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**THE NEW BARRA TRANSPORT HUB,
WHICH COMMENCED OPERATION LAST
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THE LAST QUARTER WAS 77.56 OUT
OF 200, WHICH IS BELOW THE PASSING
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AP PHOTO



China E-commerce billionaire Jack Ma will give up control of Ant Group, the leading Chinese financial technology provider he founded. In a statement posted Friday, Ant Group said that after an ownership restructuring, “no shareholder, alone or with other parties” will have “control over Ant Group.” The move follows other efforts over the years by the Chinese government to rein in Ma and the country’s tech sector more broadly.

AP PHOTO



China A traffic accident in southern China killed 19 people and injured 20 others early yesterday as the annual Lunar New Year holiday travel rush got underway, authorities said. The accident occurred outside the city of Nanchang in Jiangxi province, according to the local traffic management brigade. The cause was under investigation, the brigade said. Heavy fog was also reported at the time of the accident, just after midnight, according to reports.

AP PHOTO



Japan's Prime Minister Fumio Kishida (pictured) begins a weeklong trip today to strengthen military ties with Europe and Britain and bring into focus the Japan-U.S. alliance at a summit in Washington, as Japan breaks from its postwar restraint to take on more offensive roles with an eye toward China. Kishida’s talks with U.S. President Joe Biden on Friday will highlight his five-nation tour that also takes him to France, Italy, Britain and Canada — some of Group of Seven nations Japan has stepped up defense ties with in recent years. His first stop is Paris on Monday evening.

RENATO MARQUES



DAY ZERO

After three years of Covid closure, Sunday was ‘day zero’ of reopening, leading to a surge of tourists as gov’t puts an end to health QR codes P2-3,6

LYNZY VALLES &
ANTHONY LAM

THE city is bustling: touristic places are filled with visitors, traffic jams occupy the central district, and long queues are being observed at taxi stands as the city drops its strict Covid restrictions.

These are the most visible signs of China's easing of the border restrictions that were imposed almost three years ago.

The city's busy streets and crowds indicate that business has returned to normal – a long awaited day of local small and medium enterprises (SMEs) that have been hit hard by the pandemic.

By midnight yesterday, transportation to and from Hong Kong and Macau had resumed, with the Golden Bus resuming its 24-hours operations.

Also, after nearly three years of the suspension of ferry services, these ferries have finally set sail on a limited schedule.

FIRST FERRY AT 80% CAPACITY

The first ferry in nearly three years departed Hong Kong downtown for Macau yesterday at 80% capacity, Hong Kong media has reported.

Ferry services between Macau and Hong Kong downtown were abruptly suspended by the Hong Kong government on February 4, 2020 to control the spread of Covid-19.

Amid the reopening of the ferry terminal in Hong Kong's Sheung Wan, TurboJET and Cotai Water Jet, the two operators of the services, resumed their services yesterday with six to eight daily departures from the two cities.

During the early phase of resumption, the two operators will only provide daytime services.

The first service from Hong Kong by Cotai Water Jet departed at 9:30 a.m., which was 80% full.

A Hong Kong resident, surnamed Lai, said that over the past three years when Covid-19 restrictions were in place, he had not visited Macau even once. He chose to visit yesterday because he managed to secure a ticket. His main purpose of visiting Macau was for leisure, such as visiting friends and enjoying entertainment.

He added that many Hong Kong residents are happy about the implementation of border normalization.

RENATO MARQUES



City center filled with tourists in

A prospective traveler, surnamed Hui, checked out the crowd at the terminal yesterday as he intended to visit Macau this Wednesday. He was expecting to spend two to three days in Macau.

The Times has observed that yesterday afternoon the Taipa Ferry Terminal was filled with passengers heading back to Hong Kong, while those arriving from the neighboring city in the late afternoon were mostly individual travelers.

"I'm here to visit family members that I haven't seen for nearly three years," said one passenger.

"The ferry is more convenient for me as I'm close to the city center. I'm here for leisure and will only stay for a night," said another.

BUSTLING CITY

The scenario in the city center was comparable to pre-pandemic times, with tourists filling in the way leading to the Ruins of St. Paul.

Several shops were filled with tourists seen with luggage and bags from the traditional bakery stores, while many flocked to the sport stores.

Pharmacies also seemed busy, with tourists appearing to be purchasing flu medicines.

By 9 p.m. yesterday, a total of 37,975 tourists visited the city, with the majority entering through the Border Gate.

Starting yesterday, the SAR has further eased travel restrictions on inbound visitors.

No nucleic acid test results for Covid-19 are required for visitors entering Macau from the mainland, China's Hong Kong SAR

and Taiwan region, the center said.

Those entering Macau from other countries and regions will need to present negative nucleic acid test results effective within 48 hours upon boarding flights or ships heading for Macau. No prior approval will be needed for foreigners to enter Macau.

The Macao International Air-

port will resume flight transfer services. No compulsory health declarations or health management will be required upon or after entering Macau, which is boosting demand for travel.

EYES ON HK TOURISTS

The local tourism office is pinning its hopes on Hong Kong tourists, anticipating tourists

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For subscription and general issues: general@macaudailytimes.com | Printed at Welfare Printing Ltd



RENATO MARQUES

Long-awaited reopening

from the neighboring region to reach 60% to 80% of pre-pandemic figures, which is the ideal.

Cheng Wai Tong, director of the Macao Government Tourism Office, recalled that in 2019, the average number of tourists from Hong Kong were approximately 20,000 in number.

With the abandoning of restrictions and reopening of the

city as it removes its zero-Covid policy, the current hotel room rate is about 30% to 50%, and is expected to reach over 50% in the near future.

Speaking to local press, Cheng affirmed that the bureau will also keep an eye on hotel room rates and ensure they are reasonable.

During the pandemic, hotel

room rates dropped and are currently still slightly lower than before the pandemic.

WORLD RAISES BAR ON ENTRANTS FROM CHINA

Several European countries have decided to implement stricter measures on entrants from China.

Passengers from China are re-

quired to present pre-departure negative Covid-19 tests for flights to Portugal.

The Netherlands will impose the same requirement from tomorrow citing EU recommendations. It will also require all passengers to China to wear a mask for the entire flight.

Germany, France, Italy and Spain have also implemented si-

milar measures.

Meanwhile, Germany, Luxembourg and Belgium discouraged their citizens from visiting China, citing the current pressure faced by Chinese hospitals as the reason.

The EU had earlier recommended stricter measures on entrants from China due to Covid-19 concerns.

Gov't scraps health codes

THE government has announced that the Macao Health Code, which has been a requirement in the majority of public and private sites in the past three years should not be a requirement for entry to any venue. People in Macau do not need to declare their health conditions on the health code system. The yellow and red codes have also been suspended.

