



LAWMAKER PEREIRA COUTINHO CALLS FOR SMARTER TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT SOLUTIONS TO EASE TRAFFIC JAMS AND AVOID ACCIDENTS

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CASINOS SLATED TO OUTPERFORM IN 2023, MELCO LEADS STOCK RISES

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SUNAK DECLARES 'GOLDEN ERA' IN UK-CHINA TIES OVER

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AP PHOTO



Hawaii Waves of orange, glowing lava and smoky ash belched and sputtered from the world's largest active volcano in its first eruption in 38 years, and officials told people living on Hawaii's Big Island to be ready in the event of a worst-case scenario. The U.S. Geological Survey warned the roughly 200,000 people on the Big Island that an eruption "can be very dynamic, and the location and advance of lava flows can change rapidly."

AP PHOTO



South Korea extradited a 42-year-old woman to New Zealand, two months after she was arrested following the discovery of the bodies of two long-dead children in abandoned suitcases. New Zealand police said the woman arrived at Auckland Airport yesterday after they sent three officers to South Korea to bring her back. They said she will be held in jail overnight and is to appear today at Manukau District Court, where she will face two murder charges.

AP PHOTO



Indian and U.S. troops yesterday participated in a high-altitude training exercise in a cold, mountainous terrain near India's disputed border with China, at a time both countries are trying to manage rising tensions with Beijing. During the exercise, Indian soldiers were dropped from helicopters to flush out gunmen from a house in a demonstration of unarmed combat skills. Other drills involved sniffer dogs and unmanned bomb-disposing vehicles, and trained kites were deployed to destroy small enemy drones.

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A DROP IN THE BUCKET

Alleged illicit Suncity's income is 'a drop in the bucket' in Alvin Chau's overall performance that 'contributed to foster' the gaming industry, lawyer contends in closing statements

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CRIME
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COLD SNAP TO HIT THE CITY

The minimum temperature tomorrow and Friday will be around 12 degree Celsius, the Meteorological and Geophysics Bureau warned. A cold front will arrive at the coast of Guangdong today, thus under the influence of the associated strong winter monsoon, the temperature will drop significantly and the northerly wind will strengthen. Due to the clouds and the rain, the perceived temperature will be much lower than the actual temperature.

BEIJING STRESSES ENFORCEMENT OF HKSAR NATIONAL SECURITY LAW

It is imperative to "fully and faithfully enforce the law on safeguarding national security" in Hong Kong, a spokesperson for the Hong Kong and Macao Affairs Office of China's State Council said on Monday. In accordance with the Law of the People's Republic of China on Safeguarding National Security in Hong Kong, the Central People's Government recently issued an official request to the Chief Executive of the Hong Kong SAR (HKSAR) John Lee, asking him to submit a report on the HKSAR's performance of its duty to safeguard national security, including the work of the region's Committee for Safeguarding National Security. Since the enactment of the law, the HKSAR has fulfilled its constitutional responsibility to safeguard national security in accordance with the law and has achieved notable results, the spokesperson said.

EXPORT REACHES MOP1.2B IN OCTOBER

Total merchandise exports amounted to MOP1.16 billion in October 2022, up 27.8% year-on-year, data from the Statistics and Census Service (DSEC) indicates. The value of re-exports (MOP1.03 billion) expanded by 38.9%, of which re-exports of Wine and Articles for Casinos jumped 369.8% and 214% respectively. From January to October this year, the total value of merchandise exports increased 5.1% year-on-year to MOP11.29 billion, of which value of re-exports (MOP9.64 billion) and domestic exports (MOP1.66 billion) rose 5.8% and 1.4% respectively. External merchandise trade totaled MOP126.36 billion from January to October 2022, down 6% compared with MOP134.36 billion a year earlier.

TALENT ACQUISITION LAW

GOV'T AND LAWMAKERS DISPUTE DEFINITION OF 'KEY-INDUSTRIES'

RENATO MARQUES

THE government and lawmakers have disagreed on the definition of "key industries" in the new law for Talent Acquisition, the chairman of the Third Standing Committee of the Legislative Assembly (AL), Vong Hin Fai said yesterday in a media briefing after a committee meeting with government officials.

According to Vong, several articles of the new law use the term "key industries," referring to industries which will benefit from the new government program assisting in the recruitment of qualified staff from abroad. Nevertheless, Vong noted that "it is not convenient to create a definition for this expression since the concept is dynamic." He added that the concept of key industries will be tied to the Five-Year Development Plan of the Macau Special Administrative Region (5-year Plan).

The chairman noted that several lawmakers on the committee are dissatisfied with this explanation. The objection being that this explanation of the link to the 5-year plan is mere verbal commentary without legal effect, and should be clearly stated in the law itself.

Vong noted that "for the time being, according to the 5-year plan, the four main industries that the government wishes to promote are big health, the financial services, high technology, and culture and sports industries, alongside with those that already have some development like the gaming sector, the exhibitions and conventions, and tourism." However, Vong also noted that it was uncertain whether there will be any program allowing talent acquisition for the last three or just for the first four.

Another question that merited the attention of lawmakers was the procedure and application process of the candidates to the programs and how will they be evaluated, Vong added.

"In reply to the question of how to evaluate the candidates, the government made a presentation regarding the future entities that will be in charge of the process, including the Pu-

KEVIN KU



blic Security Police Force (PSP) and two new committees to be established that include a Talent Development Committee and a Talent Evaluation Committee," Vong remarked, stating that the whole process will be undertaken by these three bodies.

The difference between the development and the evaluation committees is less clear, as is the need for two separate committees in the first place. Both will be chaired by the Chief Executive (CE) and the members of the committees will largely be the same.

According to Vong, the Development Committee will have more competencies in elaborating on and defining the programs to which candidates can apply, while the second will be more related to the evaluation of the applications.

The PSP will administer the final stage of the application after the residency of the candidates is approved.

CONCERNES WITH PROCEDURE TIME

One of the aspects that attracted the attention of the lawmakers of the Third Com-

mittee was the duration of the process.

Although the government could not provide a precise answer, they said that the timing of each program depends on the program itself.

The government explained that the plan is to release new programs for applications and processing every quarter, assuming that the entire application process is completed in less than three months.

The government also noted that the candidates will complete their application on an online platform to accelerate the process and minimize bureaucracy.

Lawmakers suggested that when any given program is launched, the government should immediately inform the candidates of the processing time and when final verdicts could be expected. Vong said the government would consider the suggestion.

APPEALS ONLY TO COURTS

The government also clarified that if candidates disagree with the decision of the evaluation committee, no appeals

would be granted.

According to Vong, the Secretary for Social Affairs and Culture, Elsie Ao Ieong said that this policy has the aim of accelerating the process by removing the internal appeals process.

"If a candidate disagrees with the evaluation, he must resort to an appeal to the courts. The regime allows no appeals to the Committee," Vong said. According to Vong, Ao Ieong said that this is so that appeals from candidates will not affect the processing of other applications.

A final veto power is also attributed to the CE, who can revoke the decision to accept a candidate.

"The CE can use his discretionary power to refuse to accept a candidate due to reasons related to national security and others," Vong said. He also noted that the question has caused some confusion for the juridical advisor to the AL. The advisor noted that the CE also presides over the evaluation committee – thus, the last-minute veto power is a potentially overlapping competence.

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SUNCITY TRIAL

Alvin Chau's defense questions rationale behind allegations

ANTHONY LAM

THE defense in the landmark Suncity case has questioned why the company would breach the law when it already had billions in annual income, local media reports.

Court sessions were about to conclude as the first-instance judicial procedure entered its closing statements yesterday.

Lawyer Leong Hon Man, who is representing Alvin Chau, reiterated that Suncity was not operating illicit gambling.

He pointed out that Chau and Suncity had fostered "significant legal income" and had helped boost the industry to a scale even larger than Las Vegas in terms of revenue, adding that the Gaming Inspection and Coordination Bureau (DICJ) had not found any breaches in so many years.

He described the alleged illicit income (that surpassed MOP21 billion) the Judiciary Police (PJ) reportedly recorded between 2013 and 2021 as "a drop in the bucket" when compared with Suncity's then annual income surpassing MOP10 billion.

As such, and in light of the company needing to secure jobs for several thousands of workers, the lawyer asked on what grounds the company would want to break the law. The allegation goes against



common sense, according to the lawyer.

On the other hand, the lawyer also hoped that the judges would reconsider the legality and authenticity of the evidence collected by the mainland police.

He pointed out that the Court of Final Appeal had ruled against a conviction based solely on criminal reports from the mainland police. In this case, testimonies were collected in mainland China but were only presented to the local court in written form.

Moreover, the lawyer questioned whether the voice messages spoken in Cantonese were correctly transcribed into written Chinese or Putonghua before being presented to the local court. It was also revealed that the PJ had directly cited these testimonies without further verification.

The reliability of the eviden-

ce was also a concern, the lawyer said. He said he could not see actual evidence proving that Chau co-formed or co-operated side betting companies found in Chau's phone, nor had any evidence of flow of funds been presented.

During the court sessions it was revealed that two Excel documents were found on Suncity's computer server, which the prosecution considered key data in the indictment. Leong questioned the significance of the two documents, as the data had been hand-typed by the employees at two companies owned by the fifth defendant, Cheong Chi Kin, and extracted from the same pool of data.

Regarding the accusation of gambling in unpermitted venues, Leong reiterated that 71 venues listed in the PJ report were not known by the casino operators. Another 15 venues were repeated

in the report after lawyers cross-referenced with casino operators. He questioned how Suncity could participate in side-betting which was not conducted at its VIP casinos.

He then questioned how valid the evidence was as PJ did not verify or clarify some points, such as who made side bets with whom and what the relevant leverage amounts were.

The prosecution delivered its concluding statement yesterday morning. Prosecutor-coordinator Kuok Kin Hong began by saying that Chau's testimony in court evidenced that he was engaged in side-betting.

In contrast to the defending lawyer's view, Kuok suggested that all evidence collected from Suncity's computer systems, wiretapping Chau and the mainland police all constituted key pieces

of evidence. He further cited evidence revealing that from 2014, Chau had started ordering the separation of accounts for legal and illegal bets. Chau also personally analyzed the side bets of several gamblers and allowed for delayed repayment of debts arising from side-betting.

