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AP PHOTO



India 11 people died and four more were hospitalized after a gas leak yesterday in northern India's Punjab state, local media reported. The incident occurred at an industrial area in Ludhiana city, but the source of the gas leak is still unclear, police told the Press Trust of India news agency. India's National Disaster Response Force sealed off the densely populated area and evacuated residents.

AP PHOTO



Sudan Gunfire and heavy artillery fire persisted Saturday in parts of Sudan's capital Khartoum, residents said, despite the extension of a cease-fire between the country's two top generals, whose battle for power has killed hundreds and sent thousands fleeing for their lives. With ordinary Sudanese caught in the crossfire, the civilian death toll jumped to 411 people, according to the Sudan Doctors' Syndicate, which monitors casualties.
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AP PHOTO



Canada and US agreed last week to share more information about the smuggling of guns and drugs across their shared border, and pledged to review recent incidents of migrants dying along the border. Public Safety Minister Marco Mendicino said Ottawa signed four new or updated agreements with Washington that allow the Royal Canadian Mounted Police and Canada Border Services Agency to exchange more data with their U.S. counterparts.
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133,911

Extra work on Labor Day in hospitality sector as city recorded yesterday a new daily high of tourist arrivals to a total of 240k over the weekend, amid staff shortages

P3,5

RENATO MARQUES



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MACAU'S LEADING NEWSPAPER



Habitat loss has driven Asian elephants, like these foraging at a garbage dump in Sri Lanka, into human areas

WILD LIFE

HUMAN ACTIVITIES IN ASIA HAVE REDUCED ELEPHANT HABITAT BY NEARLY TWO-THIRDS SINCE 1700, DIVIDING WHAT REMAINS INTO EVER-SMALLER PATCHES

SHERMIN DE SILVA

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA,
SAN DIEGO

DESPITE their iconic status and long association with humans, Asian elephants are one of the most endangered large mammals. Believed to number between 45,000 and 50,000 individuals worldwide, they are at risk throughout Asia due to human activities such as deforestation, mining, dam building and road construction, which have damaged numerous ecosystems.

My colleagues and I wanted to know when human actions started to fragment wildlife habitats and populations to the degree seen today. We quantified these impacts by considering them through the needs of this species.

In a newly published study, we examined the centuries-long history of Asian landscapes that once were suitable elephant habitat and often were managed by local communities prior to the colonial era. In our view, understanding this history and restoring some of these relationships may be the key to living with elephants and other large wild animals in the future.

HOW HAVE HUMANS AFFECTED WILDLIFE?

It isn't easy to measure human impacts on wildlife across a region as large and diverse as Asia and more than a century ago. Historical data for many species

is sparse. Museums, for instance, only contain specimens collected from certain locations.

Many animals also have very specific ecological requirements, and there often isn't sufficient data on these features at a fine scale going far into the past. For instance, a species might prefer particular microclimates or vegetation types that occur only at particular elevations.

For nearly two decades I've been studying Asian elephants. As a species, these animals are breathtakingly adaptable: They can live in seasonally dry forests, grasslands or the densest of rain forests. If we could match the habitat requirements of elephants to data sets showing how these habitats changed over time, we knew that we could understand how land-use changes have affected elephants and other wildlife in these environments.

DEFINING ELEPHANT ECOSYSTEMS

The home-range sizes of Asian elephants can vary anywhere from a few hundred square miles to a few thousand. But since we couldn't know exactly where elephants would have been centuries ago, we had to model the possibilities based on where they occur today.

By identifying the environmental features that correspond to locations where wild elephants live now, we can distinguish places

where they could potentially have lived in the past. In principle, this should represent "good" habitat.

Today many scientists are using this kind of model to identify particular species' climatic requirements and predict how areas suitable for those species might shift under future climate change scenarios. We applied the same logic retrospectively, using land-use and land-cover types instead of climate change projections.

We drew this information from the Land-Use Harmonization (LUH2) data set, released by a research group at the University of Maryland. The group mapped historical land-use categories by type, starting in the year 850 – long before the advent of nations as we know them today, with fewer large population centers – and extending up to 2015.

My co-authors and I first compiled records of where Asian elephants have been observed in the recent past. We limited our study to the 13 countries that today still contain wild elephants: Bangladesh, Bhutan, Cambodia, China, India, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Thailand and Vietnam.

We excluded areas where elephant populations are prone to clashing with people, such as intensively farmed landscapes and plantations, in order to avoid classifying these zones as "good" elephant habitat. We included areas with lighter human influence,

such as selectively logged forests, because they actually contain great food for elephants.

Next, we used a machine-learning algorithm to determine what types of land use and land cover existed at our remaining locations. This allowed us to map out where elephants could potentially live as of the year 2000. By applying our model to earlier and later years, we were able to generate maps of areas that contained suitable habitat for elephants and to see how those areas had changed over the centuries.

DRAMATIC DECLINES

Land-use patterns changed significantly on every continent starting with the Industrial Revolution in the 1700s and extending through the colonial era into the mid-20th century. Asia was no exception.

For most areas, we found that suitable elephant habitat took a steep dive around this time. We estimated that from 1700 through 2015 the total amount of suitable habitat decreased by 64%. More than 1.2 million square miles (3 million square kilometers) of land were converted for plantations, industry and urban development. With respect to potential elephant habitat, most of the change occurred in India and China, each of which saw conversion in more than 80% of these landscapes.

In other areas of Southeast Asia – such as a large hot spot of

elephant habitat in central Thailand, which was never colonized – habitat loss happened more recently, in the mid-20th century. This timing corresponds to logging concurrent with the so-called Green Revolution, which introduced industrial agriculture to many parts of the world.

COULD THE PAST BE THE KEY TO THE FUTURE?

