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AP PHOTO



Hong Kong's outspoken Roman Catholic Cardinal Joseph Zen was allowed to leave the southern Chinese city to pay his respects to the late Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI in Vatican City, his secretary said yesterday. Zen, a 90-year-old retired bishop, will attend the funeral Mass, led by Pope Francis, at St. Peter's Square on Thursday and return to Hong Kong on Saturday, the secretary said. Zen was elevated to cardinal by Benedict in 2006, which he said signaled the pope's focus on China. [More on p8](#)

AP PHOTO



Jerusalem Ultranationalist Israeli Cabinet minister Itamar Ben Gvir (pictured) visited yesterday a flashpoint Jerusalem holy site for the first time since taking office in Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's new far-right government last week. The visit is seen by Palestinians as a provocation and drew fierce condemnation from across the Muslim world and rebuke from Israeli allies. Earlier in the day, Palestinian officials said a 15-year-old boy was killed by Israeli army fire near the occupied West Bank city of Bethlehem.

AP PHOTO



South Korea confirmed yesterday that Seoul and Washington are discussing its involvement in U.S. nuclear weapons management in the face of intensifying North Korean nuclear threats, after President Joe Biden denied that the allies were discussing joint nuclear exercises. The purported difference came after North Korean leader Kim Jong Un entered the new year with a vow to mass-produce battlefield nuclear weapons targeting South Korea and introduce a more powerful intercontinental ballistic missile capable of striking the mainland U.S.

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AP PHOTO



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MACAU EASES COVID RULES, CASINOS YET TO REBOUND

THE city has endured some of the world's strictest anti-virus controls for nearly three years, and a loosening of border restrictions after China rolled back its "zero-Covid" strategy in early December is widely expected to boost its tourism-driven economy.

But for now, China's worst wave of infections so far is keeping away the hordes of high rollers who usually fill its casinos. From Dec. 23-27, the city saw a daily average of only 8,300 arrivals, according to police data. That's just 68% of November's level. The scene improved on New Year's Eve with 28,100 visitors entering the city that day, but that's only 66% of the level a year ago. The daily average was 108,000 in 2019, before the pandemic.

Last week, China announced it would resume issuing passports for tourism, potentially setting up a flood of Chinese going abroad, but also spicing up competition for Macau.

Businesses are hoping the Lunar New Year holidays in late January will bring better luck for the territory of 672,000 people.

"Tourists just come here to have a walk instead of shopping," said Antony Chau, who sells roasted chestnuts on the



square known for the European-style buildings that recall its history as a former Portuguese possession. "They're just wandering."

When the coronavirus hit in 2020, the city's gambling revenue collapsed 80% to just USD7.5 billion from a year earlier. In 2021, the figure recovered to \$10.8 billion, but that's still down 75% from a peak of \$45 billion in 2013. Gambling revenues last year was halved to \$5.3 billion.

A rebound could not come a

moment too soon for souvenir shop owner Lee Hong-soi.

He said his business has been even quieter recently than before entry rules were relaxed. Since entry into Macau requires a negative PCR test result before departure, many in mainland China could not visit because they were infected, he said. And now Macau and other parts of China are battling outbreaks.

"I am running out of strength after enduring for three years," he said.

Rain Lee, 29, visiting from Hong Kong with her husband, said she was happy not to deal with crowds, but disappointed so many businesses were shuttered.

"Many shops are gone," said Lee, a property manager. "I wish it could be like the pre-pandemic days when all stores were open, with many people walking in the streets. It was more vibrant back then."

Beijing visitor Xylia Zhang, 36, taking her first trip outside the mainland since the pandemic

began, was looking forward to trying her luck in the casinos.

"It's quite exciting because I may lose the several hundred dollars (in Chinese yuan) that I budgeted," she said. "I have been to casinos in Seoul and Las Vegas. But I haven't experienced that in Chinese-speaking places."

The surge of cases in China has prompted some people to go to Macau to get shots of the mRNA-based Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine, which is not available in the mainland, the Chinese business news website Caixin reported last month. Macau's University Hospital, which provides the service, did not reply to an emailed request for comment and its phone rang unanswered Friday.

But there has been no sign of a rush of customers, especially not in the casinos.

It will take a while for Macau to regain its pre-pandemic pizzazz, said Glenn McCartney, associate professor in integrated resort and tourism management at the University of Macau.

"(For) tourism, you can't sort of snap your fingers, and things start to move," McCartney said.

But he said Macau's tourism officials have staged road shows in China during the pandemic, leveraging the scenic city's location just across the border.

The Lunar New Year will bring a sense of the potential for a longer term rebound in tourism, he said.

"That could be the cue." MDT/AP

TOURISM

Visitors slowly return, 61,901 recorded over New Year's weekend

RENATO MARQUES

THERE has been an increase in visitors to Macau over the holiday period.

During the three-day New Year's weekend (Dec. 31 to Jan. 2), the Public Security Police Force recorded 61,901 visitors with a daily average of 20,633.

Some 28,100 visitors entered Macau on New Year's Eve, the highest



number in a single day since the first day of the October Golden Week of

the National Day.

Compared with December 2022 figures, the

numbers recorded over the last day of 2022 and the first few days of 2023

have been much higher than the monthly average of 12,000 daily visitors.

Many tourists visited major touristic landmarks, including Senado Square and the Ruins of St. Paul's, bringing life back to places that had been almost completely devoid of activity.

Tourists also visited the Cotai area, especially non-gaming venues with many taking the opportunity for sightseeing and shopping.

On New Year's Eve, groups of mainland tourists expressed their disappointment at the lack of a celebratory feeling in the city, which was contrary to their ex-

pectations.

"We came to Macau as we expected to find a more international festive ambiance for New Year's Eve," a female visitor in a group of four female friends said after finding nothing happening in the Cotai area at midnight.

"We expected to see some fireworks," she said, "but there were none."

The Times can confirm NYE celebrations were subdued. Even The Parisian hotel's popular Eiffel Tower attraction ended its music and light show after only a few minutes into 2023, dispersing a crowd hoping to continue celebrations.

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TRANSPORT

Despite no specific date, HK gov't works to resume ferry to Macau

ANTHONY LAM

EVEN after nearly three years of suspension, ferry services between Macau and Hong Kong downtown show no sign of resuming service.

The terminals in downtown Hong Kong are the Hong Kong-Macau Ferry Terminal in Sheung Wan and the Hong Kong China Ferry Terminal in Tsim Sha Tsui.

Many needing to reach downtown Hong Kong consider the ferry more convenient than the shuttle bus because a ferry trip would take about an hour while the shuttle bus service could take longer when the road became congested.

Nearly three years ago, at midnight on February 4, 2020, ferry services between Macau and



Hong Kong downtown were suspended. The announcement had been made the day before at a press conference held by then Hong Kong Chief Executive Carrie Lam and had come as a surprise to many people.

