**

AD

FOOTBALL | CHAMPIONS LEAGUE

Benfica, PSG among four teams advancing to knockout phase

STEVE DOUGLAS

LIONEL Messi kept up his stellar pre-World Cup form to help rampant Paris Saint-Germain become one of four teams to advance to the last 16 of the Champions League yesterday [Macau time], along with Benfica, Chelsea and Borussia Dortmund.

That's more than half of the round of 16 lineup confirmed now — five clubs had already gone through — and PSG will be one of the teams its rivals are looking to avoid, especially with Messi in this mood. Kylian Mbappe, too.

At opposite ends of their careers, the two superstar forwards are tasked with guiding the French champions to a first Champions League title and they both scored twice in a 7-2 thrashing of Maccabi Haifa.

Neymar, the other member of the team's high-profile attacking trident, also scored in a victory that guaranteed PSG a top-two finish alongside Benfica in Group H. Both teams are on 11 points heading into the final round.

Benfica was a 4-3 winner over Juventus, which has failed to reach the knockout stage for the first time since the 2013-14 season.

With perhaps the best goal of the 33 scored in the next-to-last round of group games, Kai Havertz whipped a long-range shot in off the crossbar to earn Chelsea a 2-1 win at Salzburg and a first-place finish in Group E.

It's the 18th time in 19 group-stage campaigns that Chelsea, a two-time Champions League winner, has advanced. PSG has done so for 11 straight seasons now but has yet to win European soccer's biggest prize.

Dortmund joined Manchester City in advancing from Group G after drawing 0-0 with the English champions, who are now sure to finish in first place.

Already-qualified Real Madrid, the defending champion, lost 3-2 at Leipzig and must wait to seal top spot on Group F. Leipzig is on the brink of advancing after moving three points clear of Shakhtar Donetsk, which drew 1-1 at Celtic.



Benfica's on an unbeatable streak of 19 matches: Rafa Silva (second from left) celebrates his team's fourth goal

PSG 7, MACCABI 2

Messi is certainly in his best form since joining Qatari-backed PSG and might not be too far from his Barcelona prime, a month before he attempts to win the World Cup for the first time with Argentina.

It's 11 goals in his last nine games for club and country, and 129 career goals in the Champions League — 11 behind his great rival Cristiano Ronaldo, who isn't playing in the competition this season at Manchester United.

Messi, who also set up two goals against Maccabi, set PSG on its way with a casual finish with the outside of his left foot from a standing start. Mbappe curled home from a similar position for the second goal and made the decoy run that allowed Messi to play in Neymar for the third goal.

Messi added his second before halftime when he ran toward the area, checked back onto his left foot inside a would-be tackler, and found the bottom corner from 20 meters.

The crowd inside the Parc des Princes was lapping it up and there were further goals from Mbappe, and Carlos Soler, as well as an own-goal, after the break.

PSG conceded two goals

from set pieces to blot its performance.

BENFICA 4, JUVENTUS 3

Juventus' earliest Champions League exit in nearly a decade came a day after the Italian team learned that club president Andrea Agnelli, vice president Pavel Nedved and CEO Maurizio Arrivabene are among 15 people placed under investigation for alleged false accounting and irregularities in player transfers.

One of the few remaining clubs clinging onto the idea of a European Super League, Juventus faces a struggle to return to the Champions League next season after a slow start to Serie A.

They sure couldn't keep up with Benfica, for whom António Silva, João Mário and Rafa Silva scored in a wild first half. Silva added a second after halftime.

Late goals from Arkadiusz Milik and Weston McKennie proved in vain for Juventus, which has lost four of its five group games.

DORTMUND 0, MAN CITY 0

Erling Haaland didn't enjoy his return to former club Dortmund.

The striker was replaced by Man City manager Pep Guardiola at halftime, perhaps with an eye to future Premier League games and with the team already through to the last 16. Guardiola also said Haaland had been struggling with a fever.

City winger Riyad Mahrez had a penalty saved

in the second half — he also failed from the spot against FC Copenhagen two weeks ago — as Dortmund claimed the point it needed to advance.