Chat group records also showed that members had reported data on 228 side-betting entries to Chau, according to Kuok, and Chau had issued instructions 14 times.

Kuok referred to the operational analysis report of Suncity to hint that the "Main Camp" was a Chau-owned side betting company. It was also noted that the performance of Chau-owned companies was more profitable than other side-betting companies.

Although witnesses had divided opinions on the role of the "Operations Department," some Suncity employees articulated their tacit understanding from work about the department's ownership by Suncity. Training related to so-called operations, which the prosecution used to describe side-betting, was also provided to workers. There was even key performance index evaluation for the matter, as some workers testified.

Cross-referencing with financial documentation, Kuok believed that Suncity had operated side-betting under a relatively complicated structure. Computer systems were also upgraded to support the operations, Kuok added.

Five defending lawyers respectively representing Wynn, SJM, MGM, Venetian and Galaxy agreed with Kuok's statements. The five concessionaires filed for compensation to be paid by the defendants.

RESIDENTS can schedule appointments to receive the vaccine against the Omicron variant from today. The shipment of the vaccines has arrived and vaccinations will commence tomorrow.

The Health Bureau advises that the bivalent mRNA vaccine can only be administered to individuals who have opted for an mRNA type vaccine as a booster dose. The bivalent formula is primarily intended for individuals receiving the fourth dose of the vaccine.

For individuals who opt for the mRNA vaccine as their third vaccine dose (first booster dose), either the bivalent mRNA vaccine, or the original mRNA vaccine strain will be provided, depending on availability.

Bivalent mRNA vacci-

COVID-19

Appointments for bivalent vaccines open today

nes can be booked at Macau Forum's vaccination center, at the 24-hour outpatient clinic at Conde de São Januário, Ilha Verde Health Center and Ocean Gardens Health Centre.

Meanwhile, the latter two health centers are the only locations where mRNA vaccines are available for children (aged six months or more).

According to the Health Bureau, the new bivalent vaccine aims to tackle the current Omicron wave of the pandemic. China is currently facing multiple outbreaks driven by fast-spreading Omicron variants. **LV**



COVID-19

CASINOS SLATED TO OUTPERFORM IN 2023, MELCO LEADS STOCK RISES

CASINO operators in Macau are set to outperform in 2023 following nearly three years of restrictions that have hampered the gaming hub, J.P. Morgan analyst Joseph Greff has written in a note. As cited in a Dow Jones report, Greff has noted that the SAR has the best prospects for improvement within the regions analyzed by the firm, citing recent steps from the Chinese government to improve travel mobility and expected demand.

Yesterday, Melco Resorts & Entertainment led the rise on the HKSE with a 13.81% rise, followed by Wynn Macau with a 12.75% rise, following the announcement that the government will award fresh gaming licenses to the incumbent gaming operators.

MGM China, SJM Holdings, Galaxy Entertainment Group and Sands China all rose between 5.7% and 6.51%. **LV**

RENATO MARQUES



FALL IN CASINO-RELATED CRIME DUE TO LOCKDOWNS: REPORT

ANTHONY LAM

MACAU has recorded a fall in crimes related to casino activities in the first nine months of the year, and the security branch has speculated that the cause may be the decrease in the number of people circulating in the city due to Covid-19 restrictions.

In the statement announcing

the crime figures, the security branch made special mention of the June 18 outbreak, highlighting that it had “constantly evaluated the possible impact on security conditions due to various elements of instability.”

The security branch suggested that “the decline in the number of tourists due to the epidemic and the continued reinforcement

of prevention measures and crackdowns by the police” were the causes of the lower figures.

In the first nine months of the year, the police opened a total of 7,329 criminal investigations, a decrease of 16.7% from the same period in 2021.

Of the crimes related to gambling, fraud cases saw the largest decrease, followed by cases of im-

proper possession and usury, also referred to as profiteering, falling by 60%, 48%, and 54.5%, respectively.

Furthermore, violent crimes, which were often related to casino interests and conflicts, have dropped by over 43% year-on-year. Of these, serious violent crimes such as “kidnapping”, “murder”, and “serious wounding” remained at a

low rate or ceased entirely.

At the time the statement was published, the security branch had not found any change to the security conditions in or near casinos following the promulgation of the new casino law.

“Rape” fell by 36% year-on-year, while “sexual assault against children” cases increased. The data showed that victims typically met their offenders through online forums and chat rooms. The number of extortion cases increased by 25%; of which the number of blackmail cases involving naked pictures sent over chats increased by more than 30% year-on-year.

The security branch also criticized parallel traders for having “seriously disrupted the normal customs clearance order of Macau and Zhuhai, and also escalated the risk of the spread of the pandemic.”

Of all casino-related crimes, 103 violators were Macau residents, 187 from the mainland, eight from Hong Kong and six from elsewhere. Fifty-one victims were from Macau, 98 from the mainland, five from Hong Kong and one from elsewhere.

The security branch also noted that in the first three quarters of this year – especially from June to August – Macau had been severely affected by the pandemic, leading to greater pressures in all walks of life. The continued rise in the unemployment rate will inevitably create more social instability.

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Exhibition features striking East meets West artworks

THE latest exhibition at Sands Gallery is showcasing striking artworks with aims to echo the city's East meets West image, bringing together artists from China and Europe.

Sands China recently opened the exhibition Ink Wash • Abstraction, featuring over 30 imaginative works from China's Feng Zhongyun and Italy's Elisa Sighicelli.

Ink Wash • Abstraction is part of the company's ongoing commitment to the diversification of art and culture in Macau, providing a platform for promoting extensive exchange and cooperation among local and international art talent.

Showcased at Sands Gallery at the Grand Suites at Four Seasons, the ultimate objective has always been to provide a platform where people can exchange artistic ideas and show their appreciation of arts in a bid to enrich the art atmosphere in Macau.

Dr. Wilfred Wong, president of Sands China Ltd., said: "The more exhibitions like these that we organize, the more people from all over the world, especially artists, will recognize the opportunities and the beauty of having them in Macau – which has historically been a place where East meets West."

Since its launch, Sands Gallery has always aimed to play an active role in enhancing public interest in art appreciation, enriching the art atmosphere in Macau, and further motivating local artists through various art exhibitions – in support of the local cultural and creative industry.

"This time [...] the impact is striking. As you turn the corner,



you see something different and yet they blend in very well, and that's the beauty of integration in art," said Dr. Wong.

Born in the same era, Feng and Sighicelli have respectively achieved international recognition for their artworks in the Eastern and Western art worlds, and through this exhibition, they are offering a precious visual feast of cultural collision and artistic fusion.

For Feng, who is well-known for his unrestrained painting style, the exhibition plays a significant part in promoting Chinese art and culture.

"We share our culture out of national pride and because we want our audience to enjoy the beauty and sophistication

"The more exhibitions like these that we organize, the more people from all over the world will recognize the opportunities and the beauty of having them in Macau"

DR. WILFRED WONG
PRESIDENT OF SANDS CHINA LTD.

of Chinese culture and art. I'm happy Sands Gallery is embracing the integration of different styles," said Feng.

"These are modern works where I integrated both authentic and traditional Chinese techniques. I'm a happy person so I want to be able to convey that through these art pieces,"

he added.

Sighicelli meanwhile is adept at capturing the subtle beauty of sculptures, architecture and still-life objects with experimental photography techniques on unexpected and novel media such as marble, travertine stone and satin.

Sands Gallery was born out

of Sands China's desire to help cultivate an environment that nurtures creativity and art appreciation in Macau.

The plan is to host five to six exhibitions every year, where some of them will be in collaboration with international curators, to provide a platform for artists to showcase their talents.

As Dr. Wong has said: Sands Gallery aims to play an active role in enhancing public interest in art appreciation, enriching the art atmosphere in Macau, and further motivating local artists through various art exhibitions – in support of the local cultural and creative industry. Non-gaming investments have always been one of the company's pillars, such as in boosting efforts in promoting MICE, arts and culture.

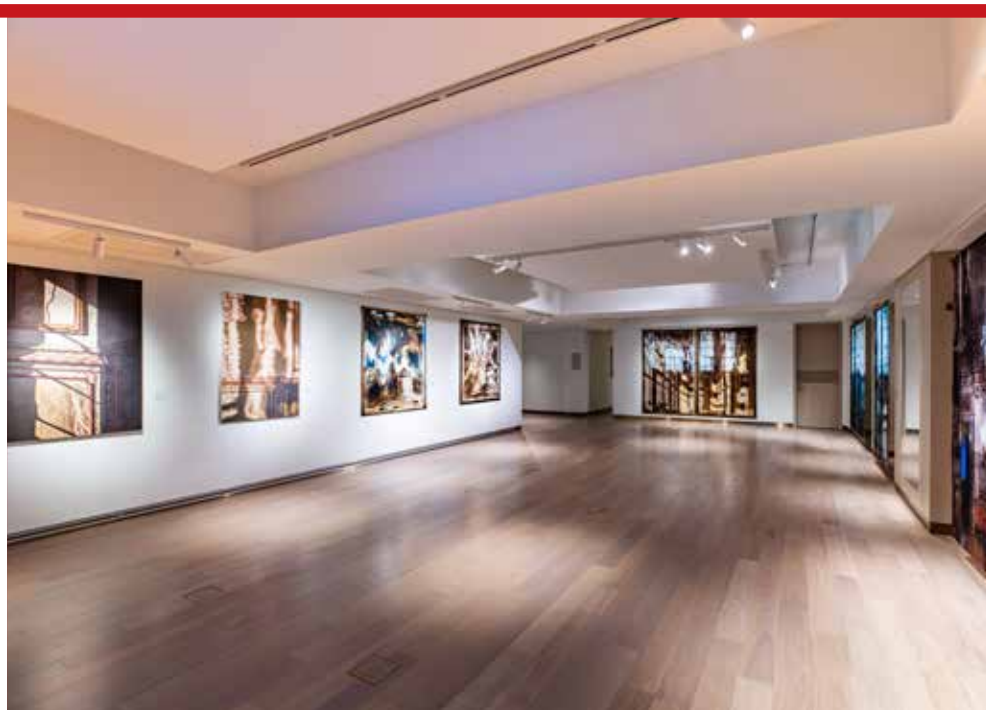
Ink Wash • Abstraction is co-organized by Lotus Art and Rossi & Rossi Gallery and curated by recognized curator Zhang Zikang

Li Zisong, president of Macau Lotus TV, said: "The future development of Lotus Art will mainly focus on supporting art and culture in Macau. We will promote high-level dialogue between Macau, mainland China and overseas to help develop a unique positioning for Macau to carry out a significant role in the global art and culture sector."