Days later, at a Macau press conference, Chief Executive Ho Iat Seng was asked if the government had been notified in advance by its Hong Kong counterpart. The head of the government said "the [Hong Kong government] did

not need to notify us in advance, in the same way that we do not have to provide advance notice when we close casinos in Macau."

The service suspension was part of Hong Kong's move to control the spread of Covid-19.

In response to an enquiry from the Times, the Hong Kong government's Transport and Logistics Bureau, speaking through the Hong Kong Information Services Department, pledged that "the Co-ordination Group on Resumption of Normal Travel is working full steam ahead to develop a sound plan to achieve a progressive, orderly and comprehensive resumption of passenger clearance."

Despite providing no definite date, the bureau said "the government is closely liaising with the cross-boundary ferry trade in preparation and is pleased to note that the trade also aspires to resume operations as soon as possible."

The bureau said that "some of the boundary control points that have been closed for a long time will resume operation."

TurboJET, an operator of the service, echoed the bureau's comment and told the Times the company was awaiting government approval saying it was fully prepared to resume services.

Another operator, Cotai Water Jet, asked about the matter, had not replied by press time.

GAMING

Casinos close 2022 with MOP42.2b in GGR, 51% drop from 2021

RENATO MARQUES

THE local gaming industry has ended 2022 with an accumulated gross gaming revenue (GGR) of MOP42.198 billion, a figure very far from the government's forecast and that represents a 51.4% drop year-on-year according to an official release from the Gaming Inspection and Coordination Bureau (DICJ).

2022 has become the worst year for casinos since 2004 due to the city's strict Covid-19 restrictions that has kept gamblers away.

In 2021, which was during the pandemic, the GGR reached MOP86.863 billion.

The 2022 figure is the worst result recorded from the gaming industry in a long time, being 30% lower than 2020.

In a year almost always in the red, the February 2022 GGR surpassed the same period in 2021 by 6.1%. The second half of the year brought further drops starting in July (-95.3%). After that, the only month with positive signs was October with the drop



year on year being limited to 10.7%, a figure that aggravated the gaming sector for the last two months of 2022.

On its own, December represented a decline of 56.3% with a total monthly GGR of just MOP3.482B.

Compared with pre-pandemic results, last year's accumulated GGR decreased by 85.57% from MOP292.455 billion in 2019.

It is with this scenario that the so-called new era of Macau's gaming industry begins, with the six new concessions starting on January

1, 2023, for a maximum period of 10 years.

The rule changes combined with the economic crisis brought on by the pandemic have reduced the number of casinos in Macau to 30.

Of those currently in operation, the majority (13) are operated by the Sociedade de Jogos de Macau (SJM), followed by Venetian Macau with five, Galaxy Entertainment Group with four, the same number as Melco Resorts & Entertainment. Wynn Resorts and MGM operate two casinos each.

KOREA, TAIWAN JOIN GROWING LIST OF COUNTRIES REQUIRING NAT OF MACAU ARRIVALS

ANTHONY LAM

SOUTH Korea and Taiwan are adding extra restrictions on either all or certain entrants from Macau, due to the Covid-19 outbreak occurring in this region.

The Korea Disease Control and Prevention Agency has recently announced that from Jan. 7, all arrivals from Macau and Hong Kong will be required to produce a negative SARS-CoV-2 nucleic acid test (NAT) result obtained within 48 hours before scheduled flight departure before being permitted to board the flight.

Prior to this latest announcement, the same agency had implemented the same restrictions on arrivals from mainland China. South Korea has also decided to stop issuing tourist visas to mainland Chinese residents.

Meanwhile, according to a report by the English platform of the Central News Agency in Taiwan, mainland Chinese entrants to Taiwan who transit through Macau or Hong Kong will be need to produce a negative NAT result upon arrival on the island.



Citing the Central Epidemic Command Center in Taiwan, the news agency reported that these travelers must produce either a negative NAT result obtained within two days pre-departure from mainland China, or a negative rapid antigen test (RAT) taken within 24 hours of departure.

Taiwan is expecting an influx of returnees from mainland China – most of them businesspeople and workers – during the upcoming Lunar New Year period.

Japan had earlier announced that flights from Macau, Hong Kong and mainland China will only be accepted by four airports, namely Narita and Haneda Airports in Tokyo, Kansai Airport in Osaka and Chubu Centrair International Airport in Nagoya.

Besides Taiwan and South Korea, several European countries have also imposed pre-departure NAT requirements on mainland Chinese arrivals, such as France, Italy, Spain and England.

At the same time, Australia, Canada, the US, Japan, India and Israel are among non-European countries that have implemented similar requirements for mainland Chinese arrivals.

The African country of Morocco has now banned entrants from the People's Republic of China, regardless of their nationalities, according to various media sources.

The aforementioned countries said the move was made to curb the spread of SARS-CoV-2 as they were not clear about the situation in China.

HO IAT SENG PLEDGES TO BOOST EFFORTS FOR ECONOMY IN NY MESSAGE

Multiple advantages for the development of the Macau SAR are set to emerge in 2023, Chief Executive Ho Iat Seng has said in his New Year message. Noting this year marks the 30th anniversary of the promulgation of the Basic Law of the Macau SAR, which represents an important historical turning point, Ho said the government will continue upholding the principle of 'One country, two systems,' and safeguarding national sovereignty, security and development interests. He has also pledged to boost the economy, promote economic diversification, maintain stable and healthy development, better coordinate epidemic prevention and control and socio-economic development, and actively improve people's lives.

TEACHERS, STUDENTS TO UNDERGO RAT BEFORE CLASS RESUMES

Teachers and students are required to conduct a rapid antigen test before resuming classes on Jan. 9, the Education and Youth Development Bureau (DSEDJ) has announced. However, those who have been infected from Nov. 28 until Jan. 9 will not need to be tested. Meanwhile, the 2023 joint admission of Macau recommended students to universities in mainland China will be held on Jan. 7 and 8 as scheduled. On the day of the test, candidates with a red code will take the test online at home.

HK AIRPORT'S ADMINISTRATOR IN ATTEMPT TO BUY IN ZHUHAI AIRPORT

ZHUHAI airport's assets may be acquired by its de-facto administrator, the Hong Kong Airport Authority (HKAA), local media has reported.

From October 2006, the airport, which opened in June 1995 and is located 25 km from Macau, has been administered by a limited company co-owned by the HKAA and the Zhuhai National Assets Supervision and Management Commission. The Hong Kong side has a 55% stake in the company, giving it the right to appoint four of the seven board directors.

The airport is also home to two international aviation and aeronautics expos in China.

Just two months ago, the Hong Kong and Zhuhai sides signed a memorandum of un-

derstanding (MOU) which included further investments in the Zhuhai Airport, according to local media Macao News.

Citing HKAA's chief operating officer, Vivian Cheung, the local media reported that the further investments will aid closer connectivity between the Hong Kong and the Zhuhai airports.

