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AL: THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD CLARIFY REGULATIONS CONCERNING PARKING LOTS IN THE CITY OPERATED ON PRIVATE LAND

P4

CARITAS BAZAAR ESTIMATED TO HAVE RAISED OVER MOP5 MILLION THIS YEAR

P2

ZHUHAI AIR SHOW SEEKS TO POSITION CHINA AS GLOBAL COMPETITOR

P6



Singapore Sri Lanka's navy said that about 300 suspected migrants have been rescued by Singapore authorities after their boat started sinking. A Sri Lankan citizen on the boat contacted the navy today [Macau time] and said they were in distress, and the Maritime Rescue Coordination Center in Colombo sought help from Singapore, Vietnam and the Philippines. Singapore authorities later notified Sri Lanka that the people on board the boat had been rescued and were heading to Vietnam.

AP PHOTO



New Zealand The man who slaughtered 51 Muslim worshippers during the deadliest mass-shooting in New Zealand's history is appealing his conviction and sentence. New Zealand's Court of Appeal confirmed yesterday that gunman Brenton Tarrant (pictured) had filed the appeal last week. The court said a hearing date has yet to be set. Tarrant, a white supremacist, gunned down worshippers at two Christchurch mosques during Friday prayers in March 2019.

AP PHOTO



South Korea A pair of dogs gifted by North Korean leader Kim Jong Un in 2018 are now mired in a South Korean political row, with the country's former president blaming his conservative successor for a lack of financial support as he gave the animals up. Moon Jae-in, a liberal who left office in May, received the two white "Pungsan" hunting dogs – a breed known to be indigenous to North Korea – from Kim following their peace summit in the North Korean capital of Pyongyang in September 2018.

More on backpage

STINGY CULTURE

Social Affairs and Culture with PIDDA projected execution rate at only 28.4% worries lawmakers.



BORDER NON-RESIDENTS DO NOT NEED PERMIT PRIOR TO ARRIVAL

P2



REAL ESTATE RESIDENTIAL PRICES CONTINUE TO DROP AMID ECONOMIC HEADWINDS

P4

CLEANING SERVICES' REVENUES INCREASE TO MOP1.32B

In view of an increase in demand for cleaning services among industries, income for cleaning services went up by 6.8% year-on-year to MOP1.32 billion in 2021. Expenditure rose correspondingly by 7.3% to MOP1.23 billion, mainly driven by an 8.4% growth in compensation for employees, data from the Statistics and Census Service (DSEC) shows. The bureau indicated that in 2021 a total of 303 businesses provided cleaning services (up by 17 year-on-year), 61 provided security (up by 1) and 226 provided property management services (down by 10). The total number of persons engaged rose by 590 year-on-year to 29,019.

BRANDED PRODUCTS FAIR LAUNCHES NOV. 11

The 2022 Guangdong & Macao Branded Products Fair (2022GMBPF) will be held at Cotai Expo Hall D, The Venetian Macao, from November 11 to 13. This year's event will again feature an integration of trade, forum, culture, shopping, leisure and entertainment. Over 60% of the enterprises are joining the fair for the second year in a row. In line with the current consumer eating habits, the three-day 2022GMBPF is planned with the theme "semi-finished food" together with the debut of the "Four Key Industries Area," aiming to provide a platform for business exchange and co-operation and product sales for enterprises participating both online and offline.

GERMAN FILM FESTIVAL RUNNING UNTIL NOV. 20

The KINO German Film Festival – Macau 2022 is featuring some German-language movies from recent years at the Teatro Alegria (Wing Lok Cinema) and the premises of the Cut Association on Rua de Coelho do Amaral, concluding November 20. Organized by Cut Association, the festival features 11 German films, subtitled in Chinese and English. At its opening, KINO presented award-winning animation Fritzzi – A Revolutionary Tale, which brings to life the absurd everyday life of East Germany through a child's eyes.

GOV'T DROPS ENTRY PERMIT REQUIREMENT FOR NON-RESIDENTS

LYNZY VALLES

THE government has lessened the requirements for non-resident workers and diplomats to return to the SAR amid its adherence to Beijing's zero-Covid policy.

A statement from the Novel Coronavirus Response and Coordination Centre states that from November 13, those returning to Macau with a "Residence Authorization" or blue card, as well as persons who have been granted a "Special Authorization to Stay" for family members of professional non-resident workers or non-resident students, will not need to acquire a permit from the Health Bureau (SSM) for an entry permit.

Macau has shut its borders to foreign travelers since March 2020 to deter the spread of the coronavirus, and has only opened its borders two and a half years later – to only 41 countries.

The long-awaited reopening did not include the majority of migrant workers in the region, such as those from Indonesia, Philippines and Myanmar.

In the reopening announcement, the center stated that those who do not meet the entry criteria will be allowed to enter Macau with prior SSM approval if they are a spouse or family member of



Macau residents; bear a blue card or are family members of professional non-resident workers with approval to stay.

With the announcement made yesterday, these employees and students residing in Macau will not have to request a special permit from the SSM before entering the city.

Those holding a diplomatic passport, a "Laissez Passer" issued by the United Nations or a diplomatic or consular identity card will also not require a permit upon return.

Although the SAR has reopened to 41 countries, tourists – except those from mainland China – are still required to undergo a

seven plus three-day quarantine period. This requirement has long been dispensed with in other countries, and has been criticized for discouraging travelers from visiting the city.

Just over the weekend, Chinese health officials gave no indication of any relaxation of pandemic restrictions, following several days of speculation that the government was considering changes to the "zero-Covid" approach that has stymied economic growth and disrupted daily life.

The officials said at a news conference that they would "unswervingly" stick to the policy, which seeks to stop cases from coming into the country and snuff out outbreaks as they are uncovered.

The announcement was not a surprise and does not preclude the possibility that discussions are taking place behind closed doors. But there has been no official confirmation of talks, and most analysts believe that any change will be gradual, with major easing of restrictions unlikely until sometime next year.

Chief Executive Ho Iat Seng, meanwhile, had long reiterated that weakening Covid-19 prevention and control policies in Macau could affect the travel of people in Macau visiting mainland China. Therefore, co-existing with Covid-19 was not an option for the local government.

Caritas Bazaar estimated to have raised over MOP5 million this year

RENATO MARQUES

THE annual Caritas Bazaar that took place last weekend at the Nam Van Lake leisure area probably raised between 5 and 6 million patacas for the institution, the secretary-general Paul Pun estimated after the event, although the final calculation of all donations has yet to be completed.

The figure represents a reduction from previous years when Caritas would normally receive around 8 million patacas from

the event. The event's fundraising is intended to fund the institution's many projects aimed at those most in need.

Pun pointed out that the reduction in donations is likely related to the current economic circumstances, which are less favorable than the years before the Covid-19 pandemic. This year marked the 53rd edition of the Bazaar.

Pun has also said that currently, the institution is supplying food hampers to approximately

700 people on weekly basis.

The food supplies program started in May this year and aims to provide basic food products to people who have lost their jobs or are on a very low income.