Meanwhile, Fabio Rossi, the founder of Rossi & Rossi, has expressed hopes that the exhibition will introduce a greater diversity of art to Macau, and nurture more local art lovers.

"We are committed to promoting and enriching the development of contemporary art and Himalayan art, and we are delighted to partner with Lotus Art to present the dual solo exhibition of Feng Zhongyun and Elisa Sighicelli at Sands Gallery," said Rossi.

The public can enjoy the unique and engaging visual styles of Feng and Sighicelli at Sands Gallery from 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. daily until Jan. 8, 2023.



Pereira Coutinho wants smarter traffic solutions to avoid accidents

RENATO MARQUES

LAWMAKER José Pereira Coutinho wants the government to find smarter traffic management solutions for both vehicles and pedestrians to ease traffic jams and avoid accidents, particularly at zebra crossings.

In a written inquiry to the government, the lawmaker noted the traffic light system in Macau is mostly outdated and operated manually and does not consider the amount of traffic at different times of the day or even on different streets at a given time.

For the lawmaker, it is unacceptable that Macau has an electronic traffic management system and a control center that is supposed to coordinate on these matters, but none of these systems is in force or is being effectively managed, he said.

To ease constant traffic jams, especially in the central districts, he proposed Macau adopt a new system of intelligent traffic lights that can automatically adjust the timing for one or another direction of traffic according to real-time traffic conditions.

He noted such a system,



combined with the 5G network capabilities, could be the best solution and could replace the constant need to send police traffic officers to the most congested crossroads to try to manually adjust the traffic conditions.

He said the same system would also help those with physical disabilities to cross the roads, especially the visually impaired.

Another of the adjustments the same lawmaker believes needs to urgently

change is related to zebra crossings and the use of speed bumps to reduce vehicles' speed in certain areas. He noted that some countries in northern Europe, such as Denmark and Iceland, have already adopted the system of 3D zebra crossings, which initially surged in Japan.

He noted the example of the city of London, where these types of zebra crossings have been installed near schools to force drivers to slow down and pay more attention to pe-

destrians.

Noting several accidents that have occurred at zebra crossings recently, Pereira Coutinho also wants to adopt the system that sends out a "strong light" warning to pedestrians, indicating when the light is red.

He says many people are falling victim to a "digital zombie" trend in which people obsessed with their mobile phone screens fail to pay the right amount of attention while crossing the roads.

Aged care employees up 10% y-o-y

STAFF REPORTER

THE number of full-time employees in aged care grew 10.2% year-on-year to 1,314, and their average earnings went up 1.8% to MOP16,060 at the end of the third quarter of this year. Childcare, meanwhile, had 1,509 full-time employees, down 1.9% year-on-year; their average earnings in September rising 1.9% to MOP16,400, data from the Statistics and Census Service shows.

Hotels had 44,219 full-time employees, down 8.5% year-on-year; average earnings (excluding bonuses) of full-time employees in September this year were MOP18,600, down by 3.3% compared to March 2022 but up fractionally by 0.5% year-on-year.

Restaurants had 22,658 full-time employees, a

decrease of 3.7% year-on-year; their average earnings fell 1.1% to MOP9,700.

At the end of the third quarter, job vacancies in restaurants (1,028) and hotels (422) decreased by 125 and 343 respectively year-on-year.

Meanwhile, 87.4% and 51.4% of the vacancies in hotels required knowledge of Mandarin and English respectively.

The job vacancy rate (0.9%) and the employee recruitment rate (1.8%) of hotels in the third quarter decreased by 0.7 and 2.5 percentage points respectively year-on-year. As for restaurants, the job vacancy rate (4.3%) and the employee recruitment rate (4.5%) went down by 0.4 and 0.3 percentage points respectively. These figures suggest a decrease in demand for labor in these two industries.



CORPORATE BITS

Sands China Makes annual donation to Tung Sin Tong



Sands China Ltd. has donated MOP 600,000 to Macau Tung Sin Tong Charitable Society at a check presentation ceremony recently at The Venetian

Charitable Society at a check presentation ceremony recently at The Venetian

Macau, in support of the nongovernmental organization's annual December-February fundraising campaign.

Sands China has been making annual donations to Tung Sin Tong to support its fundraising campaign since 2004. Macau Tung Sin Tong Charitable Society was founded 130 years ago and has been offering free medical services, medicine, and education since its establishment in 1892.

Sands China's support of Tung Sin Tong is part of Sands Cares, the global corporate citizenship program of parent company Las Vegas Sands Corp.

9th MGM Lion Dance Championship comes to successful conclusion



The 9th "MGM Lion Dance Championship - Southern Lion Dance Invitational 2022" concluded successfully over the weekend.

After two days of battles, Guangdong Provincial Dra-

gon & Lion Dance Association and MGM Golden Lion Troupe - Team A clinched the champion titles at the "Freestyle Lion Dance Championship - Taolu Movements on Poles" and the "Fe-

male Traditional Lion Dance Championship" respectively.

MGM Golden Lion Troupe - Team B took home the gold trophies from this year's "Junior Lion Dance Performance Competition," while both Lion Dance Troupe of Qiaotou Community, Fuhai Street, Bao'an District, Shenzhen and MGM Golden Lion Troupe - Team B won the Gold prizes at the "Youth Traditional Lion Dance Championship."

This year, MGM partnered with Macau Lotus TV for the first time to live stream the competition on 19 mainland social media platforms, enabling spectators to experience this annual sports and cultural event online, with over 3.8 million online and offline attendees over the two days.



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CHINESE UNIVERSITY STUDENTS SENT HOME AMID PROTESTS

JOE MCDONALD, BEIJING

CHINESE universities are sending students home as the ruling Communist Party tightens anti-virus controls and tries to prevent more protests after crowds angered by its severe “zero COVID” restrictions.

With police out in force, there was no word of protests yesterday in Beijing, Shanghai or other major cities.

Some anti-virus restrictions were eased Monday in a possible effort to defuse public anger following the weekend protests in at least eight cities. But the ruling party affirmed its “zero COVID” strategy, which has confined millions of people to their homes in an attempt to isolate every infection.

Tsinghua University, Xi’s alma mater, where students protested Sunday, and other schools in Beijing and the southern province of Guangdong said they were protecting students from COVID-19. But dispersing them to far-flung hometowns also reduces the likelihood of more activism following protests at campuses last weekend.

Some universities arranged



Protesters hold up blank white papers during a commemoration for victims of a recent Urumqi deadly fire at the Chinese University of Hong Kong, Hong Kong

buses to take students to train stations. They said classes and final exams would be conducted online.

“We will arrange for willing students to return to their hometowns,” Beijing Forestry University said on its website. It said its faculty and students all tested negative for the virus.

Campuses were hotbeds of activism during the last push for democratic reforms in the 1980s.

By sending students home, authorities hope to “defuse the situation,” said Dali Yang, an expert on

Chinese politics at the University of Chicago.

“For students, it has been lockdown on campuses for months on end. For others, of course, job prospects have been destroyed, business and all that adding to the frustrations. There has been quite a bit of anxiety,” Yang said.

Authorities have ordered mass testing and imposed other controls in areas across China following a spike in infections. But the move to disperse students was unusual at a time when many cities are telling the public to avoid

travel and imposing controls on movement.

In Hong Kong, about 50 students from mainland China protested Monday at the Chinese University of Hong Kong in a show of support for people on the mainland.

The gathering and a similar one in Hong Kong’s business district were the biggest protests in the Chinese territory in more than a year under rules imposed to crush a pro-democracy movement.

“Zero COVID” has helped keep China’s case numbers lower than those of the United States and other major countries. But public acceptance has eroded as people in some areas have been confined at home for up to four months and say they lack reliable access to food and medicine.

The Chinese Communist Party promised last month to reduce disruption by changing quarantine and other rules. But a spike in infections has prompted cities to tighten controls, fueling public frustration.

Yesterday, the number of new coronavirus cases dipped slightly to 38,421 after setting new records over recent days. Of those, 34,860 showed no symptoms.

While China’s numbers remain

low in comparison to the U.S. and other countries, few Chinese have been exposed to the virus and China’s domestically developed vaccines are considered far less effective than those used abroad. Authorities are believed to fear a wave of infections and deaths that could overwhelm the health care system should they lift “zero COVID” measures.

On Monday, the city government of Beijing announced it would no longer set up gates to block access to apartment compounds where infections are found.

It made no mention of a fire last week in Urumqi that killed at least 10 people. That prompted angry questions online about whether firefighters or victims trying to escape were blocked by locked doors or other anti-virus controls.

Urumqi and another city in the Xinjiang region in the northwest announced markets and other businesses in areas deemed at low risk of infection would reopen this week and public bus service would resume.

The Urumqi fire provided the “trigger for people to go out to express themselves,” Yang said. Depending on how tough a position the government takes, protests could continue on a “rotational” basis, with new groups taking turns, he said.

Sympathy protests were held overseas, and foreign governments have called on Beijing for restraint. **MDT/AP**

EXPLAINER

Zero-Covid limits saved lives but no clear exit

CARLA K. JOHNSON
& MARIA CHENG,
MEDICAL WRITERS

CHINA’S strategy of controlling the coronavirus with lockdowns, mass testing and quarantines has provoked the greatest show of public dissent in decades.

Most protesters on the mainland and in Hong Kong have focused their anger on restrictions that confine families to their homes for months. Global health experts have criticized China’s methods as unsustainable.

A look at China’s “zero-COVID” approach:

CHINA’S POLICY

President Xi Jinping’s government has pursued a policy of lockdowns, repeated testing of millions of people and lengthy quarantines for overseas arrivals in an attempt to tamp down spread.