Passengers will be able to utilize the proximity between the two cities to transfer between mainland and international destinations. Cheung was reported as saying that Hong Kong's wide network of flights and competitive ticket prices will be more attractive to Zhuhai residents than transiting in mainland aviation hubs, such as Guangzhou, Shanghai and Beijing. **AL**



OBITUARY

Macau diocese to offer requiem mass for Benedict XVI

THE Diocese of Macau will offer a Requiem Mass for Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI in the Cathedral on January 5 at 7 p.m.

The German theologian tried to reawaken Christianity in a secularized Europe and will likely be remembered as the first pontiff in 600 years to resign from the job. He died Dec. 31 aged 95.

"The Church in China held a special place in the heart of Pope Benedict. He visited the Diocese of Macau when he was Prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith," the local diocese said in its social media post.

"On behalf of all the faithful of the Diocese of Macau, Bishop Stephen Lee expresses our gratitude to our late Holy Father for his pastoral care and exemplary service to the Church," it added.

The former Cardinal Jose-

ph Ratzinger visited Macau and Hong Kong in March 1993 where he met with the SARs' bishops, Domingos Lam and John Baptist Wu.

Benedict stunned the world on Feb. 11, 2013, when he announced, in his typical, soft-spoken Latin, that he no longer had the strength to run the 1.2 billion-strong Catholic Church that he had steered for eight years through various scandals.

His dramatic decision paved the way for the conclave that elected Pope Francis. The two popes then lived side-by-side in the Vatican gardens, an unprecedented arrangement that set the stage for future "popes emeritus" to do the same.

Francis will conduct Benedict's funeral Mass Thursday, the first time in the modern age that a current pope will eulogize a retired one. **LV/AP**

ALEXIS TAM RETIRES, LÚCIA SANTOS APPOINTED TO ROLES

ALEXIS Tam has filed for retirement after 33 years in the Macau civil service.

Tam had been head of the Macao Economic and Commercial Delegation in Lisbon and a representative of the same delegation in the European Union in Brussels and the World Trade Organization in Geneva.

The Chief Executive (CE), Ho Iat Seng, has appointed Lúcia Abrantes dos Santos, the deputy head of the Macau delegation since 2019, to Tam's former roles in an order published in the government's official gazette.

Before this new appointment, Santos had worked in the Macau ci-



vil service at the Public Administration and Civil Service Bureau and the Office of the Secretary for Transport and Public Works.

Tam has led the Macao Economic and Commercial Delegation in Lisbon since 2019, after leaving his post as Secretary for Social Affairs and Culture

under the government of Chui Sai On in 2014.

Previously he was the head of the office of the former CE and the government's spokesperson from early 2010.

Tam, who is 60 years' old, began his career in the Macau civil service in 1989 at the Statistics and Census Bureau. **RM**

OBITUARY

LAWYER JOSÉ MANUEL RODRIGUES PASSES AWAY

LOCAL lawyer and former lawmaker José Manuel de Oliveira Rodrigues passed away on Jan. 2 aged 70, after a prolonged illness, the family revealed yesterday.

Rodrigues was an appointed lawmaker between 1996 and 2005, and was the president of the Association for Macanese Education (APIM) from 1988 to 2016.

He also served as the president of the board of local public broadcaster TDM from 2012 to 2021.

According to an interview with local magazine Phoenix Skyscape published in 2016, the late lawyer was one of the founders of the Macau Lawyers Association and had been a member of the board for



three terms.

Rodrigues was born to a middle-class Macanese family. His father and grandfather were also lawyers.

After graduating from high school in Macau, he studied law in Lisbon, Portugal, before returning to the city and to work in his father's law firm in 1979.

Speaking to the local magazine, Rodrigues recalled that when he first started his career, he had accepted cases through the govern-

ment's legal aid mechanism and would donate the slim remuneration to local sport associations "to help the needy."

He also recalled that when he was young, his family was like other Portuguese families in Macau. However, due to growing up in Macau, he had naturally learned Cantonese.

Despite his busy schedule, he would spend lunchtimes each day, and all weekends, with his family. **AL**



SET SAIL WITH MGM THIS WEEKEND

SAILING *Fun Day*



The "2023 MGM Macao International Regatta" is nearly upon us. This sailing extravaganza is organized by the Sports Bureau of the Macao SAR Government and Ursa Major Sailing Event Management, and title sponsored by MGM, will take place from January 5 to 8, 2023.

This exhilarating event will be held in the waters south of Hac Sa Beach and the Inner Harbour channel off the Macao Science Centre, with 37 teams from across cities competing against each other in the Guangdong – Hong Kong – Macao Greater Bay Area Cup Regatta Division (IRC), the Macao Cup International Regatta Division (Beneteau First 40.7 One Design), and the Catamaran Division (Hobie 16 One Design).

Aside from the competition, come join us at the harmonious "Sailing Fun Day", taking place at the Vista at MGM MACAU from January 6 to 8 to offer an enjoyable and fun-filled experience. Don't miss out an array of marine sports-related game booths; they are educational yet fun to play with for both adults and children, have fun at the remote-boat sailing area in a designated pool; or spend quality time at the workshop to unleash creativity and make very own sailing boats! Play with us and grab a chance to take home a limited edition Lion Plush and other gifts during the weekend! Make sure you come over and have fun!



Demonstrations of sailing boats including the Hobie 16 Catamaran, Topper Sailboat, and Optimist are displayed at the Grande Praça at MGM MACAU and the event venue. Come and take a moment to look at them up closely!