People with no respiratory symptoms should not be unreasonably required to take SARS-CoV-2 tests, but those with symptoms may be asked to take a test.

The government "will continually" instruct medical, social and non-tertiary education venues on the improvement of



disease prevention measures.

Those testing positive

for Covid-19 are recommended to remain at home and refrain from

activities with crowds or without a mask. They are not recommended

to take public transport. Meanwhile, those without severe symptoms are allowed to go to work.

FLU MEDICATIONS LIMIT

The government has implemented a limit on the individual transport of flu medications out of Macau to five packs per person.

The restriction has already taken effect.

Medications affected include pain and fever relief medications, flu medicines, mucus and cough medicines, as well as SARS-CoV-2 rapid antigen test (RAT) kits.

Each person is limited to taking a maximum of five packages – regardless of whether the medicine is contained in a box or bottle – out of Macau.

The restriction came only after the government announced that the city had passed its peak of infections, during which many people in Macau struggled to source medications apart from the anti-Covid-19 medication pack supplied by the government.

In December last year, people in Macau experienced a rush on mucus and cough medicines because they were not included in the anti-Covid-19 medication pack.

An exemption applies to those needing to take more than the permitted quantity out of Macau due to their habitual residences being outside of Macau. These people will be allowed to do so with medical certification. **AL**

CONSTRUCTION TRADE CALLS FOR MORE DETAILS ON LAND AUCTION

ANTHONY LAM

THE lack of information on the planned land auction initiative, which the government confirms will be proceeding, has prompted the construction industry to ask for more details.

Recently, the trade, represented by six industry associations, formed a concern group and held a press conference to amplify their voices.

Wong Kuok Kei, deputy executive director of the Macao Association of Building Contractors and Developers, complained that the industry has been provided little information about the claimed land auction initiative, local media has reported.

"We do not know how land



will be auctioned or how much and how tall we can build," Wong said in comments cited by All About Macau. He added that local constructors have interest in buying the land but may be limited by their capacity.

When asked how many land auctions the industry hopes the authorities can provide to meet the needs of future market development, Wong answered that it depends on the government's future development

plans for the city.

"Government has the full discretion as to what land will be auctioned," Wong said when commenting on the reactive position of the business sector. "We have no expectations. In

fact, what can we expect? We are not informed of the mechanism."

He added that there is no land auction by application from the business sector.

At the same conference, Lo Chi Cheong, executive director of the Macao Construction Association, said that he was anticipating public land auction and called for more details from the government.

In addition, he expressed hopes that some plots of land on the New Urban Zone A would be put to auction. "Excluding private development on Zone A will not work out, for auxiliary commercial facilities are required on any district," he commented.

On Covid-19, Lo disclosed that 90% construction workers have caught the disease. Although some of them have recovered, they have only regained half of their pre-Covid physical capabilities. As such, he hoped that the government will permit a longer project delivery period.

PUBLIC WORKS

New Barra transport hub showing construction flaws

RENATO MARQUES

THE new Barra transport hub, which commenced operation approximately one month ago, is showing signs of construction flaws, namely in its pavement, several media reports have noted.

According to the reports, the flaws are mostly found on the pavement of the first underground floor level, which is used by several public bus routes to pick up and drop

off passengers.

The pavement started crumbling just a few days after it started being used and is currently in a state that requires urgent intervention, the Secretary for Transport and Public Works, Raimundo do Rosário admitted.

To the media, Rosário said that although there is a clear need for intervention to repair the paved surface, which has holes and debris, "there are no structural issues with the

transport hub."

The Secretary also said that the government has already contacted the company that supplied the material for this pavement to determine the cause of the problem. In the meantime, workers from the company are already performing some work to minimize the inconvenience caused by the debris of the crumbling pavement, which is spreading around the transport hub.

Rosário also said that af-

ter the investigation, a report must be issued by the companies that performed the work explaining the reasons for this construction flaw. He noted that this is occurring in an important public facility that commenced operations just one month ago.

From what the Times has observed, it appears the upper layer of asphalt that was placed on top of the concrete base does not remain in place and crumbles as vehicles pass.



BASKETBALL

BLACK BEARS TAKE FIRST WIN IN ABL INVITATIONAL

RENATO MARQUES

THE Macau Black Bears have won their first match of the 2023 ASEAN Basketball League (ABL) invitational tournament, beating the Cooly Bangkok Tigers on Sunday afternoon 109 vs. 85.

It was the first and only win for the Black Bears, who before this match had suffered three defeats in the first three matches of the tournament.

On the first match played last Tuesday, the Bears had lost (84 vs. 76) against Saigon Heat, which

followed another defeat last Thursday, this time at the hands of Hong Kong's Eastern Long Lions (81 vs. 75).

On Friday, the Bears met and again lost (73 vs. 54) to the Malaysians of NS Matrix; at the time both teams were looking for their first victory in the tournament.

In the last match the Bears played at Singapore's OCBC Arena, the local team coached by the Canadian Charles Dubé-Brais finally took their first win. At half-time, the Bears were already ahead of the Tigers by 12 points (38 vs. 50)

thanks to a higher accuracy of 3-pointer shots that accounted for more than half of the Bears' score line.

The highlight for the Macau team was the American Isaiah Wade, with a total of 33 points scored, followed by another American, De'Quan Abrom, with 31 points, and the Filipino-born Canadian Jennings Leung with 26 points on his account.

With this win, the Bears occupy the sixth position out of eight teams with a score differential of -9 points. Such a result could have been even better

for the Bears if, in the last match of the day, the Zamboanga Valientes had not won over the Singapore Slingers.

The win of Valientes pulled the Philippines team from fifth to third position overall just behind Eastern and Heat.

After the round played in Singapore, the tournament moves to Indonesia late this week, where the Bears will meet again with the Eastern on January 12, at the Hi-Test Arena.

The new location will be in the city of Batam, the largest city in the province of



Riau Islands, Indonesia.

This Saturday (January 14) the Bears will meet

with the Tigers again in a match to be played at the same venue.

ANTHONY LAM

Q422 consumer confidence runs below passing grade

DESPITE a 13% rise from the third quarter last year, the fourth quarter's Consumer Confidence Index was 77.56 out of 200, which is below the passing grade of 100, the Macau University of Science and Technology (MUST) has announced.

The MUST emphasized that the quarterly rise was noteworthy, adding that the index for Q3, 2022 was the second lowest from the first edition in 2008. Further interpreting the findings, the university sees the increase as an indication that Macau is moving up from an economic trough.

Nonetheless, the MUST warns that the foundation for economic recovery in the mainland

still needs to be strengthened, seeing as the high pressure caused by demand contraction, supply bumps and weakening expectations still exist.