At the beginning of the pandemic, other countries

also had lockdowns and other restrictions that were eventually eased. Initially, the strategy in China succeeded at holding down the death toll. But it now means China’s population has very little exposure to the virus. And China is using only domestically developed vaccines that are less effective than those widely used elsewhere, and not enough elderly people are fully protected.

China’s continued reliance on lockdowns has been “rather draconian,” Dr. Anthony Fauci, the top U.S. infectious disease expert, said on NBC’s “Meet the Press.” It “really doesn’t make public health sense.”

However, as it was facing a surge of cases, China has since modified its Zero-Covid policy easing restrictions and ordering “precise lockdowns” – districts, neighborhoods or single buildings instead of entire cities.

PLAN B?

China has had far fewer deaths compared to other large nations and one of the lowest deaths per capita in the world. The official death toll stands at 5,233, the majority during the initial outbreak in early 2020.

The strict policies saved lives, but cannot be sustained, said Ali Mokdad, a professor of health metrics sciences at the University of Washington in Seattle.

“They do not have a plan B,” said Mokdad, adding that China’s approach ultimately will lead to surges in deaths and strain on hospitals. “They cannot lock the country forever.”

Julian Tang, a virologist at Britain’s University of Leicester, agreed that China’s attempt to stop every single case of COVID-19 is “simply impossible” and that it will do what most of the rest of the world has done and learn to live with the virus.

“There is no endgame for ‘zero-COVID,’” Tang said.

While China’s tough rules helped to avoid the thousands of infections, hospitalizations and deaths seen in the West during the first year of the pandemic, that disappeared with the emergence of the super-infectious omicron variant, Tang said.

“The only thing to do is to accept that there is going to be a certain level of disease,” Tang said.

GRIM PREDICTIONS

Dr. Paul Hunter, a professor of medicine at Britain’s University of East Anglia, said China had now backed itself into a corner and warned that exiting would be painful. He said the value of measures like lockdowns and mask-wearing was mostly to delay as many infections as possible until vaccines were available.

“Unfortunately, the vaccines in China were not very good,” Hunter said, adding that vaccination levels of its most vulnerable people are low and much of the protection the shots provided has now faded for those immunized long ago.

Hunter said restrictions should be lifted incrementally to avoid hospitals being overwhelmed and said other restrictions, like mask-wearing, could be held in place to reduce spread as much as possible. He said China will eventually have to open its borders, a step that will inevitably bring a surge of disease.

“The surge will peak very quickly and also fade rather quickly. But while they are going through it, it will be dreadful,” he said.

The health analytics firm Airfinity released projections on Monday estimating that up to about 2 million people in China could be at

risk of death if the country were to lift its “zero-COVID” policy, given its low vaccination rates and the lack of natural immunity among its population.

Local Chinese authorities eased some regulations after recent rallies, but the government showed no sign of backing down on its larger coronavirus strategy.

VACCINES AS ‘WAY OUT’

Dr. Bharat Pankhania, an infectious diseases expert at the University of Exeter, said China should import mRNA vaccines made by Pfizer-BioNTech and Moderna.

“The scientific answer is very clear,” Pankhania said.

He acknowledged that it might be politically challenging for China to acknowledge the shortcomings of its homegrown shots, but said the country needed to find a way to change course.

“This should not be about saving face,” he said. “The Chinese population is clearly fed up with lockdown after lockdown and the quickest way out is to immunize as fast as possible.” **MDT/AP**

AP PHOTO



Beijing called the action illegal and said it mobilized naval, air assets to issue warnings and drive off the ship

DIPLOMACY

US dismisses China objections to South China Sea mission

THE U.S. Navy yesterday dismissed Beijing's protests over a "freedom of navigation operation" conducted near a Chinese-held island in the South China Sea, in the latest incident drawing new attention to one of the world's potential military flashpoints.

In an unusual move, the Navy's 7th Fleet issued a rebuttal to China's objections to yesterday's mission, calling it "the latest in a

long string of (Chinese) actions to misrepresent lawful U.S. maritime operations and assert its excessive and illegitimate maritime claims" in the South China Sea. China claims the area virtually in its entirety.

The Navy said that China's sweeping maritime claims pose a serious threat to the freedom of navigation and overflight, free trade and unimpeded commerce, and freedom of economic oppor-

tunity for South China Sea littoral nations.

The Navy said its guided missile cruiser USS Chancellorsville yesterday "asserted navigational rights and freedoms in the South China Sea near the Spratly Islands, consistent with international law."

China called the action illegal and said it mobilized naval and air assets to issue warnings and drive off the ship.

"The U.S. military's actions

have seriously violated China's sovereignty and security, which is further ironclad evidence of its pursuit of navigational hegemony and militarization of the South China Sea," spokesperson for the Southern Theater Command, Air Force Col. Tian Junli, was quoted as saying.

"China has indisputable sovereignty over the South China Sea islands and their adjacent waters," Tian said.

The long-seething South China Sea territorial conflicts involving China, the Philippines, Vietnam, Malaysia, Taiwan and Brunei have long been regarded as a delicate fault line in the U.S.-China rivalry in the region.

While the U.S. lays no claims to the strategic waterway, where an estimated \$5 trillion in global trade transits each year, it has said that freedom of navigation and overflight is in America's national interest. The sea is also home to rich fishing stocks and a potential wealth of energy and mineral resources.

In March, U.S. Indo-Pacific commander Adm. John C. Aquilino told The Associated Press that China has fully militarized at least three of several islands it built in the disputed waters with anti-ship and anti-aircraft missile systems, laser and jamming equipment. He described it as an increasingly aggressive move that threatens all nations operating nearby.

Then in July, U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken called on China to comply with a 2016 arbitration ruling that invalidated Beijing's vast claims on historical grounds in the South China Sea.

On a visit to the area earlier this month, U.S. Vice President Kamala Harris reaffirmed Washington's commitment to defend the Philippines under the 1951 Mutual Defense Treaty. She also announced an additional aid of \$7.5 million to Philippine maritime law enforcement agencies.

That came shortly after the Philippine navy alleged a Chinese coast guard vessel had forcibly seized Chinese rocket debris as Filipino sailors were towing it to their island.

DIPLOMACY

Sunak defends pragmatism over rhetoric in British-Chinese relations

IN his speech to the annual Lord Mayor's Banquet in London, British Prime Minister Rishi Sunak said the U.K. would stand up to global competitors like China — "not with grand rhetoric but with robust pragmatism" and by boosting its ties with like-minded global allies including the U.S., Canada, Australia and Japan.

However, Sunak declared that the U.K.'s "golden era" of ties with China was over in his first major speech on foreign policy, describing China's regime as a "systemic challenge to our values and interests."



Britain's Prime Minister Rishi Sunak arrives at the annual Lord Mayor's Banquet at the Guildhall in central London

But Sunak stopped short of calling China a threat, disappointing Chi-

na hawks in his Conservative Party who had until recently expected him to

class China as a "threat" to U.K. security as part of an update of the govern-

ment's foreign and defense policies.

"We recognize China poses a systemic challenge to our values and interests, a challenge that grows more acute as it moves towards even greater authoritarianism," he said yesterday [Macau time] at the banquet.

Referring to Beijing's handling of widespread protests across China against the country's strict "zero COVID" strategy, Sunak said that "instead of listening to their people's protests, the Chinese government has chosen to crack down further, including by assaulting a BBC journalist."

In July, during a Conservative leadership race to pick a successor to former Prime Minister Boris Johnson, Sunak said China represented the "largest threat" to Britain and the world's security and prosperity.

At the time, he pledged to close all Confucius Institutes, the partially Chinese government-funded organizations that promote Chinese culture and language at U.K. universities. He also said he would lead an international alliance "against Chinese cyberthreats, and help British companies and universities counter Chinese spying."

Lawmaker Iain Duncan Smith, a former Conservative Party leader and a vocal China critic, said Sunak's "robust pragmatism" meant "anything you want it to mean" and amounted to "appeasement." And David Lammy, the opposition Labour Party's foreign affairs spokesman, described Sunak's speech as "as thin as gruel."

"All it shows is that once again the Conservative government is flip-flopping its rhetoric on China," Lammy said. **MDT/AP**

SOUTH KOREA

GOVERNMENT ORDERS STRIKING CEMENT TRUCKERS BACK TO WORK

KIM TONG-HYUNG, SEOUL

SOUTH Korea's government issued an order yesterday for some of the thousands of truck drivers who have been on strike to return to work, insisting that their nationwide walkout over freight fare issues is hurting an already weak economy.

Despite facing the threat of delicensing or even prison terms, the strike's organizers said they would defy the order and accused President Yoon Suk Yeol's conservative government of suppressing their labor rights and ignoring what they described as worsening work conditions and financial strain caused by rising fuel costs and interest rates.

The order was approved in a Cabinet meeting called by Yoon and targeted about 2,500 drivers of cement trucks among a broader group of truckers participating in the walkout. It marked the first time a South Korean government has exercised controversial powers under a law revised in 2004 to force truckers back to their jobs.

A failure to comply without "justifiable reason" is punishable

AP PHOTO



Trucks are parked next to containers at the Inland Container Depot in Uiwang

by up to three years in jail or a maximum fine of 30 million won (\$22,400). Critics have denounced the law as unconstitutional, saying it doesn't clearly define what qualifies as acceptable conditions for a strike.

The strike's damage so far has been largely limited to domestic industries such as construction and there have been no reports of substantial disruptions of key exports such as computer chips and automobiles.

Yoon said the truckers' strike is

threatening to "devastate the foundation of our industries," citing delays in deliveries of materials such as cement and steel to construction sites and factories. He accused the strikers of illicit activities such as disrupting the work of colleagues who have refused to participate in the strike.

"There's no way to justify the act of taking the lives of people and the national economy as hostage to accomplish their own interest," Yoon said in the Cabinet meeting.

Officials said the "work start order" was issued to cement truckers first because the construction industry has been hit hardest by the strike. Finance Minister Choo Kyung-ho said in a briefing yesterday that cement shipments have been reduced by more than 90% since the start of the strike and about half of the country's construction sites have experienced disruptions.

Choo said the strike also has been causing shortages at some gas stations. It wasn't immediate-

ly clear whether the government was planning to expand the order to drivers transporting fuel, steel and other supplies if the strike continues.