According to Caritas' secretary-general, the charity received almost 900 applications for this program. However, it was not possible to help all applicants. As such, the charity selected about 700 applicants to support based on need.



MOP 200,000 cheque presented to Caritas Macau secretary-general Paul Pun at the opening ceremony of the 53rd Caritas Macau Charity Bazaar

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BUDGET

Social Affairs and Culture with PIDDA projected execution rate at only 28.4%

RENATO MARQUES

THE lawmakers who comprise the Follow-up Committee for Public Finance Affairs of the Legislative Assembly (AL) have raised concerns over the poor project execution rate for the Office of the Secretary for Social Affairs and Culture, Elsie Ao Ieong.

These concerns were expressed in a meeting yesterday morning at the AL, while analyzing the report on the Government Investment and Development Expenditure Plan (PIDDA) of the second quarter (Q2) of this year, the president of the committee, lawmaker Wong Kit Cheng said yesterday in a press briefing following the meeting.

According to Wong, the lawmakers were concerned not just by the low execution rate of 28.4% (which is lower than the average and much lower than other secretariats) but also by the fact that the lack of project execution seems to have affected those projects that are more heavily related to residents' lives.

She added that the committee is submitting questions to the government to seek a clear justification on the matter.

"We want to know which projects have been affected [by the low execution rate] and if [among

JOSH APPEL



them] there are projects that affect directly the lives of people," Wong said.

In general, from the 221 projects included in the PIDDA, the report shows that there was expenditure of 6.54 billion patacas in Q2. This represents a budget execution rate of 35.3%, a figure that increased by 9.9% when compared with the first quarter of the year.

The committee president also

stated that the committee members have also noted that of the 221 projects registered, 43 of them (19.5%) have an execution rate of 0%. Among these, are at least three projects related to smart policing as well as laboratories and lab equipment for the University of Macau (UM), including nine projects that have not been executed to any extent.

The non-execution of the smart policing projects has been

justified by the government due to the complexity of the design of the system. For this reason, the projects were listed in both Q1 and Q2, with 0% execution. The government said that the projects have commenced, but the execution rate will only be reflected in Q3.

As for the UM projects, the government said that the non-execution is because the acquisition of goods and services required

to complete the projects is still undergoing the necessary public tenders.

Another project with 0% execution was the public housing of the Avenida de Wai Long. The government explained that due to the change in the concept design and swap from the economic housing model to the "sandwich class" public housing model, the project has been halted and is being re-conceptualized.

Public finance committee turns spotlight on investment losses

RENATO MARQUES

THE Follow-up Committee for Public Finance Affairs of the Legislative Assembly (AL) has raised several questions over the way public money is being invested. The committee has sent inquiries on the matter to the government, the president of the committee, lawmaker Wong Kit Cheng said yesterday after a committee meeting at the AL.

The meeting is the first committee meeting of the new legislative year, and was scheduled to analyze the reports of the budget execution of the first half (1H) of 2022 as well as the execution rate of the Government Investment and Development Expenditure Plan (PIDDA) of the second quarter (Q2) of 2022. During the meeting, several

lawmakers noted the significant losses resulting from government investments through several public funds.

According to Wong, in the 1H of 2022, government investment plans recorded net losses of about 8.3 billion patacas, she said, noting, "it is the first time this has happened."

Citing the government report on the question, the lawmaker and president of the committee who monitors the public finances, said that the government explained the loss with reference to the "instability in the international markets."

She also added that when compared with the same period in 2021, government investments suffered a decline in value of 59.2%.

Leading the drop is the Social Security Fund with

MOP7.63B lost as well as the Pensions Fund, which also recorded a significant reduction (MOP1.91B).

A similar result was seen regarding the investments made through the Macau Financial Reserve that lost some MOP17.4B for the same reasons.

"In the report, we have only the big figures so we know how much was lost. But the lawmakers want to know the reasons for such losses in more detail. In the report, it is only said that the losses are related to 'fluctuations' and instability in the international markets that have affected the investment portfolio. Besides these details, we [the committee] also want to ask the government if there is any adjustment [to be or has already been] made [to this investment portfolio] to prevent fur-

RENATO MARQUES



ther losses," Wong said. "We want to hear about the direction that these invest-

ments are taking and will take in the future as well as the government's plans to

solve this problem of losses in the value of public funds and reserves," he added.

LAWMAKERS PROPOSE TO CLARIFY CODES ON PRIVATELY MANAGED PARKING LOTS

ANTHONY LAM

THE government should clarify regulations concerning parking lots operated privately on private land, which may consequently increase the number of such facilities in older districts, lawmakers said yesterday.

A parliamentary committee commenced discussions on the bill of the Public Parking Service System yesterday. According to Ella Lei, chair of the committee, the bill mainly focuses on the operations, administration, use, supervision and punishment concerning public parking services.

She assured the press that no regulatory overhaul would be seen.

At the inaugural discussion, some lawmakers pointed out that the government may not be capable of satisfying the need for parking lots at older districts. However, the lawmakers envisioned that, should the government clarify requirements for private parking lots to provide parking services to the public, private operators may be incentivized to pro-



vide more public parking spaces.

Currently, Lei said that regulations are not sufficiently clear to identify responsible parties for conflicts or accidents that take place in private parking lots.

On another related subtopic regarding street-side parking me-

ters, the government proposed that in the future, parking meters should only accept electronic means of payment, completely excluding physical currency.

At this stage, parking meters in the city accept both physical and digital payment, although

paper money is not accepted. Regarding electronic payment, only local tap-and-go brand Macau Pass and Chinese contactless credit card UnionPay are being accepted, meaning that foreign brands such as VISA and MasterCard are excluded, limiting the

choice for drivers.

In support of its proposal, the government noted in its introductory document that digital payment methods have grown in popularity in the city, in addition to the difficulties sourcing parking meters that accept coins. Moreover, the government noted that systems that take coins will have higher maintenance costs and take up more space.

Lawmakers did not buy into the government's explanation, calling for more supporting facts to justify migrating parking meters exclusively to e-payment considering that both cash and digital payment are legal tender. The lawmakers were also concerned with what other brands of digital payment the government would consider adding to future parking meters; and also with how parking fees would be determined.

The government is proposing that both open bidding and direct negotiation will be acceptable means to designate operating rights. Parking lot licenses will be valid for seven years, with extensions of up to three years.

REAL ESTATE

Residential property prices continue to drop amid economic headwinds

THE overall residential property price index for July - September 2022 decreased by 1.7% over the previous period (June - August 2022) to 250.4 as the city faces continued economic downturn due to the pandemic.

The indices for the Macau Peninsula (249.7) and Taipa & Coloane (253.2) dropped by 2.1% and 0.3% respectively, according to data from the Statistics and Census Service (DSEC).

The data was previously forecasted by a real estate agency, which predicted that real estate prices would remain low despite the expectation of better tourism prospects.

According to Centaline Property, the main reason for this prediction is the less-than-ideal external factors such as increasing interest rates, plunging stock prices, military and political crises, as well as an uncertain future job market.