With an assured loosening of restrictions on domestic movements, the economic outlook is optimistic, the MUST added.

The institution highlighted that all indicators have recorded a rise, with Employment Condition displaying the most significant increase, 18.69% to be pre-

cise. Local Economy obtained a score of 77.42, a 17.98% rise quarter-over-quarter.

Stock Investment scored 78.91, a quarterly increase of 12.97%; Price Level 72.63, a quarterly increase of 9.68%; Living Standard 82.10, a quarterly increase of 8.13%; Purchasing Housing 77.89, a quarterly increase of 9.40%.

The index was calculated by five universities: two in Beijing, one in Hong Kong and one in Taipei.



Classes resume today, RAT required at least until CNY

THE classes at non-tertiary education levels in Macau will resume today after an extended interruption for the Christmas and New Year holidays due to fears of a high number of Covid-19 infections.

The classes, initially due to resume on January 2, were postponed for a week until January 9 by the Education and Youth Development Bureau (DSEDJ) over a forecast that a large number of students

and teachers could be undergoing a treatment period following infection with Covid-19.

According to the DSEDJ director Kong Chi Meng, the services estimate that around 60% of all students and tea-

chers have been already infected with Covid-19, adding that the measure requiring a daily Rapid Antigen Test (RAT) for all students and teachers will be in force at least until the upcoming class interruption for Chinese

New Year (CNY).

This means that at least for the next two weeks, all students and teachers from local non-tertiary education institutions will have to be tested daily.

Kong explained that

the measure is related to the policy previously announced stating that if in a single class there are four or more students infected at the same time, the classes for that group of students should be suspended. **RM**

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Application closes on 7 February 2023



Workers wearing face masks walk by as travelers wait at the departure hall of the Lok Ma Chau station following the reopening of crossing border with mainland China, in Hong Kong, yesterday

TRAVELERS RUSH TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF CHINA REOPENING

AFTER years of separation from his wife in mainland China, Hong Kong resident Cheung Seng-bun made sure to be among the first in line following the reopening yesterday of border crossing points.

The ability of residents of the semi-autonomous southern Chinese city to cross over is one of the most visible signs of China's easing of border restrictions imposed almost three years ago, with travelers arriving from abroad no longer required to undergo expensive and time-consuming quarantines.

That comes even as the virus continues to spread in China amid what critics say is a lack of transparency from Beijing.

"I'm hurrying to get back to her," Cheung, lugging a heavy suitcase, told The Associated Press as he prepared to cross at Lok Ma Chau station, which was steadily filling with eager travelers.

Those crossing between Hong Kong and mainland China, however, are still required to show a negative COVID-19 test taken within the last 48 hours — a measure China has protested when imposed by other countries.

Hong Kong has been hit hard by the virus, and its land and sea border checkpoints with the mainland have been largely closed for almost three years. Despite the risk of new infections, the reopening that will allow tens of thousands of people who have made prior online bookings to cross each day is expected to provide a much-needed boost to Hong Kong's tourism and retail sectors.

On a visit to the station yesterday morning, Hong Kong's Chief

Executive John Lee said the sides would continue to expand the number of crossing points from the current seven to the full 14.

"The goal is to get back as quickly as possible to the pre-epidemic normal life," Lee told reporters. "We want to get cooperation between the two sides back on track."

Communist Party newspaper Global Times quoted Tan Luming, a port official in Shenzhen on the border with Hong Kong, saying about 200 passengers were expected to take the ferry to Hong Kong, while another 700 were due to travel in the other direction, on the first day of reopening. Tan said a steady increase in passenger numbers is expected over coming days.

"I stayed up all night and got up at 4 a.m. as I'm so excited to return to the mainland to see my 80-year-old mother," a Hong Kong woman identified only by her surname, Cheung, said on arrival at Shenzhen, where she was presented with "roses and health kits," the paper said.

Hong Kong media reports said around 300,000 travel bookings from the city to mainland China have already been made, with a daily quota of 60,000.

Limited ferry service also was restored from China's Fujian province to the Taiwanese-controlled island of Kinmen just off the Chinese coast.

The border crossing with Russia at Suifenhe in the far northern province of Heilongjiang also resumed normal operations, just in time for the opening of the ice festival in the capital of Harbin, a major tourism draw.

And at Ruili, on the border with

Myanmar, normal operations were resumed after 1,012 days of full or partial closure in response to repeated outbreaks blamed partly on visitors from China's neighbor.

So far, only a fraction of the previous number of international flights are arriving at major Chinese airports.

Beijing's main Capital International Airport was expecting eight flights from overseas yesterday. Shanghai, China's largest city, received its first international flight under the new policy at 6:30 a.m. with only a trickle of others to follow.

Since March 2020, all international passenger flights bound for Beijing have been diverted to designated first points of entry into China. Passengers were required to quarantine up to three weeks.

"I've been under isolated quarantine for six times in different cities (in mainland China)," said Ivan Tang, a Hong Kong business traveler. "They were not easy experiences."

Ming Guanghe, a Chinese li-

ving in Singapore, said it had been difficult both to book a ticket and find somewhere to take a PCR test. Quarantine measures and uncertainty about outbreaks had kept him away from home, Ming said.

Shanghai announced it would again start issuing regular passports to Chinese for foreign travel and family visits, as well as renewing and extending visas for foreigners. Those restrictions have had a particularly devastating effect on foreign businesspeople and students in the key Asian financial center.

China is now facing a surge in cases and hospitalizations in major cities and is bracing for a further spread into less developed areas with the start of its most important holiday, the Lunar New Year, in coming days.

Authorities say they expect domestic rail and air journeys will double over the same period last year, bringing overall numbers close to those of the 2019 holiday period before the pandemic hit.

Meanwhile, more foreign go-

vernments are imposing testing requirements on travelers from China — most recently Germany, Sweden and Portugal. On Saturday, German Foreign Minister Annalena Baerbock urged citizens to avoid "unnecessary" travel to China, noting the rise in coronavirus cases and China's "overburdened" health system.

The German regulation also allows for spot checks on arrival. Germany, like other European nations, will test wastewater from aircrafts for possible new virus variants. The measures come into force at midnight today and are due to last until April 7.

Apparently concerned about its reputation, China says the testing requirements aren't science-based and has threatened unspecified countermeasures.

Chinese health authorities publish a daily count of new infections, severe cases and fatalities, but those numbers include only officially confirmed cases and use a very narrow definition of COVID-19-related deaths.

The National Health Commission yesterday reported 7,072 new confirmed cases of local transmission and two new deaths — even as individual provinces were reporting as many as 1 million cases per day.