Thousands of members of the Cargo Truckers Solidarity union have been striking since last Thursday, in their second nationwide walkout since June, calling for the government to make permanent a minimum freight rate system that is to expire at the end of 2022.

While the minimum fares are currently applied to shipping containers and cement, the striking truckers are calling for the benefits to be expanded to other cargoes including oil and chemical tankers, steel and automobile carriers and package delivery trucks.

Yoon's government has offered to temporarily extend the minimum freight fares for another three years but balked at the demand to widen the scope of such payments.

The truckers say the minimum-rate system is crucial for their finances and safety, saying that without it they are forced to increase their deliveries and drive dangerously to make ends meet.

Cargo Truckers Solidarity issued a statement denouncing the government's return-to-work order, which they described as an attack on truckers' livelihoods and basic rights. Some of its leaders shaved their heads to express their defiance during a protest at a port in Incheon. **MDT/AP**

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AP PHOTO



French President Emmanuel Macron whispers to U.S. President Joe Biden following their dinner at the G7 Summit in Elmau, Germany last June

USA-FRANCE

Biden, Macron ready to talk Ukraine, trade in state visit

AAMER MADHANI &
SYLVIE CORBET, WASHINGTON

FRENCH President Emmanuel Macron is headed to Washington for the first state visit of Joe Biden's presidency — a revival of diplomatic pageantry that had been put on hold because of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Biden-Macron relationship had a choppy start. Macron briefly recalled France's ambassador to the United States last year after the White House announced a deal to sell nuclear submarines to Australia, undermining a contract for France to sell diesel-powered submarines.

But the relationship has turned around with Macron emerging as one of Biden's most forward-facing European allies in the Western response to Russia's invasion of Ukraine. This week's visit — it will include Oval Office talks, a glitzy dinner, a news conference and more — comes at a critical moment for both leaders.

The leaders have a long agenda for their Thursday meeting at the White House, including Iran's nuclear program, China's increasing assertiveness in the Indo-Pacific and growing concerns about security and stability in Africa's Sahel region, according to U.S. and French officials. But front and center during their Oval Office meeting will be Russia's war in Ukraine, as

both Biden and Macron work to maintain economic and military support for Kyiv as it tries to repel Russian forces.

In Washington, Republicans are set to take control of the House, where GOP leader Kevin McCarthy says Republicans will not write a "blank check" for Ukraine. Across the Atlantic, Macron's efforts to keep Europe united will be tested by the mounting costs of supporting Ukraine in the nine-month war and as Europe battles rising energy prices that threaten to derail the post-pandemic economic recovery.

White House National Security Council spokesman John Kirby on Monday described Macron as the "dynamic leader" of America's oldest ally while explaining Biden's decision to honor the French president with the first state visit of his presidency.

The U.S. tradition of honoring foreign heads of state dates back to Ulysses S. Grant, who hosted King David Kalakaua of the Kingdom of Hawaii for a more than 20-course White House dinner, but the tradition has been on hold since 2019 because of COVID-19 concerns.

"If you look at what's going on in Ukraine, look at what's going on in the Indo Pacific and the tensions with China, France is really at the center of all those things,"

Kirby said. "And so the president felt that this was exactly the right and the most appropriate country to start with for state visits."

Macron was also Republican Donald Trump's pick as the first foreign leader to be honored with a state visit during his term. The 2018 state visit included a jaunt by the two leaders to Mount Vernon, the Virginia estate of George Washington, America's founding president.

Macron was also Trump's pick as the first foreign leader to be honored with a state visit during his term

Macron was scheduled to arrive in Washington today [Macau time] ahead of a packed day of meetings and appearances in and around Washington on Wednesday — including a visit to NASA headquarters with Vice President Kamala Harris and talks with Biden administration officials on nuclear energy.

On Thursday, Macron will have his private meeting with Biden followed by a joint news conference and visits to the State Department and Capitol Hill before Macron and his wife, Brigitte Macron, are feted at the state dinner. Grammy winner Jon Batiste is to provide the entertainment.

Macron will head to New Orleans on Friday, where he is to announce plans to expand programming to support French language education in U.S. schools, according to French officials.

For all of that, there are still areas of tension in the U.S.-French relationship.

Biden has steered clear of embracing Macron's calls on Ukraine to resume peace talks with Russia, something Biden has repeatedly said is a decision

solely in the hands of Ukraine's leadership.

Perhaps more pressing are differences that France and other European Union leaders have raised about Biden's Inflation Reduction Act, sweeping legislation passed in August that includes historic spending on climate and energy initiatives. Macron and other leaders have been rankled by a provision in the bill that provides tax credits to consumers who buy electric vehicles manufactured in North America.

The French president, in making his case against the subsidies, will underscore that it's crucial for "Europe, like the U.S., to come out stronger ... not weaker" as the world emerges from the tumult of the pandemic and Russia's invasion of Ukraine, according to a senior French government official who briefed reporters on the condition of anonymity to pre-

view private talks.

Macron earlier this month said the subsidies could upend the "level playing field" on trade with the EU and called aspects of the Biden legislation "unfriendly."

The White House, meanwhile, plans to counter that the legislation goes a long way in helping the U.S. meet global efforts to curb climate change. The president and aides will also impress on the French that the legislation will also create new opportunities for French companies and others in Europe, according to a senior Biden administration official who briefed reporters on the condition of anonymity to preview the talks.

Macron's visit comes about 14 months after the relationship hit its nadir after the U.S. announced its deal to sell nuclear submarines to Australia.

After the announcement of the deal, which had been negotiated in secret, France briefly recalled its ambassador to Washington. A few weeks later Macron met Biden in Rome ahead of the Group of 20 summit, where the U.S. president sought to patch things up by acknowledging his administration had been "clumsy" in how it handled the issue.

Macron's visit with Harris to NASA headquarters on Wednesday will offer the two countries a chance to spotlight their cooperation on space.

France in June signed the Artemis Accords, a blueprint for space cooperation and supporting NASA's plans to return humans to the moon by 2024 and to launch a historic human mission to Mars.

The same month, the U.S. joined a French initiative to develop new tools for adapting to climate change, the Space for Climate Observatory. **MDT/AP**

ANALYSIS

As Qatar World Cup unfolds, planet keeps spinning

TAMER FAKAHANY,
LONDON

SOCCER — or football, to most of the global billions watching the World Cup this month — is not human society itself, with all its thorny issues. But at times, the game is a reflection of the entire planet — of nations, their disputes, their aspirations and those of a multitude of minority communities.

In early November, just weeks before the most heavily scrutinized World Cup in the tournament's history kicked off in Qatar, top FIFA officials sent a letter urging teams to "let football take center stage."

FIFA president Gianni Infantino followed this up on the eve of the opening match with a one-hour diatribe against all who had criticized the host nation's human rights record, the conditions that led to thousands of migrant workers dying building the nation's glittering new stadiums and its stance on LGBTQ issues.

Fans from around the world have a different idea of what that "center stage" should show. Many, but not all, Iranians attending matches in Qatar have wanted to express their support for protesters at home. And they've wanted the team to do the same.

Other political issues have been erupting fast and furious on a near-daily basis. And outside the World Cup bubble, the world itself has kept turning in some of its most fractious events, both unsurprising and surprising: Russia's war in Ukraine, mass shootings in the United States and the sudden eruption of protests in China.

Of the sporting spirit, George Orwell wrote: "I am always amazed when I hear people saying that sport creates goodwill between the nations, and that if only the common peoples of the world could meet one another at football or cricket, they would have no inclination to meet on the battlefield."

His point stands. Russia was banned from this World Cup after hosting the previous one in 2018, mirroring

AP PHOTO



A pitch invader runs across the field with a rainbow flag during the World Cup group H soccer match between Portugal and Uruguay

the isolation the country and its leaders face for the Ukraine invasion. Ukraine itself fell at the last hurdle for qualification, with fans at home likely more concerned about bombardment and survival amid electricity and water shortages than watching matches in Qatar.

Decades of enmity between the United States and Iran have been seeping into the buildup before the two nations play a critical World Cup match Tuesday that could see one of the countries progress to the knockout stages. The U.S. Soccer Federation briefly displayed Iran's national flag on social media without the emblem of the Islamic Republic, saying the move supported protesters inside Iran. The Tehran government reacted by accusing America of removing the name of God from its national flag.

The century-long Israeli-Palestinian conflict, including Israel's occupation of lands Palestinians want for a future state, has also featured in Qatar, though neither national team is competing. The Palestinian flag and pro-Palestinian fans have been

prominent, while Israeli media and fans have been less welcome in an Arab nation that has not normalized relations with Israel.

As Morocco completed a famous victory over the highly-ranked stars of Belgium Sunday, unrest broke out in Belgian cities and also in the Netherlands, where the immigrant North African community has long been marginalized. "Those are not fans; they are rioters. Moroccan fans are there to celebrate," the mayor of Brussels said.

LGBTQ rights have been at the fore in Qatar as well, with the country under the microscope for its human rights record and laws criminalizing homosexuality.

Germany's players covered their mouths for the team photo before their opening match to protest against FIFA following the governing body's clampdown on the "One Love" armband. Sporting rainbow colors, a symbol of LGBTQ rights, has been a key contentious issue. Some European officials have brought those colors to the stands.

Qatari soccer fans responded to Germany's pro-

test by holding pictures of former Germany playmaker Mesut Özil while covering their mouths. This referenced Özil, a German-born descendant of Turkish immigrants, quitting the national team after becoming a target of racist abuse and a scapegoat for Germany's early World Cup exit in 2018. "I am German when we win, but I am an immigrant when we lose," Özil said at the time.

Keeping the world out of sport, as this tournament and many World Cups and Olympics before have shown, is well nigh impossible. This is especially true in a hyperconnected world, with each word, each gesture, each celebration or outpouring of dismay magnified for a global audience.

Football may indeed claim center stage when these matches are watched and nations' nervous systems go through the wringer. But day-to-day complex issues are never far from the surface, always ready to burst through and dominate. The rest of the world, it turns out, doesn't end where the soccer pitch begins. **MDT/AP**

this day in history

1982 ANIMAL ACTIVISTS BOMB DOWNING STREET



A letter bomb has exploded inside the British Prime Minister's London residence.