Sevilla beat Copenhagen 3-0 and will drop into the

Europa League qualifiers as a third-place finisher.

DIN ZAGREB 0, AC MILAN 4

While Chelsea is through with a game to spare, AC Milan still has work to do in

the group.

The seven-time European champion beat Dinamo Zagreb 4-0 away to jump into second, a point above Salzburg. The teams meet next week and Milan needs to avoid defeat to return to the Champions League's knockout stage for the first time in nine years.

Matteo Gabbia, Rafael Leão — with a fine solo goal — and a penalty by Olivier Giroud put Milan 3-0 ahead before Dinamo midfielder Robert Ljubii scored an own-goal.

LEIPZIG 3, REAL MADRID 2

Real Madrid fielded a weakened team — star striker Karim Benzema and Luka Modric were among those missing — and fell to its first loss of the season in all competitions.

Josko Gvardiol and Christopher Nkunku scored for Leipzig before Vinícius Júnior reduced the deficit with an instinctive header.

Substitute Timo Werner restored the two-goal cushion for Leipzig, which conceded again when Rodrygo converted a penalty in stoppage time. **MDT/AP**



**BENFICAMACAU
ACADEMY**
澳門賓菲加體育學校



FOOTBALL | BASKETBALL | DAILY TRAININGS

OPINION

China Daily
 Editorial, China Daily

**CLEAR SIGN THAT
 OPENING-UP IS
 MOVING ON**

In a sign that China will continue to attract foreign investors with improved investment environment and better services, the central authorities have pledged to further facilitate the border entry and exit of executives and technicians of multinationals and foreign-invested companies and their families, under the premise of sound COVID-19 pandemic prevention and control.

This is one of the 15 measures the National Development and Reform Commission and five other central government departments laid out in a notice issued on Tuesday to facilitate foreign investment in the country with a focus on the manufacturing sector. The notice also vows to deepen the implementation of the negative lists for foreign investors, and encourage foreign investment in high-end equipment, basic components and key parts for advanced manufacturing as well as high-tech industries.

The encouraging news comes after several Chinese airlines, including China Eastern and China Southern, recently announced that they will soon increase the number of scheduled international flights, indicating that the country is now positioning itself to gradually restore trade and economic activities as well as other international exchanges to pre-pandemic levels.

The almost three-year COVID-19 pandemic has had substantial negative impacts on world trade and global industrial and supply chains, causing many countries to face possible recession. China has responded to the challenge, by trying to strike a delicate balance between growth and a pandemic control and prevention approach that puts people's lives first. The fact that China, the world's largest trading and manufacturing nation, has managed to basically keep its economic activities on a normal track thanks to its dynamic clearing policy, has enabled it to keep playing its pivotal role as the ballast for world economic growth.

The latest easing of border restrictions implies the country will build on the progress it has made in pandemic prevention and control to further normalize its business and trade activities with other countries, injecting new confidence that it will continue to promote the benefits of globalization and integrate more closely with the world economy.

Despite the pressure it faces to prevent the pandemic rebounding within the country and keep imported cases at bay, China has maintained its position as the world's major destination for foreign investment. Its actual use of foreign direct investment surged 16.4 percent year-on-year to 892.7 billion yuan (\$122 billion) in the first eight months of this year. In particular, FDI in high-tech manufacturing rose 43.1 percent from the same period a year ago.

All this paves the way for the country to continue to push ahead with high-quality development and high-level opening-up.

The ambassadors of Russia and Belarus have been excluded from this year's Nobel Prize ceremony in Stockholm because of the war in Ukraine.

The Nobel Foundation, a private foundation which administers the prestigious awards, normally invites ambassadors stationed in Sweden to the annual award ceremony on Dec. 10.

"But due to Russia's invasion of Ukraine, the Nobel Foundation has chosen not to invite the ambassadors of Russia and Belarus to the Nobel Prize ceremony in Stockholm," it said in a statement issued yesterday [Macau time].

The foundation also said it would continue its practice of inviting

the leaders of all parties in the Swedish Parliament, except the anti-immigration Sweden Democrats.