Authorities say that since the government ended compulsory testing and permitted people with mild symptoms to test themselves and convalesce at home, it can no longer provide a full picture of the outbreak. China's vulnerabilities are increased by the population's general lack of exposure to the virus and a relatively low vaccination rate among the elderly.

Government spokespeople insist the situation is under control and reject accusations from the World Health Organization and others that they're not being transparent about the outbreak that could lead to the emergence of new variants.

The Health Commission on Saturday rolled out regulations for strengthened monitoring of viral mutations, including testing of urban wastewater. The rules called for increased data gathering from hospitals and local government health departments and stepped-up checks on "pneumonia of unknown causes." **MDT/AP**

CHINA SUSPENDS SOCIAL MEDIA ACCOUNTS OF COVID POLICY CRITICS

CHINA has suspended or closed the social media accounts of more than 1,000 critics of the government's policies on the Covid-19 outbreak, as the country moves to roll back harsh anti-virus restrictions. The popular Sina Weibo social media platform said it had addressed 12,854 violations including attacks on experts, scholars and medical workers and issued temporary or permanent bans on 1,120 accounts. The ruling Communist Party had largely relied on

the medical community to justify its tough lockdowns, quarantine measures and mass testing, almost all of which it abruptly abandoned last month, leading to a surge in new cases that have stretched medical resources to their limits. The company "will continue to increase the investigation and cleanup of all kinds of illegal content, and create a harmonious and friendly community environment for the majority of users," Sina Weibo said in a statement dated Thursday.

PHILIPPINES

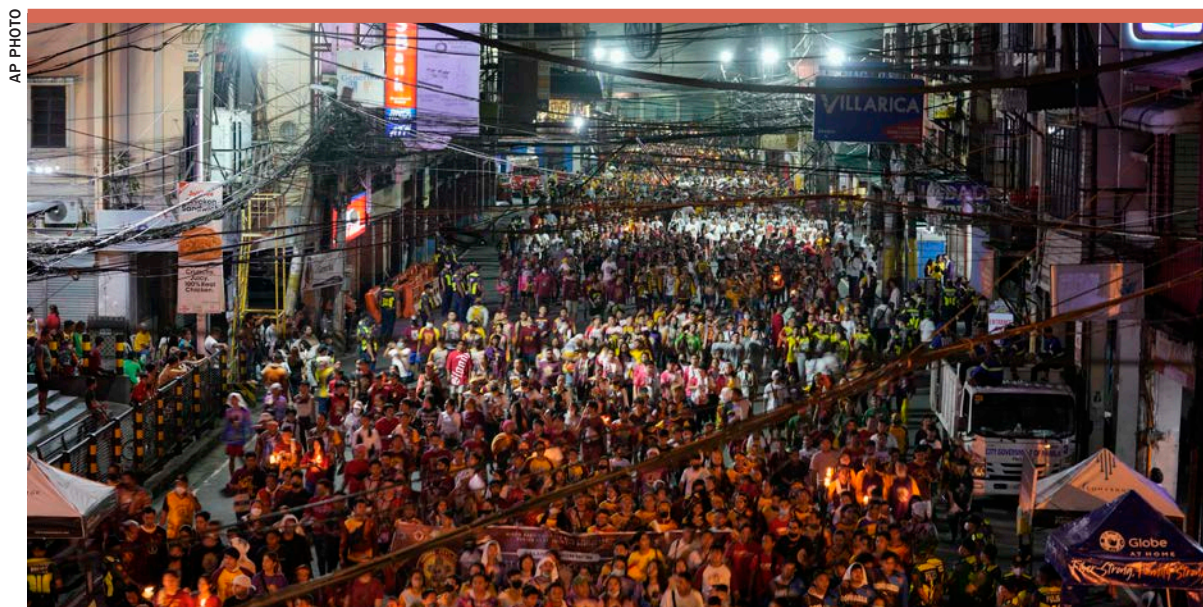
Catholics hold big procession after pandemic eases

JIM GOMEZ &
AARON FAVILA, MANILA

THOUSANDS of Catholic devotees, many donning protective masks and bearing candles, joined a night procession through downtown Manila early yesterday to venerate a centuries-old black statue of Jesus Christ, which was not paraded to discourage an even larger crowd amid lingering fears of COVID-19.

The more than 80,000 devotees who church officials said joined the nearly 6-kilometer (3.7-mile) "Walk of Faith" procession were a fraction of the more than a million worshippers who typically converged in pre-pandemic years to pay homage to the life-size Black Nazarene statue in one of Asia's biggest religious festivals.

In chaotic dawn-to-midnight processions in the past, when the Black Nazarene was paraded on a carriage pulled by ropes, mobs of mostly poor, barefoot devotees in maroon shirts would squeeze their way through the crowd around the slow-moving carriage to throw towels at volunteers, who wiped parts of the statue



in the belief that the Nazarene's powers would cure ailments and ensure good health and a better life.

Without the Nazarene, yesterday's procession from a historic park by Manila Bay to a church in Quiapo district was orderly but still intense, with many worshippers mumbling prayers and others singing and chanting "Nazareno" as they marched in the early hours of the morning. Many carried replicas of the religious

icon. The procession, which kicked off after a midnight Mass, was completed in less than three hours.

Officials of the church in Quiapo, where the Nazarene is enshrined throughout the year, brought the statue to a grandstand at Rizal Park before the procession to allow worshippers to pray before it through the weekend up to Monday, when the annual feast of the Black Nazarene is celebrated. Kissing the statue was prohibi-

ted due to fears the action could spread COVID-19 infections.

Teresa Pateañe, a 51-year-old devotee who carried a Nazarene replica, said the religious gathering was not the same without the mystical statue amid a sea of worshippers jostling to touch it in a show of piety.

"We are sad because we cannot do the things we used to do, like climbing up the carriage," she told The Associated Press. "But we are very thankful that the

(Black Nazarene) is already on the grandstand. The people can see it again."

The religious Nazarene procession was suspended at the height of COVID-19 outbreaks the last two years in the Philippines, one of the hardest-hit countries by the pandemic in Southeast Asia. Church officials decided not to parade the Nazarene this year as a precaution, even after the pandemic eased, but organized the religious march as an alternative at a time of widespread social and economic distress.

Police were on alert and deployed thousands of personnel to secure the country's largest gathering and remind devotees not to congregate too closely for health reasons.

The Nazarene statue is believed to have been brought from Mexico to Manila on a galleon in 1606 by Spanish missionaries. The ship that carried it caught fire, but the charred statue survived. Many devotees believe the statue's endurance, from fires and earthquakes through the centuries and intense bombings during World War II, is a testament to its miraculous powers.