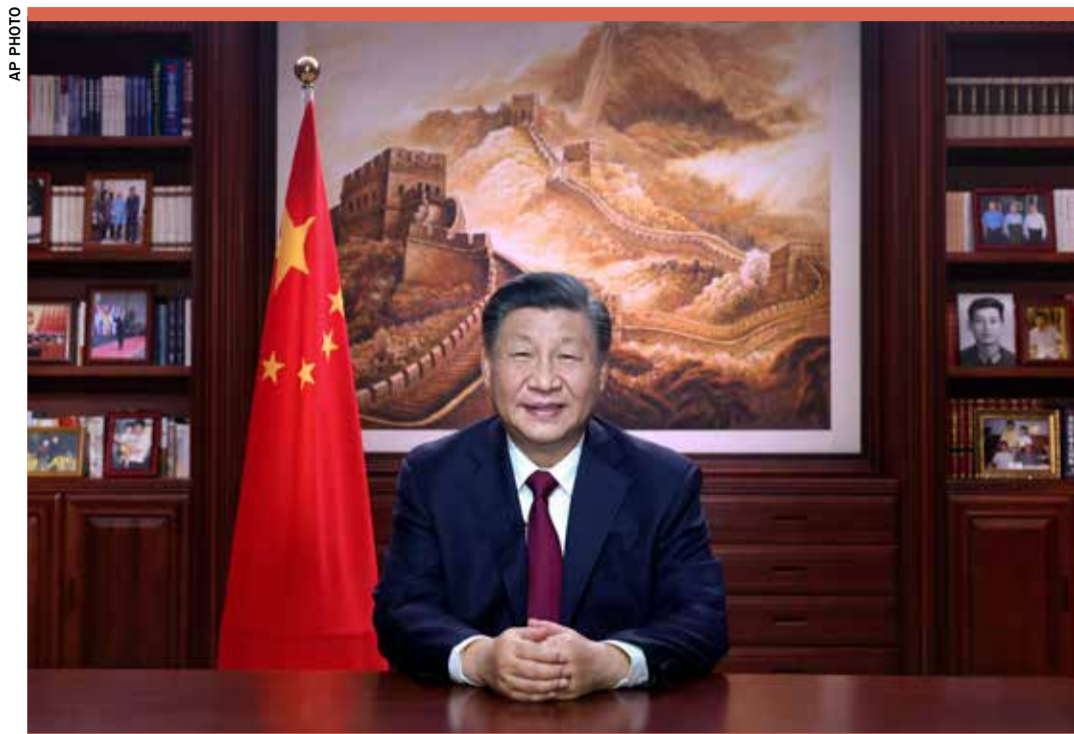
Additionally, guests can enjoy five-star delicacies, refreshing drinks while taking in the 180-degree ocean view, creating the perfect ambiance for an extraordinary weekend. The event is free admission, come and enjoy the vitality and charm of this marine sport by immersing ourselves in the lively atmosphere on the side!

"Sailing Fun Day" is open from 7 PM to 10:30 PM on Jan 6 and from 11 AM to 3 PM, 7 PM to 10:30 PM on Jan 7 and 8. Further information is available online at mgm.mo.



MORE DETAILS





NEW YEAR'S MESSAGE

TROUBLES ASIDE, XI SAYS CHINA ON 'RIGHT SIDE OF HISTORY'

CHINA "stands on the right side of history," the country's leader Xi Jinping said last weekend in a New Year's address that came as

questions swirl over his government's handling of COVID-19 and economic and political challenges at home and abroad.

Speaking on national television from behind a desk in a wood-paneled office, Xi largely avoided directly addressing issues confronting the

country, pointing instead to successes in agricultural production, poverty elimination and its hosting of the Winter Olympics in February.

However, he later turned somewhat obliquely to the challenges facing the world's most populous country and second-largest economy, saying, "The world is not at peace."

China will "always steadfastly advocate for peace and development ... and unswervingly stands on the right side of history," he said.

Recent weeks have seen street protests against Xi's government, the first facing the ruling Communist Party in more than three decades.

Xi's speech follows a stunning U-turn on China's hard-line COVID-19 containment policy that has sparked a massive surge in infections and demands from the U.S. and others for travelers from China to prove they aren't infected.

Meanwhile, the economy is fighting its way out of the doldrums, spurring rising unemployment, while ties with the U.S. and other major nations are at historic lows.

Setting aside their uncertainty, people in Beijing and other cities have returned to work, shopping areas and restaurants, with consumers preparing for January's Lunar New Year holiday, the most significant in the Chinese calendar.

Xi, who is also head of the increasingly powerful armed forces, was in October given a third five-year term as head of the almost 97 million-member Communist Party.

Having sidelined potential rivals and eliminated all limits on his terms in office, he could potentially serve as China's leader for the rest of his life.

China has also come under pressure for its continued support for Russia, and on Friday, Xi held a virtual meeting with Russian President Vladimir Putin, in which he was quoted as describing the events in Ukraine as a "crisis."

The term marked a departure from China's usual references to the "Ukraine situation," and the change may reflect growing Chinese concern about the direction of the conflict.

Still, in his remarks to Putin, Xi was careful to reiterate Chinese support for Moscow. China has pledged a "no limits" friendship with Russia and hasn't blamed Putin for the conflict, while attacking the U.S. and NATO and condemning punishing economic sanctions imposed on Russia. MDT/AP

SOUTH CHINA SEA

PHILIPPINES' MARCOS JR. HEADS TO BEIJING AMID SEA DISPUTES

PHILIPPINE President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. flew to China yesterday for a three-day state visit, saying he looks forward to his meeting with Chinese leader Xi Jinping as they work to boost bilateral ties.

"As I leave for Beijing, I will be opening a new chapter in our comprehensive, strategic cooperation with China," he told officials and diplomats, including the Chinese ambassador, prior to boarding his flight from an air base in the capital.

"I look forward to my meeting with President Xi as we work towards shifting the trajectory of our relations to a higher gear that would hopefully bring numerous prospects and abundant opportunities for peace and development to the peoples of both our countries," he added.

Alluding to the two countries' territorial dispute in the South China Sea, he said he looks forward to discussing bilateral and regional political and security issues.

"The issues between our two countries are problems that do not belong between two friends such as Philippines and China," he added. "We will seek to resolve those issues to mutual benefit of our two countries."

China claims virtually the entire South China Sea and has ignored a 2016 ruling by a tribunal in The Hague that invalidated Beijing's claims to the waterway. The case was brought by the Philippines, which says China has since developed disputed reefs into artificial islands with airplane runways and other structures so they now resemble forward military bases.

Most recently, a Filipino military commander reported that the Chinese coast guard forcibly seized Chinese rocket debris that Filipino navy personnel had retrieved in the South China Sea last month.

China denied the forcible seizure. Marcos said he would seek further clarification on his visit to Beijing.

Accompanied by a big business delegation, Marcos said they will seek cooperation in various areas including agriculture, energy, infrastructure, trade and investments, and people-to-people exchanges. He said they expect to sign more than 10 key bilateral agreements during the visit.

China accounts for 20% of the Philippines' foreign trade and is also a major source of foreign direct investment. MDT/AP



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TRAVEL ALERT

Beijing threatens response to 'unacceptable' virus measures

THE Chinese government blasted COVID-19 testing requirements imposed on passengers from China and threatened countermeasures against countries involved, which include the U.S. and several European nations.

"We believe that the entry restrictions adopted by some countries targeting China lack scientific basis, and some excessive practices are even more unacceptable," Foreign Ministry spokesperson Mao Ning said at a daily briefing yesterday.

"We are firmly opposed to attempts to manipulate the COVID measures for political purposes and will take countermeasures based on the principle of reciprocity," she said.

The comments were China's sharpest to date on the issue. Australia and Canada this week joined a growing list of countries requiring travelers from China to take a COVID-19 test prior to boarding their flight, as China battles a nationwide outbreak of the coronavirus after abruptly easing restrictions that were in place for much of the pandemic.

Other countries including the U.S., U.K., India, Japan and several European nations have announced tougher COVID-19

measures on travelers from China amid concerns over a lack of data on infections in China and fears of the possibility that new variants may emerge.