The group, which has sought to distance itself from its far-right roots, won more than 20% of the vote in Sweden's Sept. 11 election to become the country's second biggest political party and a close partner of the new center-right government.

The Nobel Foundation said it saw no reason to reconsider its previous decision to leave out the Sweden Democrats, noting that the Nobel Prizes are "based on respect for science, culture, humanism and internationalism."



Firemen stand beside a damaged church after a strong earthquake at Ilocos Norte, Northern Philippines, yesterday

**STRONG QUAKE INJURES
 DOZENS, SHUTS NORTH
 PHILIPPINE AIRPORT**

JIM GOMEZ, MANILA

A strong earthquake rocked a large swath of the northern Philippines, injuring at least 36 people and forcing the closure of an international airport and the evacuation of patients in a hospital, officials said yesterday.

The Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology said Tuesday night's magnitude 6.4 quake, which was set off by movement of a local fault, was centered 9 kilometers northwest of Lagayan town in Abra province at a depth of 11 kilometers.

The U.S. Tsunami Warning System said no warning or advisory was issued.

The quake was felt across a wide area of the main northern Luzon region, including in some parts of metropolitan Manila, more than 400 kilometers (250 miles) south of Abra.

At least 10 people received mostly minor injuries in Abra, mainly from falling debris, and 26 others were injured in Ilocos Norte, the

home province of President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. The international airport in Ilocos Norte's capital city of Laoag was closed yesterday due to damage from the quake and at least two domestic flights were canceled, officials said.

In Batac city, also in Ilocos Norte, patients were moved out of the province's largest hospital after parts of the ceiling in the intensive care unit fell as the building swayed. Medical consultation services at the hospital were suspended. School classes in the province were halted while engineers assessed damage to buildings, officials said.

Marcos Jr. said authorities were inspecting roads and buildings. "Most people are asking for tents because they're afraid to go back to their houses because if these have been weakened and an aftershock hits, they may get hurt," he said at a news conference in Manila.

More than 400 aftershocks have been detected but only a few were felt by people, officials said.

In the town of La Paz in Abra, a century-old Christian church was damaged, with parts of its belfry collapsing and some walls cracked, littering the church's grassy yard with debris, officials said.

At least two towns in Cagayan province lost electricity due to damaged power lines. A number of bridges and roads in outlying provinces were damaged.

In July, a magnitude 7 earthquake set off landslides and damaged buildings in Abra and other northern provinces, killing at least five people and injuring dozens.

In 1990, a magnitude 7.7 quake killed nearly 2,000 people in the northern Philippines and wrought extensive damage, including in Manila.

The Philippine archipelago lies on the "Pacific Ring of Fire," a region along most of the Pacific Ocean rim where many volcanic eruptions and earthquakes occur, making the Southeast Asian nation one of the world's most disaster-prone. **MDT/AP**



UK Rishi Sunak faced the opposition in Parliament for the first time as Britain's prime minister yesterday, seeking to provide assurances that his new government would offer economic stability and continuity after his predecessor's tax plans triggered market tumult. Sunak, who took office Tuesday, has appointed a government that mixes allies with experienced ministers from the administrations of his two immediate predecessors, Boris Johnson and Liz Truss, as he tries to tackle Britain's multiple economic problems.



Germany's health minister unveiled a plan yesterday to decriminalize the possession of up to 30 grams of cannabis and to allow the sale of the substance to adults for recreational purposes in a controlled market. Berlin will check with the European Union's executive commission whether the plan approved by the German government is in line with EU laws and would proceed with legislation "on this basis" only if it gets the green light, Health Minister Karl Lauterbach said.



South Africa Cape Town port is ideally suited to host a \$500 million superyacht linked to sanctioned Russian billionaire Alexey Mordashov, a South African official said, after the country announced its intention to let the vessel dock there despite a bid by the city's mayor to block its entry. The South African government made the announcement amid claims steel and mining magnate Alexey Mordashov is seeking a new harbor to shield the superyacht from seizure.