The spectacle reflects the unique brand of Catholicism, which includes folk superstitions, in Asia's largest Catholic nation. Dozens of Filipinos have themselves nailed to crosses on Good Friday in another unusual tradition to emulate Christ's suffering that draws huge crowds of worshippers and tourists each year. **MDT/AP**

NORTH KOREA

Seoul: Kim's daughter reveal hints at prolonged family rule

HYUNG-JIN KIM & SEOUL

NORTH Korean leader Kim Jong Un's disclosure of his daughter in recent public events was likely an attempt to show his people that one of his children would one day inherit his power in what would be the country's third hereditary power transfer, South Korea's spy service told lawmakers Thursday.

Kim publicly took his daughter to three events in the past few months: a missile launch site, a photo session with weapons scientists and a touring of a missile facility. State news media called her Kim's "most beloved child," sparking outside debate over whether she's being groomed as his heir apparent, though she's be-



lieved to be around 9 or 10 years old.

In a closed-door Parliamentary committee meeting, the National Intelligence Service said it believes that by taking his daughter to public places, Kim aims to show North Koreans his resolve to hold another round of he-

reditary power transition, Yoo Sang-bum, one of the lawmakers who attended the private NIS briefing, told reporters.

But the NIS said Ju Ae's public appearance — the first for any of Kim's children — doesn't necessarily mean that she herself will succeed Kim, Yoo added.

South Korean news outlets have reported that Kim has three children — born in 2010, 2013 and 2017 — and that the first child is a son while the third is a daughter.

In its earlier assessment after the daughter's first appearance in November, the NIS told lawmakers

that she is Kim's second child, named Ju Ae, and is about 10 years old. The agency told lawmakers at the time that her unveiling at the missile launch site appeared to reflect Kim's intentions to protect the security of North Korea's future generations in the face of a standoff with the United States.

Ju Ae apparently is the child whom retired NBA star Dennis Rodman saw during his trip to Pyongyang in 2013. After that visit, Rodman told the British newspaper the Guardian that he and Kim had a "relaxing time by the sea" with the leader's family and that he held Kim's baby daughter, Ju Ae.

Kim Jong Un, who turns 39 on Sunday, is the third generation of his family that has successively ruled North Korea since its 1948 foundation. He inherited power from his father Kim Jong Il upon his death in December 2011. Kim Jong Il took over when his father and state founder Kim Il

Sung died in 1994.

The young Ju Ae's appearance came as a huge surprise to long-time North Korea watchers; both Kim Jong Un and Kim Jong Il made public debuts after they became adults. In 2010, Kim Jong Il marked the then-26-year-old Kim Jong Un — his third and youngest son — as his successor by putting him in a series of high-ranking posts.

Kim Jong Un's half-brother Kim Jong Nam, who was Kim Jong Il's eldest son, was once seen as a potential heir to the country's dynastic leadership until he publicly fell from grace in 2001 when he was caught trying to enter Japan on a fake passport to visit Tokyo Disneyland. In 2017, Kim Jong Nam was killed at a Malaysian airport after two Asian women smeared the lethal nerve agent VX on his face. South Korea's spy service accused Kim Jong Un's government of being behind the attack. **MDT/AP**

DIPLOMACY

Big week for US-Mexico ties going into North American summit

COLLEEN LONG & MARIA VERZA, WASHINGTON

IT'S been a big week last week for U.S.-Mexico relations, and that was even before President Joe Biden becomes the first U.S. leader to visit Mexico in nearly a decade.

In the lead-up to that trip, Biden announced a major border policy shift, with Mexico's blessing, that will result in the United States sending 30,000 migrants from four other countries per month back across the border. In Mexico, President Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador's security forces nabbed one of the sons of imprisoned former Sinaloa cartel boss Joaquín "El Chapo" Guzmán, touching off violence that left 30 dead and dozens injured. The son, Ovidio Guzmán, is a reputed drug trafficker wanted by the United States.

The two presidents, along with Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, will gather in Mexico City today and tomorrow for a North American leaders summit. Even with progress on the migration issue, there is much to discuss: climate change, manufacturing, trade, the economy and the potential global clout of a more collaborative North America.

Biden arrives at the Palacio Nacional in Mexico City tomorrow (Macau time) and the presidents will meet before Trudeau joins them for dinner. Biden and Trudeau will hold talks Tuesday and then the three will gather for discussions. It will be the first time since 2014 that Mexico has hosted a U.S. president.

Biden hopes to use the summit "to keep driving North America's economic competitiveness and help promote inclusive growth and prosperity," said National Security Council spokesman John Kirby.



President Joe Biden speaks as he meets with Mexican President Andrés Manuel López Obrador in the Oval Office of the White House in Washington, July 12, 2022

For the U.S., the major talking points are migration, drug trafficking and building on Biden's push on electric vehicles and manufacturing.

Lopez Obrador is focused on economic integration for North America, supporting the poor in the Americas and regional relationships that put all governments on equal footing.

The U.S. and Mexico are expected to continue discussions about ending a dispute over U.S. corn after Mexico announced it would ban imports of genetically modified corn. In addition, Mexico is seeking money to boost solar energy projects.

As for Canada, the goal is simply "to carve some attention and space in this summit," said Louise Blais, a longtime Canadian diplomat.

Mexico sees the event as a chance to advance its economic interests.

It stands to benefit as U.S. companies reconsider their relationships with China after supply chain disruptions, coronavirus outbreaks and changes in federal policy. Both Mexico's proximity to the U.S. and existing trade agreements would be incentives for American factories to relocate south of the border. The U.S. imported more than \$380 billion worth of goods from Mexico through the first 10

months of 2022 — the third-largest source of imports after China and the European Union, according to the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis.

Canada is the fourth-largest U.S. partner by imports, with the State Department calling it "the world's most comprehensive trading relationship." The U.S. and Canada are each other's largest market for exports, and Canada is the largest foreign supplier of energy products to the U.S.

The U.S., Mexico and Canada are already in a long-standing trade agreement that was updated in 2020. When U.S. Trade Representative Katherine Tai met last month with Mexico's secretary of the economy, Raquel Buenrostro, they discussed further economic integration as well as energy, fisheries and the trade agreement's ban on importing goods made by forced labor — a subject that is among the tensions with China.

Analysts at Bank of America estimated in October that Mexico could increase its trade by as much as 30% if more supply chains returned to North America. Their report notes there had already been a bump in Mexican manufacturing as U.S. policymakers and businesses increasingly focus on bringing more trade to allied countries that are near American consumers.

"Every country is arriving with different priorities, but there is common ground," said Enrique Perret, managing director of the U.S.-Mexico Foundation, a think tank focused on cooperation between the two nations. "It's competitiveness, it's economy, it's education, it's labor mobility."