The index for existing residential units (268.1) went down by 1.6%; the index for those in the Macau Peninsula (259.3) dropped by 2.2%, while the index for those in Taipa & Coloane (303.1) climbed by 0.1%.

Meanwhile, analyzed

by quarter, the overall residential property price index in the third quarter of 2022 decreased by 3.2% from the second quarter. The indices for existing and pre-sale residential units fell by 3.0% and 4.7% respectively.

Following the June 18

outbreak and with July recording only 12 transactions - marking a new low in recent years - data shows that transactions quickly increased in August and September, with an estimated 25 and 30 transactions for each month, respectively. LV

PUBLIC WORKS

DESIGN AND COST FOR NEW COURT BUILDING CONFIRMED

WITHOUT having publicly announced any tender details, the Land and Public Works Bureau (DSOP) has confirmed the design firm and the construction company for part of the new court building in Nam Van.

The project has sparked debates at the Urban Planning Committee and the public circle, for the reason that it will inevitably impede the views between the Guia Hill and the Nobre do Carvalho Bridge.

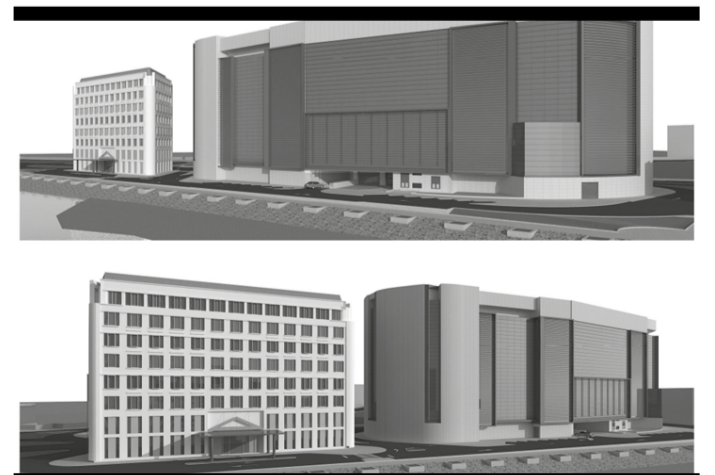
The DSOP publicized on its website that the construction company for the founda-

tion and basement of the building had been confirmed. The work is expected to cost MOP209 million and take 683 working days.

Shing Lung Construction and Engineering Company Limited will handle the construction, while a local Portuguese firm CC Atelier De Arquitectura Lda will handle the design. The design will cost Macau MOP20.5 million.

The building will have eight floors above ground and four floors below.

The next phase of the project will be the construction of the building itself. AL



ANTHONY LAM

THE Macao Government Tourism Office (MGTO) will start attracting tourists from foreign countries next year, although “the last mile” still lingers.

The Tourism Development Committee (CDT) convened the second Plenary Meeting of 2022 yesterday.

The release, the MGTO said that “in 2023 [...] besides securing the mainland visitor market, the Office will take progressive steps to promote [Macao] in overseas markets in accordance with the loosening of border measures.”

In the course of attracting foreign tourists, the bureau pledged that it would “[attract] visitors for longer stays in Macau through a variety of initiatives.”

Orchestrating the concept of “tourism+” – which the local government has been using to highlight the various elements of tourism – and deeply immersing MGTO in the development of the mainland are also part of their focus areas in the coming year, the bureau added.

Meanwhile, the MGTO revealed that “[two] major events, Light up Macau 2022 and the Crunch and Munch Fair in Macau – Fiesta for Five” will be held in December to close out the year. The tourism board dis-

Despite zero news on a return to normality, tourism board to start targeting foreign markets

closed that special travel offers have been launched and tailored for foreigners, Hong Kong and Taiwan residents residing in the mainland to expand the range of visitors.

Through these events and initiatives, the bureau believes that tourists will spend more time in the city, although Christmas is not a public holiday in mainland China.

In terms of e-marketing, the MGTO said that it has continued to partner with e-commerce platforms to promote information on Macau's latest border measures, travel information and special offers towards target users, to increase their intentions to visit Macau.

During the meeting, Secretary for Economy and Finance Lei Wai Nong, who is also the chair for the committee, said that the resumption of the electronic issuing of travel permits and group travel to Macau is one of

the Central Government's “major supportive measures for Macau's economic recovery.” These measures apply to four mainland provinces and one municipality – Guangdong, Zhejiang, Jiangsu, Fujian and Shanghai.

As such, the MGTO disclosed that it is making special efforts to promote the destination in those areas. The “Experience Macau, Unlimited” Caravan Roadshow Series is being rolled out across various locations in Greater Bay Area, with destination presentation seminars and travel marts being held concurrently.

The Office also partners with Air Macau to hold flash roadshows at shopping malls in mainland cities to highlight Macau's image as a healthy, safe and quality destination and bolster travelers' confidence in Macau.

CDT members have also made comments and suggestions on the future of Macau's tourism industry.



ANTHONY LAM

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A J-20 stealth fighter jet, foreground, taxis with a YU-20 aerial tanker while a training for the upcoming 14th China International Aviation and Aerospace Exhibition in Zhuhai

ZHUHAI

AIR SHOW SEEKS TO POSITION CHINA AS GLOBAL COMPETITOR

CHINA is displaying its latest generation fighter jets and civilian aircraft this week as it looks to carve a larger role for itself in the global arms trade and compete with Boeing and Airbus.

China is currently the world's fourth-largest arms exporter and an expanding domestic industry has allowed itself to cut off former dependence on Russia. With heavy state backing, it now competes to sell drones, warplanes and missile defense systems, as well as its staple Cold War-era ground weapons and ammunition.

Military aircraft on display

starting yesterday include the J-20 stealth fighter and YU-20 aerial tanker.

The air show in the southern city of Zhuhai comes as Russia's war on Ukraine has reduced stocks to the point that the United States has accused North Korea of supplying Soviet-era ammunition such as artillery shells to replenish Russian stockpiles.

Between 2017 and 2021, China made up 4.6% of total global arms exports, placing it fourth behind the U.S., Russia and France, according to the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute. The bulk of its

exports went to Pakistan, a long-time ally that shares a mutual rival in the other regional giant, India.

On the civilian side, state airplane maker The Commercial Aircraft Corporation of China plans 15-minute display flights of its C919 jet that it hopes will compete with Boeing's 737 and the Airbus A320. The project is long overdue and reportedly over budget, while a drastic reduction in air travel due to China's strict anti-COVID-19 policies have delayed plans for domestic carriers to add the planes to their fleets.

MDT/AP

ECONOMY

RENAULT, GEELY ANNOUNCED POWERTRAIN JOINT VENTURE

RENAULT SA and China's Geely announced plans yesterday for a jointly owned venture to produce gasoline-powered and hybrid powertrains, adding to a series of partnerships between global automakers to share soaring technology costs.

The venture will have 17 plants with annual production capacity of 5 million powertrains, five research and development centers on three continents and some 19,000 employees, the companies said. They gave no fi-



nancial terms but said each partner will own half of the venture.

It will supply brands owned by or linked to Renault and Geely

including Nissan, Mitsubishi, Volvo Cars, Renault, Dacia, Geely Auto, Lynk & Co. and Proton, the companies said. They said it might later supply third-party brands.