Some Canadian experts have questioned the effectiveness of the testing. Kerry Bowman, assistant professor at the University of Toronto's Temerty Faculty of Medicine, said that people can test positive long after entering the country.

The requirement is "not based on science at this point," he said after Canada announced measures last weekend.

China, which for most of the pandemic adopted a "zero-COVID" strategy that imposed harsh restrictions aimed at stamping out the virus, abruptly eased those measures in December.

Chinese authorities previously said that from Jan. 8, overseas travelers would no longer need to quarantine upon arriving in China, paving the way for Chinese residents to travel.

European Union nations will try again today to mold a coordinated approach on if and how authorities should check incoming airline passengers from China for any new COVID-19 variants after several member nations announced indi-

vidual efforts over the past week.

Belgium said late Monday it would be checking wastewater from planes coming in from China to see if it yields new clues about any potentially dangerous variants. It said that it would urge visitors from China who do not feel well to take a COVID-19 test.

More should be done, but only in a coordinated approach among the 27 member states, said Belgian Health Minister Frank Vandenbroucke. "It would be a good signal toward China if all EU nations would say together: 'If you come to Europe you have to be tested first,'" he told VRT network.

Sweden, which holds the rotating EU presidency, said officials from the member states will hold an Integrated Political Crisis Response meeting today to see if entry requirements throughout the bloc are necessary.

"It is important that we get the necessary measures in place quickly," said Swedish Health Minister Jakob Forssmed.

EU nations France, Spain and Italy have already announced independent measures to implement tougher COVID-19 measures for passengers arriving from China.

French Prime Minister

Elisabeth Borne defended the tests. Starting today, anyone flying from China to France will have to present a negative virus test taken within the previous 48 hours and be subject to random testing on arrival.

"We are in our role, protecting the French," Borne said yesterday on France-Info radio.

France's government is requiring negative tests, and is urging French citizens to avoid nonessential travel to China. France is also reintroducing mask requirements on flights from China to France.

Spain's government said it would require all air passengers coming from China to have negative tests or proof of vaccination. Italy was the first EU member in requiring coronavirus tests for airline passengers coming from China, but several others have said such measures might not be the best option to protect local populations since new variants now coming from China have already been around in Europe, often for many months.

The United States announced new COVID-19 testing requirements for all travelers from China, joining some Asian nations that had imposed restrictions because of a surge of infections. **MDT/AP**

ADVERTORIAL

GREAT TIMES

Embrace a Bright New Year with MGM

A brand new year begins at the cue of auspicious firecrackers crackling away, while a bright-colored lion dance ushers in good fortune and prosperity for all. Commencing on January 22, it marks the Year of the Rabbit! It's a time of celebration and no doubt a delicious excuse to indulge in the Chinese New Year puddings! This year, MGM partners with Mr. Lok Hei, Producer and Artist of "Macao: Back to Common Roots Narrative Film", to create a special gift box to house the most auspicious holiday treats. The deluxe gift box features beautiful hand-drawn festive patterns, illustrated by Mr. Lok Hei, to wish everyone a flourishing Year of the Rabbit. It is perfect to delight in and celebrate with families and friends.



In keeping with our tradition to celebrate Chinese New Year in style, we have specially curated an array of rice puddings which comes in a variety of savory and sweet flavors, that are sure to delight your tastebuds. Crafted with premium ingredients and refined recipes, we are proud to offer the Coconut and Ginger Pudding, Water Chestnut and Osmanthus with Bird's Nest Pudding, and Turnip with Conpoy and Preserved Meat Pudding. If you crave a bite of each delicious flavor, opt for our Fortune Gift Set which includes a mini-sized portion of Coconut and Ginger Pudding & Turnip with Conpoy and Preserved Meat Pudding, each comes in two pieces.

Chinese New Year is always the time for a family reunion. We wish everyone a joyous and prosperous "Gui Mao" Year of the Rabbit! Gift vouchers are available until January 21, 2023. Get your voucher and send your warmest greetings and blessings to friends and family now! For more information, please call (853) 8802 3888 or visit mgm.mo

AP PHOTO



Nuns arrive at dawn to view the body of Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI as it lies in state in St. Peter's Basilica at the Vatican, yesterday

VATICAN

Benedict's admirers keep streaming to St. Peter's Square to honor him

GIADA ZAMPANO & FRANCES D'EMILIO, VATICAN CITY

FOR a second day, lines of people wanting to honor Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI's service to the Catholic church snaked around St. Peter's Square yesterday to view the late retired pontiff's body.

Benedict died on Saturday at age 95, 10 years after retiring from the papacy — the first to do so in 600 years — and after increasingly frail health. His body lies in state in St. Peter's Basilica, where thousands of faithful and curious came for the viewing. On Monday, the first day the general public could view the body, around 65,000 people paid their respects — about double what Italian security had predicted. A third day of viewing is set for Wednesday.

On Thursday, Pope Francis will lead the funeral Mass at St. Peter's Square for his predecessor, whose retirement lasted two years longer than his papacy, which began in 2005.

Along with the rank-and-file faithful or the simply curious also came some notable figures from politics and Catholic hierarchy.

Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orbán was among those coming to the basilica

viewing. Like Benedict did, Orbán has crusaded for a revival of what conservatives in Europe view as Europe's Christian roots.

The basilica's doors opened before dawn yesterday. Among those paying respects was 6-year-old Miriam Gropelli, who is an altar server in her parish in Milan.

She and her father, Giuseppe Gropelli, 40, traveled by train in the early hours to offer their homage, along with the child's grandparents and older brother and sisters.

"I told her his story and she was really excited to come to Rome to say goodbye," the father said. "Benedict has been very important for the Church, his speeches were so clear and beautiful, he leaves a great legacy of knowledge."

Gropelli offered his take on the unusual, nearly-decade-long arrangement that saw Benedict's retirement in the Vatican City monastery where he died on Saturday, and Francis, who was elected in 2013 by fellow cardinals to succeed him.

"I believe there's no real war or competition within the church and between popes. The church lives and grows every day, also thanks to their words," he said.

Benedict, who as German Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger had served for decades at the Vatican as the church's guar-

dian of doctrinal orthodoxy, was known for his theological knowledge as well as for eloquent speeches, which — unlike like many of his predecessors — would write himself.

Francis will eulogize his predecessor at the funeral, which the Vatican has said would be marked by the simplicity that Benedict requested.

Since Benedict was no longer head of Vatican City State, in contrast to protocols for funerals of popes who died when they were reigning, only two countries — Italy and his native Germany — will send official delegations, according to the Vatican.

Instead, politicians and royalty, especially of predominantly Catholic countries, will attend in a private role.

With no need to elect a new pontiff following this former pope's death, cardinals who attend the funeral won't have to stay on in Rome to vote in a secret conclave to pick the next man who will help shape the Church's direction.