But it's not all rosy.

The leaders of Canada and Mexico have voiced concerns over Biden's "Buy America" plan. And while Biden's push toward electric vehicles is a boon to both nations because of the tax credits for North American batteries, there's concern the U.S. allies will be left behind.

Meantime, the U.S. and Canada accuse López Obrador of trying to favor Mexico's state-owned utility over power plants built by foreign and private investors, something that is forbidden under the three countries' free trade pact.

The leaders did meet in Washington last November, but until then, there hadn't been a summit in five years and many of the current disputes have festered despite constant discussion. They include fentanyl trafficking, corn production, automobile rules of origin and Mexican energy laws.

"These topics are really complicated issues and they will not be solved in a two-day summit," said Carin Zissis of the Americas Society, a nonprofit dedicated to education, debate and dialogue in the Americas.

The chemistry between Biden and Lopez Obrador is tricky, too. Their relationship is highly transactional and absent any of the warmth and camaraderie Biden has with other world leaders.

Lopez Obrador has made no secret of his admiration of Biden's predecessor, Donald Trump. Lopez Obrador did not recognize Biden's election victory from November 2020 until after the formal Electoral College vote a month later.

Biden has raised concerns over security and drug trafficking in Mexico and the deaths of journalists there. The U.S. took issue with Lopez Obrador for boycotting the Summit of the Americas in Los Angeles last year over Biden's decision not to invite the leaders of Cuba, Venezuela and Nicaragua. **MDT/AP**

this day in history

1986 HESELTINE QUILTS OVER WESTLAND



The Defence Secretary, Michael Heseltine, has resigned from his Cabinet job in a row with Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher over the Westland affair.

Mr Heseltine stormed out of a meeting at Number 10 today saying his views on the future of the Westland helicopter company were being ignored.

He said the final straw came when Mrs Thatcher insisted all his public comments on Westland would have to be vetted by officials before being released.

In a statement to reporters later this afternoon, Mr Heseltine said: "If the basis of trust between the Prime Minister and her Defence Secretary no longer exists, there is no place for me with honour in such a Cabinet."

The row over the company's future has split the Cabinet.

Mr Heseltine was alone among ministers backing a European consortium's rescue package - while Mrs Thatcher favoured the deal being proposed by the American Sikorski Fiat group.

Mr Heseltine - with the backing of the Defence committee - claimed the European deal, which was initially worth more financially, could form the basis of a strong arms industry to rival the Americans.

Critics claimed the orders were based on aircraft still in the design stage.

Westland's directors are urging shareholders to back the Sikorski package.

The American group has now offered to match the European offer.

Its orders are also seen as more secure, because they are linked to aircraft already in production.

Mrs Thatcher has appointed George Younger to replace Mr Heseltine as Defence Secretary. Malcolm Rifkind will take over the vacant role of Secretary of State for Scotland.

Mr Heseltine's sensational departure from his Cabinet role is bound to fuel rumours that he is aiming for the top job, as Conservative party leader.

Courtesy BBC News

IN CONTEXT

Just 15 days after Mr Heseltine's departure from the Cabinet, the Westland affair provoked a second senior Tory resignation. Leon Brittan was forced to quit as Trade and Industry Secretary after admitting he had authorised the leaking of a government law officer's letter criticising Mr Heseltine. In 1990 Mr Heseltine unsuccessfully challenged Mrs Thatcher for the Tory party leadership - which led to her downfall. Her successor, John Major made him Environment Secretary (1990-1992) and Trade and Industry Secretary (1992-1995). He left the House of Commons in June 2001, but remains a respected Tory elder statesman whose views are still frequently canvassed.

MACAU'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

YOUR STARS

ARIES Mar. 21-Apr. 19
 Any intimate relationships with colleagues will lead to gossip that could easily affect your position. You can make wonderful contributions to any organization that you join.

TAURUS Apr. 20-May. 20
 Minor health problems will flare up if you don't take care of yourself. Spend time with your lover today. You have two choices; Get out on your own, or bend to your mate's whims.

GEMINI May. 21-Jun. 21
 Do not let in-laws upset you. Hold your temper and refrain from doing anything that might cause injury. Past partners may try to come back into your life.

CANCER Jun. 22-Jul. 22
 Opportunities to learn important information will surface through discussions with peers or seminars you attend. You can win points if you present your ideas today.

LEO Jul. 23-Aug. 22
 Try to be a bit more understanding or you may end up spending the evening alone. Your devotion will be persuasive. Find out if they have other commitments.

VIRGO Aug. 23-Sep. 22
 Be tolerant, but don't let any one take you for granted. Be prepared to take care of the issues at hand. Expect to pay more than anticipated for entertainment or other purchases.

LIBRA Sep. 23-Oct. 22
 Your emotional reaction will be dependent upon your partner's responsiveness. Don't be too eager to start any debates. Self-improvement could bring amazing results.

SCORPIO Oct. 23-Nov. 21
 Unfortunately, your personal life may suffer from a lack spare time. Self-improvement projects will payoff in more ways than one. You can get your point across if you don't beat around the bush.

SAGITTARIUS Nov. 22-Dec. 21
 Inharmonious situations at home may be extremely upsetting for you today. Don't hesitate to enlist the aid of friends or family if you have a big project to finish in your domestic environment.

CAPRICORN Dec. 22-Jan. 19
 You can expect changes in your financial situation as well as in your status. Helping children may be rewarding and challenging. You can change your living arrangements.

AQUARIUS Jan. 20-Feb. 18
 Don't be too eager to cut those who have disappointed you from your life. You'll be pleased with the results if you take the time to decorate your home.

PISCES Feb. 19-Mar. 20
 Social events will be rewarding. You will feel the limitations if you have been overdoing it. You can sort out any differences you have in an amiable manner.