Global automakers have been forming partnerships over the past decade to share the multibillion-dollar development costs of electric vehicles and more efficient gasoline engines.

The Renault-Geely agreement will "enable the creation of a global leader in hybrid technologies to provide highly efficient advanced solutions for automakers around the world," Eric Li, chairman of Geely Holding Group, said in a statement. MDT/AP

COVID-19

Cases soar in Guangzhou; Residents in Shandong clash with police over rules

POLICE in northeastern China said that seven people have been arrested following a clash between residents and authorities enforcing COVID-19 quarantine restrictions.

The violence comes as China reports new cases nationwide, with 2,230 cases reported yesterday in the southern manufacturing and technology hub of Guangzhou.

While the numbers remain relatively low, China has relentlessly pursued its strict "zero-COVID" policy of quarantines, lockdowns and daily or near-daily compulsory testing.

A news release from the police department in the Shandong city of Linyi said public security would take strong measures against those who "illegally violated the legal rights of personal protection of citizens."

Anti-pandemic measures have prompted backlashes across the country. It wasn't immediately clear who was arrested after the clash. News of the arrests appeared on social media yesterday morning, but were erased before noon.

Chinese leader Xi Jinping has made "zero-COVID" a hallmark of his administration, which gained a boost last month after he was granted a third five-year term in power.

While the rest of the world has mostly opened up, China has

taken only highly cautious minor steps, with its borders still largely closed and officials under heavy pressure to enforce restrictions.

China reported its trade shrank in October as global demand weakened and anti-virus controls weighed on domestic consumer spending. Exports declined 0.3% from a year earlier, down from September's 5.7% growth, the customs agency reported Monday. Imports fell 0.7%, compared with the previous month's 0.3% expansion.

Speculation about a possible relaxation of "zero-COVID" roiled markets, but the government has kept its plans, including "the possibility of importing foreign vaccines, a closely held secret," Associated Press has learned.

Last week, access to the industrial zone where a factory that manufactures Apple iPhones is located was suspended for one week following a surge in infections in Zhengzhou and the departure of workers from the factory. Many climbed fences and walked along highways to avoid being placed in quarantine centers where food, sanitation and privacy standards have been heavily criticized.

Apple announced Sunday that customers will have to wait longer to get its latest iPhone models, saying the Foxconn factory in the central Chinese city Zhengzhou is "operating at significantly reduced capacity." MDT/AP



North Korea denies US claims it sent artillery shells to Russia

HYUNG-JIN KIM
& KIM TONG-HYUNG, SEOUL

NORTH Korea has denied American claims that it's shipping artillery shells and ammunition to Russia for use in its war against Ukraine, and yesterday accused the United States of lying.

The denial follows dozens of weapons tests by North Korea, including short-range missiles that are likely nuclear-capable and an intercontinental ballistic missile that could target the U.S. mainland. Pyongyang said it was testing the missiles and artillery so it could "mercilessly" strike key South Korean and U.S. targets if it chose to.

North Korea has been cozying up to traditional ally Russia in recent years and even hinted at sending workers to help rebuild Russian-occupied territories in Ukraine. The United States has accused North Korea, one of the most weaponized countries in the world, of supplying Soviet-era ammunition such as artillery shells, to replenish Russian stockpiles that have been depleted in the Ukraine.

Last week, Russia sent North Korean leader Kim Jong Un a trainload of 30 thoroughbred horses, opening the border with its neighbor for the first time in 2 1/2 years. Kim is an avid horseman and state media have often pictured him galloping on snowy mountain trails astride a white charger. The horses, Orlov trotters, are prized in Russia.



Russian President Vladimir Putin (right) and North Korea's leader Kim Jong Un shake hands during their meeting in Vladivostok on April 25, 2019

Spokespeople of Russia's Far Eastern Railway told the state-run news agency Nov. 2 that the first train headed to North Korea with the 30 horses and said the next train was to carry medicine.

Experts say North Korea may be seeking Russian fuel and also technology transfers and supplies needed to advance its military capabilities as it pursues more sophisticated weapons systems.

In September, North Korea restarted its freight train service with China, its biggest trading partner, ending a five-month hiatus.

Last week, U.S. National Security Council spokesperson John Kirby accused North Korea of covertly supplying a "significant number" of ammunition shipments to Russia. He said the United States believes North Korea was trying to obscure the transfer route by making it appear the weapons were being sent to countries in the Middle

East or North Africa.

"We regard such moves of the U.S. as part of its hostile attempt to tarnish the image of (North Korea) in the international arena," an unidentified vice director at the North Korean ministry's military foreign affairs office said in a statement carried by state media.

"We once again make clear that we have never had 'arms dealings' with Russia and that we have no plan to do so in the future," the vice director said.

In September, U.S. officials confirmed a newly declassified U.S. intelligence finding that Russia was in the process of purchasing millions of rockets and artillery shells from North Korea. North Korea later dismissed that report, calling on Washington to stop making "reckless remarks" and to "keep its mouth shut."

On Nov. 2, Kirby said the U.S. has "an idea" of which country or countries the North may funnel

the weapons through but wouldn't specify. He said the North Korean shipments are "not going to change the course of the war," citing Western efforts to resupply the Ukrainian military.

Slapped by international sanctions and export controls, Russia in August bought Iranian-made drones that U.S. officials said had technical problems. For Russia, experts say North Korea is likely another good option for its ammunitions supply, because the North keeps a significant stockpile of shells, many of them copies of Soviet-era ones.

Even as most of Europe and the West has pulled away, North Korea has pushed to boost relations with Russia, blaming the U.S. for the crisis and decrying the West's "hegemonic policy" as justifying military action by Russia in Ukraine to protect itself. In July, North Korea became the only nation aside from Russia and Syria to re-

cognize the Donetsk and Luhansk territories as independent.

North Korea's possible arms supply to Russia would be a violation of U.N. resolutions that ban the North from trading weapons with other countries. But it's unlikely for North Korea to receive fresh sanctions for that because of a division at the U.N. Security Council over America's confrontations with Russia regarding its war in Ukraine and its separate strategic competitions with China.

Earlier this year, Russia and China already vetoed a U.S.-led attempt to toughen sanctions on North Korea over its series of ballistic missile tests that are banned by multiple U.N. Security Council resolutions.

Some observers say North Korea has also been using the Russian aggression in Ukraine as a window to ramp up weapons testing activity and dial up pressure on the United States and South Korea. Last week, the North test-fired dozens of missiles in response to large-scale U.S.-South Korea aerial drills that Pyongyang views as a rehearsal for a potential invasion.

In a separate statement published yesterday by state media, a senior North Korean diplomat criticized U.N. Secretary-General Antonio Guterres' recent condemnation of North Korea's missile launch barrage, calling him a "mouthpiece" of the U.S. government.

"The U.N. secretary general is echoing what the White House and the State Department say as if he were their mouthpiece, which is deplorable," said Kim Son Gyong, vice minister for international organizations at the North Korean Foreign Ministry.