Still, with cardinals from around the world flocking to Rome to mourn the former pope, Francis would have ample opportunity to confer with these "princes of the Church," who — besides electing future pontiffs — serve as privileged advisers

to reigning popes.

The last decade saw an uneasy kind of equilibrium over the presence in the Vatican of a retired pope and a reigning pope.

Now, Francis governs the church without that presence, which loomed over his papacy despite Benedict's last years lived out mainly with prayer and meditation.

Yesterday, two powerful U.S. churchmen, Cardinals Timothy Dolan of New York and Sean Patrick O'Malley of Boston, attended Mass in the basilica being celebrated at an altar just behind the central viewing area for Benedict's body.

Francis has largely conducted business as usual since his predecessor passed away.

He met with the cardinal who heads the Italian bishops conference, bid farewell to South Korea's ambassador to the Holy See in a courtesy visit, greeted a delegation of an organization promoting brotherhood and appointed new papal envoys to Uruguay and to United Arab Emirates.

Francis' schedule also conferred with the basilica's archpriest, who on Monday, after Benedict's body was transferred in a pre-dawn procession from the monastery to the basilica, sprinkled holy water and incense by the bier. **MDT/AP**

this day in history

1951 COMMUNIST FORCES TO RE-TAKE SEOUL



Chinese and North Korean troops are reported to be close to capturing the South Korean capital of Seoul for the second time since the war began last year.

The authorities have ordered the evacuation of Seoul and thousands of people have started streaming south out of the city and across the Han river.

Over the past few weeks, many families have taken refuge in Seoul from the advancing enemy. Now they are being forced to move on again, mostly by foot, although some have been lucky enough to get a lift on a military vehicle.

The BBC's cameraman Cyril Page was in Seoul as the communist forces were reported to be less than 50 miles from the city.

His pictures show the only sign of normal life in the city was the trams, which were still running.

To the south, the steady stream of refugees made its way through freezing temperatures to the River Han flats. It was so cold the river had frozen over and people were able to walk across to the relative safety of the other side.

They have left behind them a city devastated and burning.

The United States Eighth Army is also pulling out, but reports of its movements have been banned by army censors.

Speaking at a Pentagon briefing, the US Secretary of Defense, General Marshall, said the advance of the enemy troops had been anticipated.

The odds against the United Nations forces were heavy - "almost incredible in some respects," he said. The Communists forces outnumber UN troops by three or four to one and they are capable of covering difficult terrain on foot carrying heavy loads.

Lieutenant-General Matthew Ridgway, commander of the Eighth Army, has been reported in press dispatches as saying the flight of the Korean refugees is "perhaps the greatest tragedy to which Asia has been subjected in the course of its long history."

Seoul first fell to the powerful North Korean and Chinese communist forces last June - days after the invasion began.

In September, a United Nations force led by US marines re-captured the city.

Courtesy BBC News

IN CONTEXT

After a series of offensives, UN forces succeeded in winning back control of Seoul in March 1951.

It was followed by a UN call for a ceasefire, the first since the war began.

Talks finally began in July 1951 but the negotiations at Kaesong broke down. The war reached stalemate.

In July 1953 talks reopened. The Korean War ended with the signing of the armistice on 27 July 1953. Two million people had died during the war. In August, prisoners of war were exchanged in Operation Big Switch - 77,000 communists for 12,700 UN men, of whom 3,597 were Americans. North and South Korea were separated by a demarcation line which was extended by a 2km (1.5 miles) demilitarised zone on either side. A peace deal has never been signed.

MACAU'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

YOUR STARS

ARIES
Mar. 21-Apr. 19
Your outgoing, aggressive nature will attract someone you've been eager to meet. Recognition can be yours if you present your ideas and stand behind your beliefs.

TAURUS
Apr. 20-May. 20
Think twice before you agree to take on any new projects. You can work in conjunction with those in the know in order to get to the bottom of any pending issue.

GEMINI
May. 21-Jun. 21
Your changing attitudes may be causing concern for your partner. Don't divulge secret information. You can make excellent investments if you are in the right place at the right time.

CANCER
Jun. 22-Jul. 22
Don't hesitate to voice your ideas and opinions. Children or friends may try to talk you into lending them money. Better still, take your mate and let them foot the bill.

LEO
Jul. 23-Aug. 22
You must take care of health problems that have been lingering. Your stability will aid you in getting support from your fellow workers.

VIRGO
Aug. 23-Sep. 22
Rewards, gifts, or money from investments or taxes can be expected. Someone envious of your popularity may challenge you to a debate.

LIBRA
Sep. 23-Oct. 22
You may be likely to have difficulties with females. You could expand your circle of friends if you get involved in unusual activities.

SCORPIO
Oct. 23-Nov. 21
You will easily capture the interest of those you talk to. Strength will come from your ability to overtake just about any one.

SAGITTARIUS
Nov. 22-Dec. 21
Do things for them but don't allow them to make unreasonable requests. You will be able to borrow money in order to invest. Be careful of the groups you join or the people you associate with.

CAPRICORN
Dec. 22-Jan. 19
Focus, and concentrate on yourself and your future. Don't be too quick to let friends and relatives know what you're up to. Your outgoing charm and obvious talent will be admired.

AQUARIUS
Jan. 20-Feb. 18
If you are not already, think about going into business for yourself. Take a look at yourself and prepare to make those changes you've been contemplating.

PISCES
Feb. 19-Mar. 20
Ignore colleagues who appear to be going in circles. Minor health problems may lower your vitality. Opportunities will come through long term investments.

The Born Loser by Chip Sansom



SUDOKU

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

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

WEATHER

	MIN	MAX	CONDITION
CHINA			
Beijing	-8	5	fine
Changchun	-21	-9	fine
Chengdu	6	9	rain
Chongqing	8	11	rain
Fuzhou	11	14	overcast
Guangzhou	11	20	overcast
Guiyang	2	7	overcast
Haikou	14	18	rain
Hangzhou	1	11	cloudy
Harbin	-20	-10	fine
Hefei	-2	11	fine
Nanjing	0	12	cloudy
Shanghai	3	10	cloudy
Taipei	15	17	rain
Wuhan	0	12	fine
Hong Kong	14	17	cloudy
WORLD			
Moscow	-7	-2	cloudy
Frankfurt	9	10	showers
Paris	12	14	showers
London	3	19	showers
New York	11	17	rain