Margaret Thatcher was in 10 Downing Street when the device exploded but was not hurt in the blast.

One of her staff was slightly burnt in the attack.

Four more bombs were sent to senior politicians but were intercepted before they got through.

Letters from a group called the Animal Rights Militia were in the Downing Street package but other groups promoting animal welfare have said they have never heard of this organisation.

The bomb - which was addressed to the prime minister herself - arrived at Number 10 in a padded envelope and immediately aroused suspicions.

The official responsible for handling such packages, office manager Peter Taylor, was handling it when it flared up, burning his hands and face.

Mr Taylor was taken to the nearby Westminster Hospital but was discharged after a few hours and is now back at work.

Designed to burn

Police said the device was gunpowder-based and was designed to burn rather than explode.

The remaining packages were sent to the leaders of the other major UK political parties and one government official. They were:

- Michael Foot (Labour)
- Roy Jenkins (SDP)
- David Steel (Liberals)
- Timothy Raison (Home Office)

Mrs Thatcher, who was in her study when the bomb went off, told the House of Commons at Prime Minister's Questions that all MPs should be on their guard.

"Letter bombs anywhere are most distressing and I'm afraid we are all vulnerable," she said.

An investigation is now underway to discover how the package got through the rigorous checks performed on all mail sent to 10 Downing Street.

Courtesy BBC News

IN CONTEXT

Groups like the Animal Rights Militia (Arm) and the Justice Department have been at the extreme end of animal rights campaigning since the early 1980s.

The activists - who use violence to further their cause - are thought to have links with more moderate groups like the Animal Liberation Front.

But many ALF members dislike their tactics, believing they taint their cause.

YOUR STARS



ARIES

Mar. 21-Apr. 19

You may find that you're being used. Try to iron out any friction over money with your mate or conflicts could prevail. Don't be afraid of opposition; your suggestions are valid.



TAURUS

Apr. 20-May. 20

Don't let relatives make demands of you. You might find that a coworker has been two faced. Don't upset elders in your family who don't understand your present situation.



GEMINI

May. 21-Jun. 21

Emotional matters may not be easy for you to handle. Don't let your jealousy be the reason for a decaying relationship. You may be tired of working for someone else.



CANCER

Jun. 22-Jul. 22

Be prepared to make changes to your personal documents. Don't jump too quickly if someone tries to make you join in on their crusade. Get busy putting your place in order.



LEO

Jul. 23-Aug. 22

You may find that your mate is well aware of the circumstances. It's a good time to make changes to your living quarters that will give you more space.



VIRGO

Aug. 23-Sep. 22

If you haven't planned a vacation, then at least try to get away for the weekend. Your best gains will come through helping others emotionally.



LIBRA

Sep. 23-Oct. 22

Get involved in groups and organizations that are of a distinguished nature. You must be careful not to reveal secrets or get involved in gossip. Help others solve their dilemmas.



SCORPIO

Oct. 23-Nov. 21

New romantic ties can be made; however, you must make sure that your motives are not selfish before you make your move. New relationships will surface through work related events.



SAGITTARIUS

Nov. 22-Dec. 21

You will have some wonderful ideas that should bring you extra money. Get involved in philosophic groups that will enlighten you.



CAPRICORN

Dec. 22-Jan. 19

You can meet potential new mates, but make sure that they aren't already committed to someone else. Relatives may be less than easy to deal with.



AQUARIUS

Jan. 20-Feb. 18

You will be appreciated for the competence you exhibit and for taking on responsibilities. Look into ways that you can make extra cash.

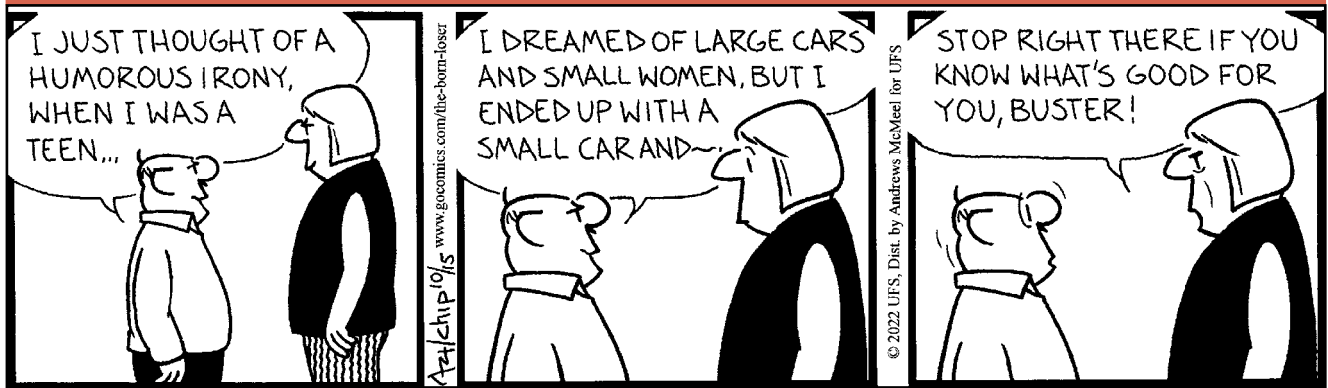


PISCES

Feb. 19-Mar. 20

If you address those in a position to grant you favors you should get the support you require. Do not get involved in joint financial ventures.

The Born Loser by Chip Sansom



SUDOKU

EASY

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

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5		7		4	9			
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7	8						5	3
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		3	9					

HARD

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5					4			
1	2							
	6					2	3	
			1	4				
				5		6		

WEATHER

	MIN	MAX	CONDITION
CHINA			
Beijing	-9	-1	fine
Changchun	-18	-12	fine
Chengdu	3	9	overcast
Chongqing	7	12	overcast
Fuzhou	13	23	rain
Guangzhou	12	23	rain
Guiyang	0	8	overcast
Haikou	23	26	rain
Hangzhou	2	9	rain
Harbin	-18	-14	cloudy
Hefei	-1	2	overcast
Nanjing	0	4	overcast
Shanghai	4	6	rain
Taipei	17	23	rain
Wuhan	0	3	overcast
Hong Kong	15	23	overcast

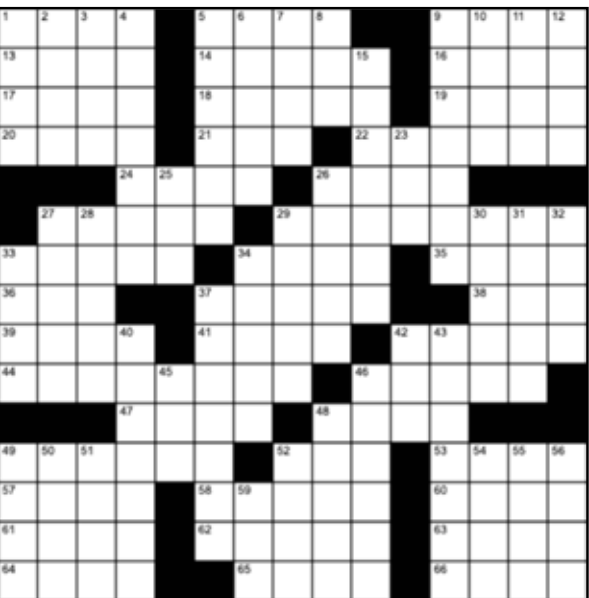
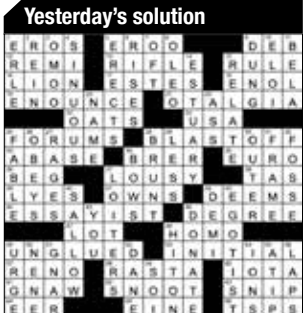
WORLD

	MIN	MAX	CONDITION
Moscow	-13	-9	cloudy
Frankfurt	3	8	showers
Paris	5	8	cloudy
London	4	9	cloudy
New York	2	15	rain

CROSSWORDS

ACROSS 1-Cpls.' superiors; 5- Gentle creature; 9- Horton Hears ____; 13- Trim; 14-Inclined; 16- Goon; 17- On top of; 18- Later, dude!; 19- Sharpen; 20- Start from scratch; 21- Transgression; 22- Whip up; 24- Undoing; 26- Portico; 27- Buy alternative; 29- One who brings change for the better; 33- Light wood; 34- Ballerina's skirt; 35- Mah-jongg piece; 36- Bit of resistance; 37- Disinfectant brand; 38- Inc., overseas; 39- Romance lang.; 41- Ready for business; 42- Cream-filled cookies; 44- Ancestry; 46- Get to know; 47- Dry and waterless; 48- DEA agent; 49- Early computer; 52- Suffix for human; 53- Andy of the comics; 57- Wine choice; 58- Needed liniment; 60- Lubricates; 61- Make ____ for it; 62- Cavalry weapon; 63- Lyric poems; 64- Swimmer's regimen; 65- Go-getter; 66- Cool!;

DOWN 1- Boot attachment; 2- Open wide; 3- Stepped; 4- Ladies of Spain; 5- Timmy's dog; 6- Had dinner at home; 7- Appearance; 8- Journalist Nellie; 9- Deep down; 10- Rider's command; 11- Search thoroughly; 12- Gothic-type arch; 15- Diplomatic; 23- Friend of Tigger; 25- Dos Passos trilogy; 26- Attack; 27- Christine of "Chicago Hope"; 28- Violinist Mischa; 29- Tricks; 30- Distance runner; 31- John of England; 32- Beatty Oscar film; 33- Seethe; 34- Keyed in; 37- Reasonable; 40- Adds yeast; 42- Done, to Donne; 43- Nocturnal carnivore; 45- First name in Notre Dame football; 46- Climbing device; 48- One who cries "uncle?"; 49- Orsk's river; 50- Asta's mistress; 51- The jig ____!; 52- Horrors!; 54- Assistant; 55- This can be guilty or not guilty; 56- Hey, over here!; 59- Vulgar, ill-bred fellow;



Crossword puzzles provided by BestCrosswords.com

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	
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MATCH OF THE DAY

AUSTRALIA PLAYS DENMARK FOR LAST 16 SPOT

ANDREW DAMPE, DOHA

SCENES of wild celebrations featuring flares and fire are not the norm in Australia after World Cup matches.