The Born Loser by Chip Sansom



SUDOKU

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

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

WEATHER

	MIN	MAX	CONDITION
CHINA			
Beijing	-5	6	fine
Changchun	-15	-6	fine
Chengdu	6	15	cloudy
Chongqing	6	15	cloudy
Fuzhou	13	16	rain
Guangzhou	14	17	rain
Guiyang	4	19	fine
Haikou	16	20	rain
Hangzhou	5	19	fine
Harbin	-20	-9	fine
Hefei	3	15	fine
Nanjing	4	16	cloudy
Shanghai	7	17	fine
Taipei	17	20	overcast
Wuhan	2	19	fine
Hong Kong	18	20	rain
WORLD			
Moscow	-19	-18	overcast
Frankfurt	4	8	rain
Paris	5	9	rain
London	4	8	cloudy
New York	1	8	rain

CROSSWORDS

ACROSS 1- Seine spot; 6- Picture border; 11- French possessive; 14- Worker's reward; 15- Juridical; 16- Female gametes; 17- Midway alternative; 18- Absurd; 19- Mus. slow-up; 20- Domingo, for one; 22- Panorama; 24- Tight embrace; 28- Lament; 29- More spine-tingling; 30- Muscat native; 32- Shake ___ (hurry); 33- Western; 35- Highland hats; 39- Clockmaker Thomas; 40- Rangers' org.; 41- Like ___ of bricks; 42- Waste allowance; 43- Cancels a dele; 45- Vamp Theda; 46- Less friendly; 48- Arrest; 50- Passes by degrees; 53- Small black beetle; 54- Writer Loos; 55- Category; 57- Blend; 58- Pad user; 60- Silvery fish; 65- Letter before omega; 66- Construct; 67- Early evening; 68- Call on; 69- Move sideways; 70- Anticipate;

DOWN 1- Maven; 2- Satisfied sound; 3- Narrow inlet; 4- Leb. neighbor; 5- Do a slow burn; 6- Throw with force; 7- City in Western Nevada; 8- Petri dish gelatin; 9- Adult male; 10- Craps natural; 11- Trunk; 12- Patti LuPone role; 13- The devil; 21- Franc replacement; 23- Capable of being imitated; 24- Animal; 25- Conger catcher; 26- Aggregate of qualities that make good character; 27- Conservative; 28- Ingot; 30- Different; 31- Hot sandwich; 34- Get in a hand; 36- Whatsoever; 37- Fable finale; 38- Capture; 43- Bro's counterpart; 44- Surgery reminder; 47- Stops; 49- Potemkin setting; 50- Lanterns; 51- Biscotto flavoring; 52- Sprite; 53- Benjamin; 55- Turned right; 56- Business letter abbr.; 59- Part of TNT; 61- Cry of a cat; 62- Sister of Zsa Zsa; 63- Maui memento; 64- Big bang producer;

Friday's solution

S	I	N	E	W	T	R	Y	L	E	A	N	S			
C	O	C	O	A	R	I	O	U	N	C	A	P			
A	N	O	N	Y	M	I	T	Y	S	E	T	T			
R	A	S	O	L	E	O	T	R	A	C	T				
	G	I	R	L	F	R	O	S	H						
A	N	G	O	R	A	S	T	O	A						
C	O	R	N	E	L	D	A	R	L	O	C	K			
T	R	U	E	E	L	M	W	H	A	M					
A	B	R	I	D	G	E	L	I	N	E	R	S			
C	A	I	R	N	L	A	O	S	H	I	E	R	O	N	
P	S	A	L	M	L	A	I	R							
C	A	I	R	N	A	C	E	S	A	T	E				
A	R	E	T	E	B	R	E	A	K	A	W	A	Y		
R	E	G	I	S	B	A	R	I	S	E	R	E			
T	R	E	E	S	A	M	T	U	D	O	R				

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

TENNIS

Team USA beats Italy to win inaugural United Cup

THE United States claimed the inaugural United Cup yesterday in convincing fashion with an overpowering display over Italy in the final of the mixed teams event.

No. 9-ranked Taylor Fritz gave the U.S. an unassailable 3-0 lead in the best-of-five matchup when edging former Wimbledon finalist Matteo Berrettini 7-6 (4), 7-6 (7).

The Indian Wells Masters champion failed to convert nine break points but faced none on his own serve and proved the steadier player in the two tie-breakers.

He was mobbed by his teammates at Ken Rosewall Arena after clinching the title for the Americans.

"We came in with really high hopes before the start of the event and I was really happy to be in the position to clinch the match and just the emotions when you win and everyone comes running at you, it is amazing," Fritz said.

"We have gotten a lot of team bonding this week and it was a lot of fun."

Jessica Pegula put the U.S. on the path to victory by beating Martina Trevisan 6-4, 6-2, continuing her strong form, which in-



United States' Taylor Fritz plays a backhand return to Italy's Matteo Berrettini during the final of the United Cup tennis event in Sydney, Australia, yesterday

cluded a win over top-ranked Iga Swiatek on Friday.

Frances Tiafoe, a 2022 US Open semifinalist, extended the lead when Lorenzo Musetti withdrew with a shoulder injury after losing

the first set of their match 6-2.

The singles match between Madison Keys and Lucia Bronzetti was rendered a dead rubber in terms of the title, though ranking points and prize money

were on offer.

The U.S. were considered favorites for the 18-nation tournament based on the strength of a team where all four singles players were ranked inside the world's top 20.

Heading into the final, the U.S. had lost just two of the 20 rubbers they played in ties against the Czech Republic, Germany, Great Britain and Poland.

Dual-Wimbledon champion Petra Kvitova defeated Pegula in the opening tie of the event, while 2022 Wimbledon semifinalist Cameron Norrie beat Fritz in three sets on Jan. 4.

Similarly to Fritz's 7-6, 7-6 victory over Poland's Hubert Hurkacz on Saturday, the clash between Fritz and Berrettini was dominated by serving.

But Berrettini, who fell in three sets to Stefanos Tsitsipas in a semifinal against Greece on Saturday, lost his composure early in

the first tiebreaker and late in the second to give Fritz the victory.

"I had a lot of chances in there and he kept playing so well on those chances, so he made it really tough for me," Fritz said.

Pegula claimed the first three games against Trevisan and then withstood a challenge from the No. 27-ranked player late in the first set on the way to a solid victory.

No. 3-ranked Pegula said that as her team's top-ranked player of either sex, she wanted to lead by example.

"I wanted to win because I am the No. 1 American on the team. I wanted to embrace that. I did not want to shy away from that," she said.

Tiafoe, ranked No. 19, was in a dominant position against Musetti when the Italian ended the match on the opening point of the second set.

The 20-year-old had earlier received medical treatment after dropping serve to trail 2-5 in the opening set.

U.S. coach David Witt, who is also Pegula's individual coach, praised his players for their teamwork.

"It has been an honor to be a coach of them and enjoy the time we have had together. It has been awesome," he said. **MDT/AP**

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OPINION

China Daily
 Editorial, China Daily

**NEW COVID PROTOCOL
 SCIENCE-BASED RESPONSE
 TO CURRENT EPIDEMIC
 SITUATION**

China released the 10th edition of its diagnosis and treatment protocol for COVID-19 on Saturday, the first of its kind since the country announced that it will be managed as a Category B disease.

Over the past three years, the virus has been strictly prevented and controlled according to the same strict Category A standards that apply to diseases such as the plague and cholera.