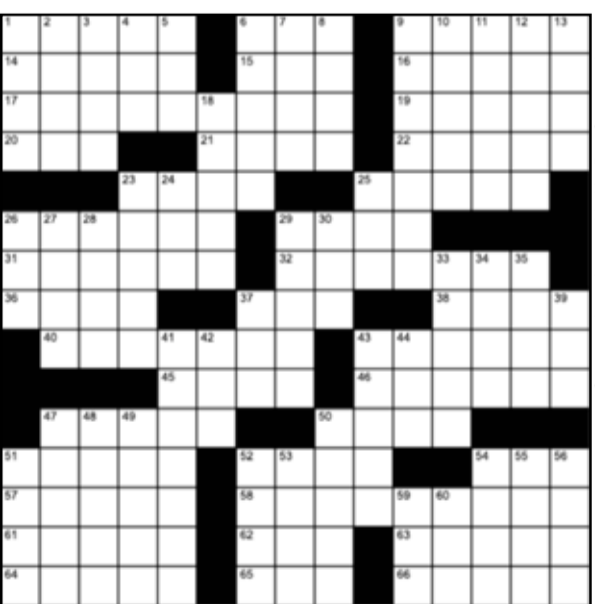
CROSSWORDS

ACROSS 1- Razor sharpener; 6- D.C. VIP; 9- Wild dog of Australia; 14- Throng; 15- Chemical ending; 16- Role model; 17- Foreigner; 19- Roofing stone; 20- Piggy; 21- Prefix with -drome; 22- For ___ sake!; 23- The Beatles' "Back in the ___"; 25- Continental cash; 26- Rupture; 29- Helper; Abbr.; 31- Spinning; 32- Like some mail; 36- Bump into; 37- Battery size; 38- On the peak of; 40- Maxims; 43- Horrify; 45- Driving aids; 46- Feeling cold; 47- Sprinkle; 50- Stated; 51- Tree insect; 52- Rise sharply, as a bird would; 54- Bring civil action against; 57- Sports venue; 58- Famous person; 61- Bothered; 62- Gasteyer of "Saturday Night Live"; 63- Boring tool; 64- Big dipper; 65- Director Browning; 66- Compact;

DOWN 1- Rabbit's tail; 2- Tom, Dick and Harry, e.g.; 3- Routine; 4- Hooter; 5- Palm Pilot, e.g.; 6- Passover meal; 7- Cabinet dept.; 8- Roman emperor; 9- Quarrel; 10- Do-nothing; 11- Peachy!; 12- Entrances; 13- Corrida cries; 18- Like Fran Drescher's voice; 23- Oneness; 24- Poitier role; 25- Part of i.e.; 26- Ark passenger; 27- Flock members; 28- She played Carla on "Cheers"; 29- Collect; 30- Neptune's domain; 33- Swift; 34- Catchall abbr.; 35- Child's toy; 37- What Dorian Gray didn't do; 39- Layer; 41- Do repeatedly; 42- Modern; 43- Without ___ in the world; 44- Fraternity letter; 47- Somewhat, colloquially; 48- Cornered; 49- Pertaining to the kidneys; 50- Dish of raw vegetables; 51- False god; 52- Beat it!; 53- Vintner's prefix; 54- Indication; 55- Salt Lake City hoopsters; 56- Fictional Jane; 59- Foul; 60- Wish undone;

Friday's solution

ANTON	SSSS	ATTU
TEENA	PEAT	SOOT
TENTS	UNDO	PSST
IDE	CENTER	PIECE
GATWALK	ARREAR	
IRK	AGGIE	
EARN	EMBLEM	APT
TENDS	ROFER	ELER
IRBENS	SUF	RIOR
ASSERT	TELESTAR	
PLEASURABLE	TINE	
SAND	REDO	IRATE
ETTE	ANON	GYRAL
SEAN	LOSE	HEALS



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



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FOOTBALL

Ronaldo's Saudi move tipped to increase eyes on Asian soccer

WHEN Cristiano Ronaldo is presented by Saudi Arabian club Al-Nassr today [Macau time] in Riyadh, it will kick off a new era in Asian soccer.

Al-Nassr announced the signing of one of the world's biggest sports stars on social media on Friday. Within 24 hours, the post was viewed more than 20 million times and the club gained about 2.5 million more followers.

There was a similar surge on Instagram, where the Portuguese star has more than 520 million followers, the most in the world. There, the announcement received more than 30 million likes.

"This agreement is more than writing a new historical chapter," Al-Nassr president Musalli Al-Muammar said. He will present Ronaldo at the club stadium.

Ronaldo has won five European Champions Leagues with Real Madrid and Manchester United, but his controversial second tenure at the English club ended after

AP PHOTO



15 months with him as a bench regular without trophies and out of contract after it was prematurely terminated.

New coach Rudy Garcia has welcomed the free agent who has Al-Nassr dreaming of a first Asian title.

"The signing of a player the size of Cristiano Ronaldo is extraordinary, and contributes to the development of Saudi football," said

the Frenchman who has coached Lyon and Roma. "We are happy with his arrival. The first goal is to work so he can adapt to our team, to enjoy playing for Al-Nassr, and to entertain the fans."

Al-Nassr, a nine-time Saudi Arabian champion, is already going well near the halfway stage of the Saudi Professional League. It moved into the lead on Saturday after winning at Al-Khaleej

1-0 thanks to Cameroonian striker Vincent Aboubaker.

Other names at the club include Colombia goalkeeper David Ospina, formerly of Arsenal and Napoli, and 2018 South American player of the year Pity Martinez. Brazilian Anderson Talisca leads the goal-scoring chart.

Despite such talent, the league does not have a wide audience internationally. That may change

thanks to Ronaldo, who will reportedly earn up to \$200 million a year.

"The whole world knows Ronaldo very well and his achievements as a player speak for themselves," former Saudi Arabia international Hamad Al-Montashari said. "He is an exceptional player and could score a hat trick in every game."

Had the soon-to-be-38-year-old superstar left Europe five years ago, then China would have been a realistic destination. The massive wave of spending there in the previous decade has ended, however. With real estate companies financing much of the transfer activity, the massive slowdown in China's property market has seen the majority of clubs struggling to make ends meet.

Guangzhou won eight Chinese and two Asian titles in the previous decade, but with owner Evergrande facing reported debts of \$300 billion in June 2022, the club was reduced to fielding a team made up of youngsters. Relegation was the result in December.

On Friday, the same day the Ronaldo deal was announced in Riyadh, Wuhan Three Towns was given the Chinese Super League title a round early as opponent Tianjin Tigers was unable to field a team of 11 players due to COVID-19. In terms of Asian soccer news, it was overshadowed. **MDT/AP**

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OPINION

China Daily
 Editorial, China Daily

STRONGER CHINA-BRAZIL RELATIONS HAVE RICH CONNOTATIONS

The presence of Chinese Vice-President Wang Qishan, as a special representative of Chinese President Xi Jinping, at the inauguration ceremony of Brazilian President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva in Brasilia on Sunday speaks volumes about the great significance China attaches to relations with Brazil.

In the congratulatory message he sent, President Xi expressed China's willingness to expand and upgrade its cooperation with Brazil. To which the Brazilian leader, a long-term advocate of developing Sino-Brazilian relations, tweeted: "China is our biggest trading partner and we can further expand relations between our countries."

Along with the positive attitude he has unequivocally expressed since winning the October election, this is another good sign that he will look to further boost the two countries' comprehensive strategic partnership and bring it to new heights.