Yet that was exactly what happened in Melbourne's Fed Square after the Socceroos beat Tunisia on Saturday for just their third win in 18 World Cup matches.

Now, Australia is after something even bigger: reaching the last 16 of soccer's biggest event — something it has achieved only once, in 2006.

Australia faces European Championship semifinalist Denmark in its decisive final group game today [Wednesday, 23:00], with the winner likely advancing.

"It's been an amazing reaction from our result. And so there should be," said Australia striker Mitchell Duke, who scored with a header in the 1-0 win against Tunisia. "But we haven't achieved

anything yet.

"It was amazing to get that result and get that third win in a World Cup for Australia. But we're not happy and satisfied with that," Duke added. "We want more and we do believe that we can get out of the group and we can get a result against Denmark and that's our main objective now."

Defending champion France has already advanced to the knockout stages in Group D with a full six points from its opening two games. Australia sits next with three points, while Denmark and Tunisia trail with one point each.

Australia will qualify with a win, or a draw unless Tunisia beats France. Denmark needs to win and hope that Tunisia doesn't beat France.

Australia is counting on France performing well against Tunisia.

"There's players out there that are hungry for individual awards.

And (France forward Kylian) Mbappé will want to keep scoring goals to try and get the Golden Boot and things like that," Duke said. "So I'm hopeful all those players in the French squad keep that same mentality and want to get the full clean sweep in their group to get the result and do us a favor against Tunisia."

Although, as Duke also pointed out, "as long as we get the job done against Denmark, it doesn't matter."

Australia drew 1-1 with Denmark in the group phase of the last World Cup in 2018.

But Denmark will expect more of itself after a lackluster 0-0 opening draw with Tunisia and a 2-1 loss to France.

"It is very clear and it is very easy; we don't have to make any calculations or think (about) other options," Denmark coach Kasper Hjulmand said. "It is straightforward; we will try to win the match, that is it." MDT/AP



GROUP STANDINGS AT 2ND ROUND

Group A	PL	W	DRAW	L	GF - GA	PNT
Netherlands	2	1	1	0	3 - 1	4
Ecuador	2	1	1	0	3 - 1	4
Senegal	2	1	0	1	3 - 3	3
Qatar	2	0	0	2	1 - 5	0
Group B	PL	W	DRAW	L	GF - GA	PNT
England	2	1	1	0	6 - 2	4
Iran	2	1	0	1	4 - 6	3
United States	2	0	2	0	1 - 1	2
Wales	2	0	1	1	1 - 3	1
Group C	PL	W	DRAW	L	GF - GA	PNT
Poland	2	1	1	0	2 - 0	4
Argentina	2	1	0	1	3 - 2	3
Saudi Arabia	2	1	0	1	2 - 3	3
Mexico	2	0	1	1	0 - 2	1
Group D	PL	W	DRAW	L	GF - GA	PNT
France	2	2	0	0	6 - 2	6
Australia	2	1	0	1	2 - 4	3
Denmark	2	0	1	1	1 - 2	1
Tunisia	2	0	1	1	0 - 1	1
Group E	PL	W	DRAW	L	GF - GA	PNT
Spain	2	1	1	0	8 - 1	4
Japan	2	1	0	1	2 - 2	3
Costa Rica	2	1	0	1	1 - 7	3
Germany	2	0	1	1	2 - 3	1
Group F	PL	W	DRAW	L	GF - GA	PNT
Croatia	2	1	1	0	4 - 1	4
Morocco	2	1	1	0	2 - 0	4
Belgium	2	1	0	1	1 - 2	3
Canada	2	0	0	2	1 - 5	0
Group G	PL	W	DRAW	L	GF - GA	PNT
Brazil	2	2	0	0	3 - 0	6
Switzerland	2	1	0	1	1 - 1	3
Cameroon	2	0	1	1	3 - 4	1
Serbia	2	0	1	1	3 - 5	1
Group H	PL	W	DRAW	L	GF - GA	PNT
Portugal	2	2	0	0	5 - 2	6
Ghana	2	1	0	1	5 - 5	3
Korea Republic	2	0	1	1	2 - 3	1
Uruguay	2	0	1	1	0 - 2	1

MATCH OF THE DAY

Mexico faces early World Cup exit against Saudi Arabia

ANNE M. PETERSON, DOHA

MEXICO is going to have to suddenly find goals — and perhaps even several of them — to extend its knockout-round streak at the World Cup.

Mexico has reached the round of 16 at the last seven World Cups, tied for the longest current streak with Brazil. But in Qatar, El Tri sits at the bottom of Group C ahead of a must-win match against Saudi Arabia tonight [03: at Lusail Stadium].

The last time Mexico played at soccer's biggest tournament and didn't advance out of its group was in 1978.

But it's not quite as simple as winning: El Tri must also get help. They'll need Poland to beat Lionel Messi and Argentina at the exact same time Wednesday night some at Stadium 974.

That's the easiest way forward for Mexico — beyond that, it gets complicated. If Mexico does its job and wins but Argentina, one of the tour-



Mexico's goalkeeper Guillermo Ochoa embraces teammate Hector Moreno at the end of the World Cup group C soccer match between Argentina and Mexico

nament's favorites, also wins, then goal difference comes into play.

The problem is, Mexico has no goals yet in Qatar.

In fact, El Tri hasn't scored for 384 straight minutes at the World Cup, dating back to their second group stage match at the 2018 tournament in Russia.

"In the next game we have no more chances," forward Henry Martin said. "We have to score the goals that we can, and not what happens in the other game."

The drought was extended Saturday night with a 2-0 loss to Messi and Argentina. And neither team scored in the Mexico's opener against Poland.

Mexico hasn't been eliminated in the group stage since the tournament in Argentina 44 years ago. El Tri didn't qualify for the 1982 World Cup in Spain, and was banned from the 1990 event in Italy for using overage players at a CONCACAF under-20 tournament.

Since then, Mexico has advanced to the round of

16 in its last seven appearances — but no further. El Tri came to Qatar looking to play in an elusive "quinto partido" — a fifth game — for the first time since Mexico hosted the tournament in 1986.

With the lack of goals, the criticism of Mexico coach Gerardo "Tata" Martino grew. He had already been questioned over some of his roster choices, including his decision to leave El Tri's all-time scorer Javier "Chicharito" Hernandez off the team. MDT/AP

GROUP H

Portugal advances to knock-out stage, beats Uruguay

STEVE DOUGLAS, LUSAIL

PORTUGAL 2, URUGUAY 0

CRISTIANO Ronaldo wheeled away in celebration, acting as though he had scored once again at the World Cup.

Not this time.

Instead, it was Bruno Fernandes eventually credited with the goal that set up Portugal's 2-0 win over Uruguay yesterday [Macau time], advancing the team into the last 16.

Fernandes curled in a cross from the left that barely went over the head of the leaping Ronaldo and bounced into the far corner of the net in the 54th minute to give Portugal a 1-0 lead.

A grinning Ronaldo threw his arms in the air, suggesting he got the final touch, and was embracing Fernandes as multiple close-up replays were being shown on the big screens in Lusail Stadium.

Alas for Ronaldo, the goal wound up being awarded to Fernandes, who added a second from the penalty spot in stoppage time after a handball by Jose Maria Gimezez as he slid in to challenge the



Portugal's Cristiano Ronaldo jumps for his side's opening goal

Manchester United playmaker.

"I don't really think it matters who scored," Fernandes said about the first goal. "The feeling at the time was that he (Ronaldo) touched the ball — I was crossing it to him — but what's important was we moved into the next round and beat a very big opponent."

Fernandes was denied a hat trick with virtually the last kick of the game, his shot from outside the area hitting the post and bouncing wide.

Portugal, which opened with a

3-2 win over Ghana, became the third team to reach the last 16 after France and Brazil.

Uruguay has one point from two matches and needs to beat Ghana on Friday to stand a chance of advancing. The 2010 semifinalists have yet to score a goal at this tournament, with coach Diego Alonso even putting 35-year-old striker Luis Suarez on the bench in search of the right combination up front.

Portugal has no such worries. The team has scored five goals

in two games and Fernandes has had a hand in four of them as he dictates play in his role as the team's playmaker.

Ronaldo was unable to add to the penalty he scored against Ghana, which took his World Cup tally to eight goals from five tournaments and his men's record of international goals to 118.

He still was the center of attention, though, illuminating a lackluster first half with tricks and flicks that brought gasps from the crowd inside the World Cup's lar-

gest venue, where Ronaldo will hope to return for the final on Dec. 18.

There was a booming layoff with his right shoulder for teammate William Carvalho to volley over in the opening minutes. There was a double stepover and no-look pass that was nothing more than showboating. Then came an impressive chest control as he leapt to receive a cross toward the far post.

Ronaldo is now assured of at least two more matches in what is likely his final World Cup, and will play in the knockout stage for the fourth time in his career.

A draw against South Korea in its final Group H match will secure first place for Portugal, and likely avoid a last-16 meeting with Brazil.

As for Uruguay, a must-win game awaits against Ghana — a repeat of the 2010 quarterfinal match won by the South American team in a penalty shootout after Suarez was sent off for a handball on the line in stoppage time of extra time.

Suarez might be recalled for that game after making an impact off the bench against Portugal, shooting just wide from close range after fellow substitute Maxi Gomez curled a shot against the post.

"We'll need to gamble more. We need to be a bold team," Alonso said.

Portugal avenged its loss to Uruguay in the last 16 at the 2018 tournament. **MDT/AP**

GROUP G

Brazil advances with narrow win over Switzerland

TALES AZZONI, DOHA

BRAZIL 1, SWITZERLAND 0

STRUGGLING and unconvincing without Neymar on the field, Brazil still played well enough to secure a spot in the next round of the World Cup.

The five-time champions overcame the absence of their injured star to beat Switzerland 1-0 with a late goal yesterday [Macau time] and make it to the round of 16 with a match to spare in Group G.

"Of course we miss a player like Neymar," Brazil coach Tite said. "The team loses a lot without him. But we also have other players who can get the job done, as we saw it today."