Kim said that Guterres' "unfair and prejudiced behavior" has contributed to the worsening tensions in the region. **MDT/AP**

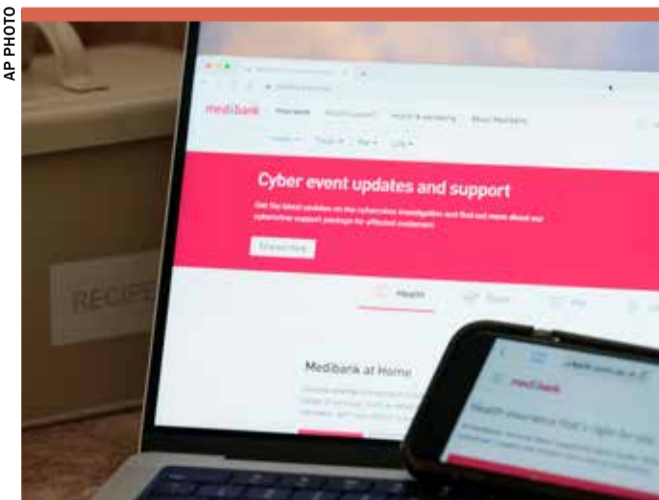
AUSTRALIA

Extortionist threatens to publish customer data

AN extortionist has threatened to make Medibank customer data public within 24 hours after Australia's largest health insurer refused to pay a ransom for the personal records of almost 10 million current and former customers.

Medibank initially ruled out paying ransom for the stolen data. The theft was reported to police Oct. 19 when trade in the company's shares was halted for a week.

The thieves had reportedly threatened to expose the diagnoses and treatments of high-profile cus-



A computer and phone display pages from Medibank Private in Sydney

tomers unless a ransom of an undisclosed sum was paid.

"Based on the extensive advice we have received from cybercrime experts,

we believe there is only a limited chance paying a ransom would ensure the return of our customers' data and prevent it from being published," Medibank CEO David Koczkar said in a statement.

"In fact, paying could have the opposite effect and encourage the criminal to directly extort our customers and there is a strong chance that paying puts more people in harm's way by making Australia a bigger target," Koczkar added.

A blogger using the name "Extortion Gang" posted Monday night on

the dark web that "data will be publish (sic) in 24 hours."

"PS. I recommend to sell medibank (sic) stocks," the blog added.

The post did not include data samples that could prove the author held the data. But Medibank yesterday took the threat seriously.

"We knew the publication of data online by the criminal could be a possibility, but the criminal's threat is still a distressing development for our customers," Koczkar said.

Koczkar urged customers to remain vigilant

and warned that the criminal could contact them directly.

Medibank this week updated its estimate of the number of people whose personal information had been stolen from 4 million two weeks ago to 9.7 million. The stolen data included health claims of almost 500,000 people including diagnoses and treatments, the company said.

"The weaponization of their private information is malicious and it is an attack on the most vulnerable members of our society," Koczkar said.

Cybersecurity Minister Clare O'Neil welcomed Medibank's stance, saying its refusal to pay a ransom was in line with her government's advice. **MDT/AP**

AP PHOTO



Pedestrians walk past a display of destroyed Russian tanks and armoured vehicles in downtown Kyiv

PUTIN'S WAR

Zelenskyy: Talks with Russia possible on Ukraine's terms

ANDREW MELDRUM & YURAS KARMANAU, KYIV

UKRAINE'S president has hinted at the possibility of peace talks with Russia, a shift from his earlier refusal to negotiate with President Vladimir Putin that came on the eve of crucial elections in the United States.

Volodymyr Zelenskyy urged the international community yesterday [Macau time] to "force Russia into real peace talks" and listed his usual conditions for dialogue: the return of all of Ukraine's occupied lands, compensation for damage caused by the war and the prosecution of war crimes.

That is a change in rhetoric at least from a man who signed a decree in late September stating "the impossibility of holding talks" with Putin. But since his preconditions appear to be non-starters for Moscow, it's hard to see how that would advance any talks.

Western weapons and aid have been key to Ukraine's ability to fight off Russia's invasion, which some initially expected would more easily roll through the country. But U.S. midterm elections Tuesday will define the amount and the shape of Washington's future political and financial support for Ukraine. If Republicans win control

of Congress, it could become more difficult for President Joe Biden's administration to push forward large packages of military and other aid for Ukraine.

Russia and Ukraine held several rounds of talks in Belarus and Turkey early on in the war, which is now nearing its nine-month mark. The talks stalled after the last meeting of the delegations in Istanbul in March yielded no results.

Zelenskyy said that Kyiv has "repeatedly proposed (talks) and to which we always received crazy Russian responses with new terrorist attacks, shelling or blackmail."

But he has more recently refused to negotiate with Putin — itself a change in tactic after he repeatedly called for a personal meeting with the Russian leader. The Kremlin brushed off any such meeting.

Zelenskyy listed conditions for the dialogue to begin, including the "restoration of (Ukraine's) territorial integrity ... compensation for all war damage, punishment for every war criminal and guarantees that it will not happen again."

Russia, meanwhile, resumed calls for talks after Ukraine's successful counteroffensive in the east and the south of the country began in September, but Ukraine has been rejecting the possi-

bility ever since.

Russia's deputy foreign minister, Andrei Rudenko, stressed on Tuesday that Moscow is not setting any conditions for the resumption of talks with Ukraine and accused Kyiv of lacking "good will."

"This is their choice, we have always declared our readiness for such negotiations," Rudenko said.

Ukraine's presidential advisor Mykhailo Podolyak insisted in a tweet that "Ukraine has never refused to negotiate," but first, Russia needs to withdraw its troops from the country. "Is Putin ready? Obviously not," Podolyak wrote.

In other developments:

— In the eastern Donetsk region, which the Russians are struggling to take full control of, Moscow's shelling killed three civilians and wounded seven others over the past 24 hours, according to Donetsk Gov. Pavlo Kyrylenko.

Kyrylenko said the fatalities occurred in the city of Bakhmut, a key target of Russia's grinding offensive in Donetsk, and the town of Krasnohorivka. Ukraine's deputy defense minister last week described the Bakhmut area as "the epicenter" of fighting in eastern Ukraine.

— Elsewhere, two civilians were seriously wounded by unexploded mines in Ukraine's northeastern

Kharkiv region, where Kyiv's forces retook broad swaths of territory in September, Kharkiv Gov. Oleh Syniehubov said.

— In the partially occupied Kherson region in the south, where Ukraine's troops are conducting a successful counteroffensive, Russian-installed authorities said they have "completed" measures to evacuate residents ahead of anticipated Ukrainian advances.

The Kremlin-appointed administration had sought to relocate tens of thousands of people in anticipation of a Ukrainian advance deeper into the region. Ukrainian military and civilian officials have previously described the relocation measures as "forced displacement." Kirill Stremousov, deputy head of the Kremlin-backed administration, has repeatedly denied that.