But in light of how the epidemic situation has evolved, with the current variants of the virus more transmissible but less virulent than earlier ones, and with few cases presenting as pneumonia, the disease has been downgraded from novel coronavirus pneumonia to novel coronavirus infection, and it is to be managed accordingly, starting Sunday.

The previous edition of the protocol was released in March last year. The latest edition calls for a treat-it-as-it-is shift of focus for the governments and public health systems, as well as neighborhoods and individual residents, as the emphasis is on treatment rather than preventing infection.

The revised national protocol, which is based on the experience of some big cities in their head-on collision with the virus last month, will undoubtedly help standardize diagnosis and treatment of COVID-19 infections nationwide, as in line with clinical practice it classifies cases as being light, medium, severe or critical. This will be especially welcomed by small towns and rural areas, as the protocol improves the diagnostic criteria and warning indicators for severe and critical cases, which will ease the pressure on their public health facilities as less severe cases can be treated with over-the-counter medications at home.

The adjustment of the protocol can help ensure that limited medical care resources can be concentrated on caring for those who are most vulnerable, such as the elderly, children and people with underlying diseases, in a bid to prevent and reduce the occurrence of severe cases and minimize the number of deaths caused by COVID-19.

But having said that, more medical care resources should now be diverted to villages in light of the requirements of the protocol so as to minimize the pressure on the public health system and the national economy that is expected to arise as a result of the projected resurgence of COVID-19 infections during the 40-day Spring Festival holiday peak travel period that will begin on Friday.

The issuance of the protocol should prompt public health departments across the country to accelerate the adjustment of the distribution of medical resources between urban and rural areas through the pre-settled assistance model, whereby major hospitals in cities provide local rural clinics and village doctors with direct assistance in terms of personnel, medicines, funding, facilities and equipment, as well as diagnosis and treatment guidance.

The protocol highlights the importance of quick diagnosis, high clinical treatment efficiency, early treatment and the use of a combination of traditional Chinese and Western medicines, the importance of which has been fully demonstrated in the nation's fight with the virus last month after it lifted its strict virus control policies.

The latest COVID-19 infection diagnosis and treatment protocol, which adheres to the country's consistent principle of always putting life and health first, effectively responds to the appeals and demands of society, while still being firmly rooted in science and the actual epidemic situation in the country.

[Abridged]

**SEATTLE SCHOOLS SUE TECH
 GIANTS OVER SOCIAL MEDIA HARM**

**THE
 BUZZ**

The public school district in Seattle has filed a novel lawsuit against the tech giants behind TikTok, Instagram, Facebook, YouTube and Snapchat, seeking to hold them accountable for the mental health crisis among youth.

Seattle Public Schools filed the lawsuit Friday in U.S. District Court. The 91-page complaint says the social media companies have created a public nuisance by targeting their products to children.

It blames them for worsening mental health and behavioral disorders including anxiety, depression, disordered eating and cyber-

bullying; making it more difficult to educate students; and forcing schools to take steps such as hiring additional mental health professionals, developing lesson plans about the effects of social media, and providing additional training to teachers.

"Defendants have successfully exploited the vulnerable brains of youth, hooking tens of millions of students across the country into positive feedback loops of excessive use and abuse of Defendants' social media platforms," the complaint said. "Worse, the content Defendants curate and direct to youth is too often harmful and exploitive"

AP PHOTO



INFLATION

**GLOBAL FOOD PRICES IN
 2022 HIT RECORD HIGH
 AMID DROUGHT, WAR**

GLOBAL prices for food commodities like grain and vegetable oils were the highest on record last year even after falling for nine months in a row, the U.N. Food and Agriculture Organization said, as Russia's war in Ukraine, drought and other factors drove up inflation and worsened hunger worldwide.

The FAO Food Price Index, which tracks monthly changes in the international prices of commonly traded food commodities, dipped by 1.9% in December from a month earlier, the Rome-based organization said Friday. For the whole year, it averaged 143.7 points, more than 14% above the 2021 average, which also saw large increases.

The December decline was led by a drop in the price of vegetable oils amid shrinking import demand, expectations of increased soy oil production in South America and lower crude oil prices. Grain and meat were also down, while dairy and sugar rose slightly.

"Calmer food commodity prices are welcome after two very volatile years," FAO chief economist Maximo Torero said in a prepared statement. "It is important to remain vigilant and keep a strong focus on mitigating global food insecurity given that world food prices remain at elevated levels, with many staples near record highs, and with prices of rice increasing, and still many risks associated with future supplies."

Last year, the U.N. organization's Food Price Index hit the highest level since its records began in 1961, according to FAO data.

Russia's invasion of Ukraine in February exacerbated a food crisis because the two countries were leading global suppliers of wheat, barley, sunflower oil and other products, especially to nations in parts of Africa, the Middle East and Asia that were already struggling with hunger.

With critical Black Sea supplies disrupted, food prices rose to record highs, increasing inflation, po-

verty and food insecurity in developing nations that rely on imports.

The war also jolted energy markets and fertilizer supplies, both key to food production. That was on top of climate shocks that have fueled starvation in places like the Horn of Africa. Ethiopia, Somalia and Kenya are badly affected by the worst drought in decades, with the U.N. warning that parts of Somalia are facing famine. Thousands of people have already died.

Prices for wheat and corn reached a record high last year, though they fell in December along with the costs of other grains, the FAO said. It said harvests in the Southern Hemisphere boosted supplies and there was strong competition among exporters.

The organization's Vegetable Oil Price Index hit an all-time high last year, even as it tumbled in December to its lowest level since February 2021. For all of 2022, the FAO Dairy Price Index and Meat Price Index also were the highest since 1990. **MDT/AP**

AP PHOTO



Palestinian's foreign minister said yesterday that Israel revoked his travel permit, part of a series of punitive steps against the Palestinians that Israel's new hard-line government announced days ago. Riad Malki said in a statement that he was returning from the Brazilian president's inauguration when he was informed that Israel rescinded his travel permit, which allows top Palestinian officials to travel easily in and out of the occupied West Bank, unlike ordinary Palestinians.

AP PHOTO



Germany Climate activists pledged yesterday to defend a tiny village in western Germany from being bulldozed for the expansion of a nearby coal mine that has become a battleground between the government and environmental campaigners. Hundreds of people were expected to take part in protest training and a subsequent demonstration in the hamlet of Luetzerath, which lies west of Cologne next to the vast Garzweiler coal mine.

AP PHOTO



Mexico Two subway trains collided between two stations Saturday in Mexico City, killing at least one person and injuring 41, authorities said. One woman was killed and 57 people injured, who were taken to seven hospitals. Four people were trapped in the wreckage for a time, including one train driver, who was reported in serious condition. Late in the afternoon, the mayor said 26 of the injured had been released.