Casemiro got the only goal in the 83rd minute of a game in which Brazil had difficulties creating scoring chances without its main playmaker. The defensive midfielder scored with a



Brazil's Casemiro celebrates after scoring his side's victory goal

one-timer into the far corner, using the outside of his right foot for a shot that deflected slightly off defender Manuel Akanji.

"We knew that it wasn't going to be easy. We had to be patient," Casemiro said. "Our first objective was to advance and we achieved that."

Neymar stayed at the team's hotel to treat a right ankle injury sustained in the opener in Qatar. He posted an Instagram story showing him watching the match on television while undergoing

treatment on his foot.

"Casemiro has been the best defensive midfielder in the world for a long time," Neymar wrote on Twitter.

Team doctors have not yet given a timetable for Neymar's return — or said if he will return at all. Vinicius Junior said Neymar also had a fever on Monday, though the team had not officially said anything about it.

"We know that Neymar is a great player and that he makes a difference," Brazil defender Marquinhos said. "In difficult moments he

takes on the responsibility and creates the opportunities, but we showed once again that we have quality players to make up for his absence."

The win gave Brazil six points from two matches, leaving Switzerland with three. Serbia and Cameroon, which drew 3-3 earlier Monday, have one point each.

Switzerland, which had no attempts on target, needs a win in the last match against Serbia to guarantee its spot in the next stage. A draw may be enough depending on the match between Brazil and Cameroon.

The result extended Bra-

zil's unbeaten run in the group stage to 17 matches, with 14 wins and three draws. It has lost only one of its last 29 group games, with the last defeat coming against Norway in 1998 in France.

Switzerland had lost only two of its last 13 group matches at the World Cup.

"I can't really blame the team, it did a good job for quite some time," Switzerland coach Murat Yakin said through a translator. "I don't think it's a disappointment. We have a lot of good takeaways here. The next game is something we have control over."

It was an even match ear-

ly on, with both teams trying to control the game but not creating many significant chances. Without Neymar, Brazil struggled to get near Switzerland's area until Casemiro's goal. The assists came from Vinicius Juniors and Rodrygo, the Real Madrid players who until recent had Casemiro as their teammate. Casemiro now plays for Manchester United.

The lights dimmed for a few seconds before halftime at Stadium 974, prompting a brief stoppage in play. Brazil was about to take a corner when it suddenly started turning dark at the temporary stadium.

TODAY'S MATCHES

	Date	Time	Home	Away	ODDS
Wed	Nov 30	23:00	Tunisia	France	H 8, D 4.33, A 1.5
Wed	Nov 30	23:00	Australia	Denmark	H 7.5, D 4.6, A 1.53
Thu	Dec 1	3:00	Saudi Arabia	Mexico	H 4.9, D 4.4, A 1.71
Thu	Dec 1	3:00	Poland	Argentina	H 8, D 4.33, A 1.51

OPINION

China Daily
Editorial, China Daily

SUNAK SHOULD NOT LET US DIM 'GOLDEN ERA'

While the members of the European Union have become increasingly aware of the nature of the US administration's invitation for its allies to help it contain China, as well as its scheme to drag out the Ukraine crisis — so as to weaken Russia and bring European countries into its fold — the United Kingdom is willingly throwing itself into a dangerous liaison.

The United States was an ardent supporter of Brexit, as by encouraging the UK to sever itself from the EU, and it has secured a more docile lackey that it can push to the forefront of its geopolitical games. It was only after Brexit that the US was able to form AUKUS with the UK and Australia, and engage the UK in its "Indo-Pacific" strategy.

Now that the Brexit chickens have come home to roost and are laying rotten eggs that the UK is being forced to swallow, the UK is desperately looking to the US for some kind of relish to make them more palatable.

Thus it is of no surprise to hear the latest to pass through No 10 Downing Street's revolving door echo the rhetoric of the US administration, as UK Prime Minister Rishi Sunak did on Monday, when he declared that the "golden era" of Sino-British relations is over, warning that China poses a "systemic challenge" to the "values and interests" of the UK.

Although calling China a "challenge" rather than a "threat" earned him strong criticism from the anti-China hawks in his party, it was still a far cry from the more pragmatic approach he adopted toward China as chancellor of the exchequer. By declaring an end of the "golden era", a term the UK and China employed to describe the bright prospects for their cooperation in 2015, Sunak has apparently recalibrated his position on China.

In doing so, it is clear that although the UK government still appears to be vacillating on its China policy, which it has vowed to adjust over the past three months under three prime ministers, the anti-China hawks in the Conservative Party are pushing Sunak into casting the UK's lot in with Washington.

No wonder some leaders of major countries have found it unnecessary to meet with Sunak after meeting with their US counterparts, as they know the UK will just follow the US' lead.

Being the youngest prime minister of the country does not excuse Sunak from the responsibility of not letting Washington lead the UK astray.

He should beware the UK being left high and dry should the US start mending its relations with those countries toward which it is instructing the UK to bark.

POLIO IS BACK IN INDONESIA, SPARKING VACCINATION CAMPAIGN

Children in school uniforms and toddlers with their parents lined up this week for polio vaccinations in the Sigli town square on the northern tip of the Indonesian island of Sumatra, after four children were found infected with the highly contagious disease that was declared eliminated in the country less than a decade ago.

The virus was first detected in October in a 7-year-old boy suffering from partial paralysis in the province of Aceh near Sigli, and since then three other cases have been detected, prompting the mass immunization and information drive.

Official say that polio immunization rates in the conservative pro-

vince are well behind the rest of the country, with efforts hampered by widespread disinformation the vaccine is incompatible with religious beliefs, among other things. The government has also been prioritizing COVID-19 vaccinations since they became available.

The campaign that started Monday aims to vaccinate some 1.2 million children in the province, said Maxi Rein Rondonuwu, the Health Ministry's director general for disease control and prevention.

"There is no cure for polio, the only treatment is prevention and the tool for prevention is vaccination," Rondonuwu said.

AP PHOTO



A boy kisses a dog while he charges his phone at the heating tent "Point of Invincibility" in Bucha

UKRAINE'S 'INVINCIBILITY' CENTERS OFFER REFUGE, RESILIENCE

VASILISA STEPANENKO & JAMEY KEATEN, BUCHA

RETIRED Ukrainian reconstruction worker Borys Markovnikov is on the move again: This time, just a few steps from his home in the town of Bucha, northwest of Kyiv, to seek shelter and warmth at a "Point of Invincibility" — a government-built help station that serves food, drinks, warmth and ultimately, resilience, in the face of Russia's military onslaught.

In recent weeks, Ukraine has rolled out hundreds of such help stations, christened with a name of defiance as places where residents facing outages of power, heating and water can warm up, charge their phones, enjoy snacks and hot drinks, and even be entertained.

Markovnikov, 78, has had to move a few times. He recalled how he was driven from his home in the eastern Donbas region after Russian-backed separatists seized territory there in 2014. Earlier this year, he fled his adopted town of Bucha — now infamous for massacres during a brief occupation by Russian forces — on foot, across the front line, to Kyiv. Later, he was able to return home, but home is not always an easy place to live.

"My neighbors told me

there was a tent with electricity and a TV, and I came to have a look," said Markovnikov, ogling Monday's World Cup match between Ghana and South Korea, adding he had no power at home. "We still believe. Without belief, you can't survive."

Ukraine's State Emergency Service said Friday nearly 1,000 such centers have been erected across the country since the program was first launched on Nov. 18. Its website features a handy online map to show beleaguered citizens where they are located.

As of Friday, over 67,000 people had gotten help in them — and more could pour in if, as many experts and President Volodymyr Zelenskyy have warned, more Russian strikes lie ahead.

Such centers — often consisting of small, insulated tents no larger than a classroom — were rolled out just in time as a string of massive airstrikes by Russian forces deprived many Ukrainians of basics of life at home.

The centers are in essence a stopgap while utility crews scramble to fix cut power lines and put water mains back into operation, so basic services can be restored to homes and businesses.

Power company DTEK

said controlled outages continued Monday in Kyiv as a necessary step to balance the hobbled power system and avoid other breakdowns, while ensuring electricity to hospitals and heat-pumping stations.

Only 42 percent of power was available to household customers in the city, and "we do our best to provide light to each customer for 2 to 3 hours twice a day," the company said.

Outside the "Point of Invincibility" on an esplanade in front of a sports center in Bucha, teens had a snowball fight and a guitarist strummed his instrument outside an inflatable tent.

Inside, kids crouched over games of Roblox on mobile phones as young adults tapped away at laptops and elderly women sat quietly to while away the time. A young girl clutched her dog as staffers poured cups of hot tea and sweetened it with honey.

The "Points of Invincibility" offer a public-service — and free — alternative to the many coffee shops and restaurants that have become hubs for internet access and warmth of Ukrainians seeking refuge from the cold and dark in their own homes.

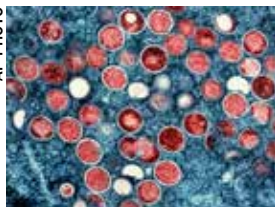
A new delivery of cookies was expected in the next few days. **MDT/AP**

AP PHOTO



Romania NATO allies reaffirmed their commitment to Ukraine yesterday saying that the war-torn nation will one day become a member of the world's largest security alliance, and promising more help — from winter aid to artillery — to help Ukraine's beleaguered armed forces to fight off Russia. "NATO's door is open," NATO Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg (pictured) said before chairing the meeting.

AP PHOTO



Monkeypox WHO has renamed monkeypox as mpox, citing concerns the original name of the decades-old animal disease could be construed as discriminatory and racist. The UN health agency said in a statement that mpox was its new preferred name for monkeypox, saying that both monkeypox and mpox would be used for the next year while the old name is phased out. WHO said it was concerned by the "racist and stigmatizing language" that arose after monkeypox spread to more than 100 countries.

AP PHOTO



Stay, the smash hit by The Kid Laroi and Justin Bieber topped Apple Music's global song chart in 2022 as the giant music streamer released its end-of-year lists and provided listeners with data on their own most listened-to tunes. "Stay," which stayed atop the Billboard Hot 100 for seven weeks this summer, was No. 1 on Apple Music's top 100 global songs chart, staying on top for 51 days straight. Elton John and Dua Lipa's "Cold Heart (PNAU Remix)" was No. 1 on the streamer's Shazam chart.