Russian-backed officials in Kherson announced that motorized ferries transporting civilians across the Dnieper and deeper into Russian-held territory were no longer running. According to the announcement, made yesterday on Telegram, the main remaining relocation route is across the Antonivskiy Bridge over the Dnieper, which has been repeatedly damaged by Ukrainian attacks and is now operated by the Russian military. MDT/AP

this day in history

1989 BERLINERS CELEBRATE THE FALL OF THE WALL



The Berlin Wall has been breached after nearly three decades keeping East and West Berliners apart.

At midnight East Germany's Communist rulers gave permission for gates along the Wall to be opened after hundreds of people converged on crossing points.

They surged through cheering and shouting and were met by jubilant West Berliners on the other side.

Ecstatic crowds immediately began to clamber on top of the Wall and hack large chunks out of the 28-mile (45-kilometre) barrier.

It had been erected in 1961 on the orders of East Germany's former leader Walter Ulbricht stop people leaving for West Germany.

Since 1949 about 2.5 million people had fled East Germany.

After 1961, the Wall and other fortifications along the 860-mile (1,380-kilometre) border shared by East and West Germany have kept most East Germans in.

Many of those attempting to escape have been shot dead by border guards.

The first indication that change was imminent came earlier today when East Berlin's Communist party spokesman, Gunther Schabowski, announced East Germans would be allowed to travel directly to West Germany.

The move was intended to stem an exodus into West Germany through the "back door" which began last summer when the new and more liberal regime in Hungary opened its border.

The flow of migrants was intensified last week when Czechoslovakia also granted free access to West Germany through its border.

West German Chancellor Helmut Kohl has hailed the decision to open the Wall as "historic" and called for a meeting with East German leader, Egon Krenz.

Courtesy BBC News

IN CONTEXT

The opening of the Berlin Wall was preceded by a series of momentous events in East Germany.

They included the removal of the country's hardline Communist leader, Erich Honecker, and the resignation of the entire cabinet.

East Germany's new leader, Egon Krenz, called for free democratic elections.

But it was not enough to turn the tide and once the Berlin Wall was breached, East Germany disintegrated.

On 3 October 1990 the two Germanys merged to form a new united country.

In 1997 Egon Krenz received a six-and-a-half year jail sentence for the manslaughter of people killed by border guards when trying to escape to the West.

YOUR STARS

ARIES
Mar. 21-Apr. 19
Take care when dealing with older relatives. If you're willing to cut loose you will find yourself in the midst of an exciting encounter.

TAURUS
Apr. 20-May. 20
Cultural activities will prove to be quite enlightening for everyone. Do you really want to start something with someone you can't reason with?

GEMINI
May. 21-Jun. 21
Romance will unfold through business trips. You may have taken on a little too much, but you will enjoy every minute of it. Use discrimination and play hard to get.

CANCER
Jun. 22-Jul. 22
Concentrate on your job. You can meet a new romantic partner or secure the love connection you already have by going out and entertaining yourself.

LEO
Jul. 23-Aug. 22
You can find out important information if you listen to friends and relatives. You will have difficulties spreading yourself between your work and your home.

VIRGO
Aug. 23-Sep. 22
Don't settle for less than the best. Travel is evident, but be cautious while in transit. Don't let your emotions interfere with your professional integrity.

LIBRA
Sep. 23-Oct. 22
Your lover will be annoyed with your participation. You will be confused about the intentions of someone you work with. Luck is with you, regardless of the financial venture.

SCORPIO
Oct. 23-Nov. 21
You will do your best work on your own. You can get ahead if you are willing to take a partner. Real estate investments could be to your advantage. Get down to business and do the work yourself.

SAGITTARIUS
Nov. 22-Dec. 21
You need to be active and spend time with friends you enjoy. You will have a great day if you just say what you feel. You will impress new friends and acquaintances with your intellectual wit.

CAPRICORN
Dec. 22-Jan. 19
Some of that extra energy you have stored up might just be put to good use. Get busy doing all those things at home that you have been putting off for so long.

AQUARIUS
Jan. 20-Feb. 18
You are exceptional at presenting your ideas. Take a short business trip if possible. Opportunities to travel will develop through peers.

PISCES
Feb. 19-Mar. 20
You can make new friends if you get involved in group activities. Your romantic inclination should lead to a committed relationship.

The Born Loser by Chip Sanson



SUDOKU

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

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

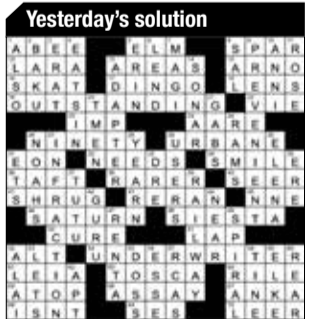
WEATHER

	MIN	MAX	CONDITION
CHINA			
Beijing	3	14	cloudy
Changchun	3	13	fine
Chengdu	15	20	rain
Chongqing	17	24	cloudy
Fuzhou	19	25	overcast
Guangzhou	18	24	rain
Guiyang	11	22	cloudy
Haikou	22	26	rain
Hangzhou	12	23	cloudy
Harbin	0	9	fine
Hefei	10	24	fine
Nanjing	13	22	cloudy
Shanghai	15	23	rain
Taipei	21	25	cloudy
Wuhan	12	27	fine
Hong Kong	23	25	overcast
WORLD			
Moscow	6	8	rain
Frankfurt	7	14	rain
Paris	7	16	overcast
London	10	14	overcast
New York	7	13	fine

CROSSWORDS

ACROSS 1- Mountain range in central Europe; 5- Proscribe; 8- Pig; 12- Biblical spy; 14- Cougar; 15- Pine fruit; 16- Creamy white; 17- ___'acte; 18- The third man; 19- Dawn; 21- Breakfast food; 23- Thunder Bay's prov.; 24- Spar; 25- Half of MCI; 26- Places of contest; 30- Satisfies; 32- Shifted; 33- Netlike; 37- What ___ mind reader?; 38- Ruin; 39- Italian resort; 40- Potassium nitrate; 42- Trapshooting; 43- More healthy; 44- Declines; 45- Decay, waste away; 48- CD predecessors; 49- Free (of); 50- Sharon's land; 52- Weighted; 57- Scottish refusals; 58- Radiate; 60- Guarded; 61- The ___ the limit; 62- Third son of Adam; 63- Beast of Borden; 64- Bridge seat; 65- Carrier to Copenhagen; 66- Canonized Fr. women;

DOWN 1- Sour; 2- Magma; 3- Ruse; 4- Balkan native; 5- Built-in platform bed; 6- Invoice abbr.; 7- Addictive substance; 8- Operation memento; 9- Like ears; 10- Actor Ryan; 11- Attorney Melvin; 13- Scenic route path; 14- Heating fuel; 20- USNA grad; 22- Corp. VIP, briefly; 24- Ulan ___; 26- Latin lesson word; 27- Actress Downey; 28- Devil's doing; 29- Not o'er; 30- Cleave; 31- Sullen; 33- Gives a 9.8, say; 34- Untruths, tells falsehoods; 35- Mideast gulf; 36- ___-Rooter; 38- Vulnerable; 41- "___ Rider" starred Clint Eastwood; 42- Bicycle seat; 44- Round Table title; 45- Wash cycle; 46- City near Kobe; 47- Low cards; 49- Batting Babe; 51- Kind of prof.; 52- Fragments; 53- Electric fish; 54- Treehouse used by birds; 55- HOMES part; 56- Stains; 59- Give ___ break!



USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

Emergency calls 999	Taxi 28 939 939 / 2828 3283
Fire department 28 572 222	Water Supply - Report 2822 0088
PJ (Open line) 993	Telephone - Report 1000
PJ (Picket) 28 557 775	Electricity - Report 28 339 922
PSP 28 573 333	Macau Daily Times 28 716 081
Customs 28 559 944	
S. J. Hospital 28 313 731	
Kiang Wu Hospital 28 371 333	
Commission Against Corruption (CCAC) 28326 300	
IAM 28 387 333	
Tourism 28 333 000	
Airport 59 888 88	



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MACAU'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

AUTOMAKER

ITALIAN EV STARTUP TAKES ON US, CHINESE RIVALS WITH DESIGN

COLLEEN BARRY, MILAN

ELON Musk's Tesla paved the way nearly two decades ago. Now, the global transition to fully electric vehicles is littered with startups, inspired by a new era in mobility and drawn by the lower cost of building EVs compared with their fossil-fuel-guzzling forbears.

Gone are the billion-dollar investments that have made legacy auto-making into such a cash cow. Suppliers offer ready-made generic electric platforms and manufacturers can take on contracts for assembly — approaches that translate into savings on jobs and infrastructure.

What has been missing in the new EV formula, according to a Milan-based startup, AEHRA, is a fresh design concept.

"Electric vehicles are looked at as being boring by the general public," AEHRA CEO Hazim Nada said. "It is very easy to build an extremely powerful electric vehicle. It is not so easy to build an electric vehicle that has character. And I think that's one

AP PHOTO



The Aehra new electric vehicle is lit on a set for a photo shoot in Milan

of the elements that Italian-ness has to express."

Nada has hired a former Lamborghini designer to help infuse his vehicles with Italian emotion and is emphasizing aerodynamics over performance.

But the company wants to enter an increasingly crowded market of EV startups and tradi-

tional carmakers that are being pushed to tackle car emissions that contribute to climate change. Some startups have had little success.

AEHRA doesn't plan to launch its first vehicles — an SUV and a sedan — until mid-2025, with annual production starting at 20,000 to 25,000 vehicles. The

ultra-premium cars also plan to come with a price tag to match — \$160,000 to \$180,000.

They are expected to roll out first in the United States and key European markets before expanding to China. That would follow an initial production investment of 700 million euros (dollars).

"We are not spending much," Nada said. "This is due to the fact that we're evolving the materials in such a way that the chain of production is very asset-light compared to the existing production ways."

Nada earned most of the startup money trading crude oil in London and honed his passion for aerodynamics building the world's largest vertical wind tunnel, AeroGravity, an attraction north of Milan that allows anyone to experience freefalling.

While AEHRA's cars are for a wealthy demographic as inflation bites the middle class and low-income earners, battery-powered vehicles generally have gained broader consumer acceptance and governments

are nudging automakers away from internal combustion engines.

U.S. asset management and research firm Bernstein predicts one-quarter of all cars sold by 2025 will be battery electric or plug-in hybrids, doubling by 2030. It cites ambitious rollout schedules and regulatory support.

The European Union is banning sales of new fossil fuel-burning cars by 2035, giving rise to new players with lower startup costs while potentially penalizing legacy carmakers that have invested billions in hybrids as bridge technologies.

Battery electric vehicles recorded the strongest growth of all fuel types in the third quarter, up 22% to over 259,000 units, according to the European Automotive Manufacturers Association. That accounts for a 12% market share.

The U.S. market share is slimmer, at around 6%, but Bernstein expects that to accelerate significantly with U.S. policies like tighter fuel efficiency standards.

At the same time, Chinese manufacturers are making inroads in Europe, with an eye on the U.S. market. In the Italian luxury market, Ferrari and Lamborghini have announced plans for their own EVs. **MDT/AP**

AD

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FOOTBALL

Blatter says picking Qatar as World Cup host was a 'mistake'

GRAHAM DUNBAR, GENEVA

PICKING Qatar to host the World Cup was a mistake 12 years ago, FIFA's president at the time Sepp Blatter said yesterday, again citing a meeting between Nicolas Sarkozy and Michel Platini for swaying key votes.

The 86-year-old Blatter spoke with the Swiss newspaper group Tamedia in his first major interview since being acquitted with Platini in July of financial misconduct at FIFA after a trial at federal criminal court.

"It's a country that's too small," Blatter said of Qatar, the smallest host by size since the 1954 tournament in Switzerland. "Football and the World Cup are too big for that."

The 32 teams will play 64 games in eight stadiums in and around the city of Doha which has been transformed since 2010 by massive construction projects to prepare for the World Cup.

"It was a bad choice. And I was



Former FIFA president Sepp Blatter is surrounded by the media as he leaves the Swiss Federal Criminal Court in Bellinzona, last June

responsible for that as president at the time," said Blatter, who has long said he voted for the United States. Its bid was beaten by Qatar in the final round of a five-candidate contest to be 2022 host.

It became part of FIFA lore that an expected U.S. victory swung toward Qatar at a meeting Sarkozy hosted in Paris in the week before the Dec. 2, 2010 vote by FIFA's executive committee.

French soccer great Platini, then president of European soccer body UEFA and a vice president of FIFA, was invited by then-state president Sarkozy to his official residence. The crown prince of Qatar, now the Emir, Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani, was also there.

Blatter yesterday repeated his claim that Sarkozy put pressure on Platini, and again gave his version of a telephone call Platini made to

him after the Paris meeting that the World Cup voting plan had changed.

"Thanks to the four votes of Platini and his (UEFA) team, the World Cup went to Qatar rather than the United States. It's the truth," Blatter said of the 14-8 voting result.

Blatter did not specifically refer to criticism of Qatar on labor and human rights issues since 2010.

However, he did question why his successor as FIFA president, Gianni Infantino, has moved to live in Qatar for at least the past year.

Blatter noted growing calls, by rights groups and several FIFA member federations including the U.S. and England, to create a compensation fund for families of workers who died or were injured. Qatar's government has resisted the calls and described them as a "publicity stunt."

"What can FIFA say if its president is in the same boat as Qatar?" Blatter said of Infantino choosing to live in Doha.

The World Cup starts on Nov. 20 with about 1.2 million international visitors expected to arrive in Qatar. **MDT/AP**

WORLD CUP AMBASSADOR FROM QATAR DENOUNCES HOMOSEXUALITY

AN ambassador for the World Cup in Qatar has described homosexuality as a "damage in the mind" in an interview with German public broadcaster ZDF only two weeks before the opening of the soccer tournament in the Gulf state, highlighting concerns about the conservative country's treatment of gays and lesbians. Former Qatari national team player Khalid Salman told a German re-

porter in an interview that being gay is "haram," or forbidden in Arabic, and that he has a problem with children seeing gay people. The full interview, which is part of a documentary, will be shown today on ZDF. The interview was cut short by a media officer of the World Cup organizing committee after Salman expressed his views on homosexuals, ZDF reported.