That Argentina, China and the United States are the first three countries he plans to visit in the first three months of his presidency, and his stressing of the European Union's strategic importance to Brazil's economy and trade, indicate that his government will pursue balanced diplomacy and seek to maintain the country's independence as a major player on the world stage.

That's also what the world expects from the veteran statesman who emphasized unity and rebuilding in his inauguration speech. Although neither is an easy task, as long as the Lula government adheres to its rational and balanced development and diplomacy models, it can stay clear from the either-or choice the US is trying to enforce upon other countries, and continuously accumulate favorable factors to inject more positive energy into socioeconomic development by expanding and deepening win-win cooperation with various sides in the world.

The cooperation between the two largest developing countries in the Eastern Hemisphere and Western Hemisphere will deliver more concrete benefits for both countries and peoples. Their bilateral trade volume was \$164 billion in 2021, up 36.2 percent from the previous year, and they can further upgrade the current trade and cooperation model that is dominated by exports of and collaboration in natural resources, primary industrial products and basic life necessities to in-depth cooperation in aerospace, information technology, biotechnology, agricultural technologies as well as medicine and health.

Amid the global uncertainties and volatility, the strengthening of China-Brazil relations can help promote regional and global peace, stability and prosperity, as it sets a good model for other emerging market economies to strengthen their mutual trust, strategic coordination and win-win cooperation, which accords with their common aspirations and interests.

SURVEY FINDS BLEAK OUTLOOK FOR JAPANESE COMPANIES IN 2023

THE BUZZ

Major Japanese companies have grown more pessimistic about the economy, given higher costs and a weaker yen, according to a survey by Kyodo News.

The survey of 117 companies found just over half, or 56%, expect the economy to grow this year. That was down sharply from 84% a year earlier, said the survey released this week.

The percentage of firms forecasting growth was at its second lowest in 10 years for the annual survey, and the companies also expressed worries about slowdowns in the United States and China in 2023.

The war in Ukraine has pushed prices of oil and other raw materials higher while at the same time the yen has weakened against the U.S. dollar, raising risks for the world's third-largest economy.

The bleak outlook also reflects worries over a possible global recession as central banks in the U.S. and other major economies raise interest rates to counter inflation.

The dollar rose to about 150 yen at its peak last year from 115 yen at the beginning of the year. Yesterday, it was trading at about 130 yen.

AP PHOTO



People wait in line to enter Vila Belmiro stadium where Pelé, the late Brazilian soccer great lies in state in Santos

BRAZIL PREPARES TO BURY PELÉ IN CITY HE MADE SOCCER MECCA

MAURICIO SAVARESE, SANTOS

FORTY-FIVE years after Pelé played his last game, it's hard to imagine modern soccer, or Brazil, without him.

Geovana Sarmento, 17, waited in the three-hour line to view his body as it lay in repose at the stadium where he played for most his career. She came with her father, who was wearing a Brazil shirt with Pelé's name.

"I am not a Santos fan, neither is my father. But this guy invented Brazil's national team. He made Santos stronger, he made it big, how could you not respect him? He is one of the greatest people ever, we needed to honor him," she said.

Pelé will be buried Tuesday in the city where he grew up, became famous, and helped make into a global capital of soccer. A Catholic Mass will be celebrated at the Vila Belmiro stadium before his casket is ushered through the streets of Santos to a nearby cemetery.

Brazil's newly inaugurated President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva, who was sworn in for a third term Sunday after a comeback victory, is expected to come to Vila Belmiro shortly before the coffin is removed from the stadium.

The soccer great died Thursday at age 82 after a battle with cancer. He was the only player ever to win three World Cups.

Thousands of mourners, including high school students and supreme court justices, filed yesterday [Macau time] past the body of Pelé on the century-old field where he made his hometown team one of Brazil's best. Pelé's coffin, draped in the flags of Brazil and the Santos FC football club, was placed on the midfield area of Vila Belmiro.

The storied 16,000-seat stadium was surrounded by mourning fans, and covered with Pelé-themed decorations inside. Fans coming out of the stadium said they'd waited three hours in line, standing under a blazing sun.

Caio Zalke, 35, an engineer, wore a Brazil shirt as he waited in line. "Pelé is the most important Brazilian of all time. He made soccer important for Brazil and he made Brazil important for the world," he said.

In the 1960s and 70s, Pelé was perhaps the world's most famous athlete. He met presidents and queens, and in Nigeria a civil war was put on hold to watch him play. Many Brazilians credit him with putting the country on the world stage for the first time.

Rows of shirts with Pelé's number 10 were placed behind one of the goals, waving in the city's summer winds. A section of the stands was filling up with bouquets of flowers placed by mourners and sent by clubs and star players — Neymar and Ronaldo among them — from around the world as loudspeakers played a song named "Eu sou Pelé" ("I am Pelé") that was recorded by the Brazilian himself.

The crowd was mostly local, although some came from far away.

Among those at the stadium was Pelé's best friend Manoel Maria, also a former Santos player.

"If I had all the wealth in the world I would never be able to repay what this man did for me and my family," Maria said. "He was as great a man as he was as a player; the best of all time. His legacy will outlive us all. And that can be seen in this long line with people of all ages here."

FIFA President Gianni Infantino told journalists that every country should name a stadium after Pelé.

"I am here with a lot of emotion, sadness, but also with a smile because he gave us so many smiles," Infantino said. "As FIFA, we will pay a tribute to the 'King' and we ask the whole world to observe a minute of silence." **MDT/AP**

AP PHOTO



Australia A pilot, two British visitors and a Sydney woman have been identified as the four people killed in a collision of two helicopters over the waterfront at an Australian tourist hotspot. Authorities say it was fortunate the death toll in the crash of two aircraft operated by Sea World Helicopters was not higher. The pilot of the second helicopter managed to land safely on a sandy outcrop despite the aircraft being damaged in the collision Monday afternoon near Main Beach on Australia's Gold Coast.

AP PHOTO



Ukraine Emergency crews yesterday sifted through the rubble of a building struck by Ukrainian rockets, killing at least 63 Russian soldiers barracked there in the latest blow to the Kremlin's war strategy as Ukraine says Moscow's tactics could be shifting. An AP video of the scene in Makiivka, a town in the partially Russian-occupied eastern Donetsk region, showed five cranes and emergency workers removing big chunks of concrete under a clear blue sky.

AP PHOTO



UK Commuters returning to work yesterday after the Christmas break were advised not to travel as tens of thousands of British rail workers stage a fresh round of strikes that will disrupt services all week. Around half of the U.K.'s railway lines are closed, and only one-fifth of services are running amid a long-running dispute over pay and working conditions. Members of the Rail, Maritime and Transport union were striking Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday and Saturday, while drivers in the Aslef union will strike Thursday. Many places, including most of Scotland and Wales, have no train services.