AD

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OPINION

China Daily
 Editorial, China Daily

HEATED DEBATES, BUT ALL THE TALK IN THE WORLD WILL NOT BE ENOUGH WITHOUT MEANINGFUL ACTION

The United Nations' COP 27 climate change conference, which started in the Egyptian resort city of Sharm El-Sheikh on Sunday, provides perhaps the last chance for leaders from around the world to get their act together and find ways to curb global warming.

Yet there have been worries about whether they will actually be able to turn the pledges they made at COP 26 in Glasgow, Scotland, last year into actions, given the differences that still exist among them on some key points as well as the multiple challenges the world faces today — ranging from high inflation, food shortages to the energy crisis.

A United Nations report at the end of October said government pledges to cut greenhouse gas emissions put the planet on track for a 2.8 C temperature rise this century — after the “woefully inadequate” progress to curb warming. This falls far short of the pledge countries have made to limit global temperatures to 2 C above pre-industrial levels.

Also, despite the wide-ranging climate pact reached in Glasgow last year, additional government commitments since COP 26 will remove only less than 1 percent of estimated global greenhouse gas emissions by 2030, according to the UN Environment Programme, making it almost impossible to avert the looming climate cataclysm.

“As COP 27 gets underway, our planet is sending a distress signal,” UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres said on Sunday when commenting on the latest UN report suggesting that the past eight years were the warmest on record, with an acceleration in sea level rise, glacier melt and heat waves.

All this requires all countries to shoulder their due responsibilities and summon their collective will to deliver on promises because we could well be drinking in the last chance saloon.

Yet so far the developed countries have failed to provide the \$100 billion each year to help developing countries address climate change — as they promised in 2009. This has damaged the mutual trust between the global North and South and made the reaching of any new agreements in this regard even more difficult.

The United States, as the world's largest carbon emitter in history, has dragged its feet on fulfilling its climate obligations. Although the US administration has made tackling the climate crisis a top priority after President Joe Biden reversed the course of his predecessor Donald Trump by rejoining the Paris Agreement, the US Congress has approved a mere \$1 billion in international climate finance for 2022 — falling far short of the pledge the US made to provide \$11.4 billion by 2024.

This failure by Washington to scale up financing for the world's poorest and most climate-vulnerable countries has been viewed as a “betrayal”.

The actions needed to curb the global rise in temperature call for a fundamental change in perspective and some tough decisions being made. But the past eight years have run down the clock, and there can be no more delay in biting the bullet.

The Powerball drawing was delayed Monday and it's likely that the official results won't be known until today [Macau time], the Multi-State Lottery Association said. The record-breaking \$1.9 billion Powerball drawing was delayed because a participating lottery had issues processing sales, officials said.

“Powerball requires all 48 participating lotteries to submit their sales and play data prior to the winning numbers being selected. Once Powerball receives the outstanding submission, the drawing can proceed,” the lottery said.

The winning numbers and recorded video of the drawing will

be posted to the Powerball website and YouTube channel. Players should hold onto their tickets, the statement said.

The jackpot is nearly \$400 million larger than the previous record jackpot and will keep growing until someone wins the prize. Only four previous jackpots have topped \$1 billion, but none of those are close to the current prize.

A winner who chooses an annuity, paid annually over 29 years, would get the estimated \$1.9 billion payout. Nearly all winners instead opt for cash, which for Monday's drawing would be \$929.1 million.

DISCOVERY OF BRONZES REWRITES ITALY'S ETRUSCAN-ROMAN HISTORY

ITALIAN authorities yesterday announced the extraordinary discovery of more than 2,000-year-old bronze statues in an ancient Tuscan thermal spring and said the find will “rewrite history” about the transition from the Etruscan civilization to the Roman Empire.

The discovery, in the San Casciano dei Bagni archaeological dig near Siena, is one of the most significant ever in the Mediterranean and certainly the most important since the 1972 underwater discovery of the famed Riace bronze warriors, said Massimo Osanna, the Culture Ministry's director of museums.

Thanks to the mud that protected them, the figurines were found in a perfect state of conservation. Alongside the figures were 5,000 coins in gold, silver and bronze, the ministry said.

As evidence of the importance of the find, the ministry announced the construction of a new museum in the area to house the antiquities.

Jacopo Tabolli, who coordinated the dig for the University for Foreigners in Siena, said the discovery was



A statue is seen at the site of the discovery of two dozen well-preserved bronze statues from an ancient Tuscan thermal spring in San Casciano dei Bagni, central Italy

significant because it sheds new light on the end of the Etruscan civilization and the expansion of the Roman Empire between the 2nd and 1st centuries B.C.

The period was marked by wars and conflicts across what is today's Tuscany, Umbria and Lazio regions, and yet, the bronze statues show evidence that Etruscan and Roman families prayed together to deities in the sacred sanctuary of the thermal springs. The statues bear both Etruscan and Latin inscriptions.

“While there were social and civil wars being fought outside the sanctuary ... in-

side the sanctuary the great elite Etruscan and Roman families prayed together in a context of peace surrounded by conflict,” Tabolli said. “This possibility to rewrite the relationship and dialectic between the Etruscan and Romans is an exceptional opportunity.”

Some of the two dozen bronzes are entire figures of humans or gods, while others are of individual body parts and organs which would have been offered up to the gods for intervention for medical cures via the thermal waters, the ministry said in a statement.

MDT/AP



Russia Kremlin-connected entrepreneur Yevgeny Prigozhin (pictured) admitted yesterday [Macau time] that he had interfered in U.S. elections and would continue to do so — confirming for the first time the accusations that he has rejected for years. “Gentlemen, we have interfered, are interfering and will interfere. Carefully, precisely, surgically and in our own way, as we know how to do,” Prigozhin boasted in remarks posted on social media.



USA House Speaker Nancy Pelosi said the brutal attack on her husband will impact her decision on whether to remain in Congress after the midterm election, as she called on Republicans to stop the misinformation that is fueling political violence and urged Americans to “vote to defend our democracy.” In a wide-ranging CNN interview, Pelosi's voice cracked with emotion and she acknowledged she was “close to tears” as she described the trauma of the attack on her 82-year-old husband Paul Pelosi and the sadness she felt for the country.



Hollywood Chris Evans may have put down Captain America's shield but he's got a new badge of honor: he's been named People magazine's Sexiest Man Alive. People's selection was announced on Stephen Colbert's late night show and on the magazine's website. Evans, who for nearly a decade played Captain America in Marvel's sprawling superhero films, takes the baton from another Avenger, Paul Rudd. “My mom will be so happy,” he told the magazine.

THE DECISIVE MOMENT

AP Photo/John Raoux



A SpaceX Falcon Heavy rocket's two side boosters, left and, center rear, return to Cape Canaveral for landing about eight minutes after liftoff in Cape Canaveral, Florida. The rocket was hoisting satellites yesterday for the military and then nailed side-by-side booster landings back near the pad.