Looking back at land-use change over centuries makes it clear just how drastically human actions have reduced habitat for Asian elephants. The losses that we measured greatly exceed estimates of "catastrophic" human impacts on so-called wilderness or forests within recent decades.

Our analysis shows that if you were an elephant in the 1700s, you might have been able to range across 40% of the available habitat in Asia with no problem, because it was one large, contiguous area that contained many ecosystems where you could live. This enabled gene flow among many elephant populations. But by 2015, human activities had so drastically fragmented the total suitable area for elephants that the largest patch of good habitat represented less than 7% of it.

Sri Lanka and peninsular Malaysia have a disproportionately high share of Asia's wild elephant population, relative to available elephant habitat area. Thailand and Myanmar have smaller populations relative to area. Interestingly, the latter are countries known for their large captive or semi-captive elephant populations.

Less than half of the areas that contain wild elephants today have adequate habitat for them. Elephants' resulting use of increasingly human-dominated landscapes leads to confrontations that are harmful for both elephants and people.

However, this long view of history reminds us that protected areas alone are not the answer, since they simply cannot be large enough to support elephant populations. Indeed, human societies have shaped these very landscapes for millennia.

Today there is a pressing challenge to balance human subsistence and livelihood requirements with the needs of wildlife. Restoring traditional forms of land management and local stewardship of these landscapes can be an essential part of protecting and recovering ecosystems that serve both people and wildlife in the future. **MDT/THE CONVERSATION**

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BEIJING TO EXTEND VALIDITY OF TRAVEL PERMITS FOR SARS RESIDENTS

China will extend the expiration date of mainland travel permits for eligible Hong Kong and Macao residents starting May 8, the National Immigration Administration (NIA) announced. The validity of their mainland travel permits with an expiration date between Jan. 1, 2020 and Dec. 30, 2023 will be extended until Dec. 31, 2023. The measure aims to meet soaring travel demand among these residents after the Chinese mainland fully resumed normal travel with Hong Kong and Macao starting Feb. 6, according to the announcement.

33RD MACAO ARTS FESTIVAL KICKS OFF

The 33rd Macao Arts Festival kicked off Friday with an opening ceremony followed by "Rite of Spring," a work of renowned Chinese dancer Yang Liping that innovatively combines oriental philosophy, symbols and aesthetics. Organized by the Cultural Affairs Bureau, the month-long festival will also feature "Bonds of Hato," a multimedia full-length Cantonese opera transformed from the harrowing memories of Typhoon Hato, seeking to eulogize Macao people's love for the city. A series of outreach events, including pre-show talks, lectures, workshops and exhibitions, will also be staged, according to the bureau.

MERCHANDISE EXPORT DROPS IN MARCH

Macao's total merchandise export amounted to 1.19 billion patacas in March, down 16.7% year-on-year, the statistical service said on Friday. The merchandise import went down 7% year-on-year to 12.85 billion patacas, and the merchandise trade deficit totaled 11.66 billion patacas in March, the latest report from the Statistics and Census Service showed. The value of re-exports dropped 15.4% to 1.07 billion patacas, whereas the value of domestic exports shrank 26.6% to 120 million patacas, the report said.

GOLDEN WEEK

May Day: Visitor figures skyrocketed in the first two days

RENATO MARQUES

VISITORS entering Macau in the first two days of the May 1 holidays, informally called "May 1 Golden Week," have far surpassed predictions from the Macao Government Tourism Office (MGTO) of a daily average of 70,000 people over the five days.

On the first day (Saturday, April 29), the border posts recorded a record-high of 109,196 visitor entries. The previous single-day record this year was on March 18, when 96,011 visitors arrived in Macau.

The figure even surpassed (for the time being) the hotel and tourism industry's forecast of 90,000 daily arrivals, a more optimistic forecast than the MGTO's.

Yesterday saw a new record-high,

with 133,911 visitors entering Macau.

Due to the tourist influx to landmark areas Sunday, the Public Security Police Force (PSP) began enforcing several crowd-control measures, starting at 2:30 p.m.

These included enforcing a single direction of pedestrian traffic, limiting traffic access and converting some streets to temporary pedestrian-only zones in some parts of the historical center around the Ruins of Saint Paul's and other major tourist areas.

PROTECTING TOURISTS FROM SCAMS

Partnering with the Consumer Council, the MGTO has deployed staff to inspect shops and tourism operators to ensure that the many tourists arriving in Macau are not

scammed.

Inspectors are investigating the prices and services of various economic sectors to ensure tourists' rights are not overlooked in the pursuit of higher profits.

The Judiciary Police (PJ) has also issued a social media statement warning tourists about false advertising offering food and accommodation package deals at a discounted price.

The PJ has warned people this is a fraud and advised them to pay attention while acquiring this kind of product from unknown sources.

According to the PJ, the scammers' page is impersonating an existing travel agency and posting multiple fraudulent advertisements for the purposes of collecting people's data, including credit

card information, which is then used to unlawfully collect money from victims.

A local hoteliers' association has discussed with its members the need to not exaggerate hotel rates over this period, to keep the prices under control and to allow tourists to stay longer. Still, according to the same association, hotel prices have risen by at least 30% for the May 1 holidays.

F&B SECTOR STRUGGLING DUE TO LOW SALARIES

While the lack of manpower in the hospitality and food and beverage (F&B) sector is not new, the sector's most representative association says F&B establishments will continue to struggle as it becomes very difficult and almost impossible to recruit workers even from the mainland, since current Macau salaries are almost equivalent to those in the mainland.

According to the vice chairman of the council at The United Association of Food and Beverage Merchants of Macau (UAFB-MM), Fong Kin Fu, this is the current situation, which is unlikely to change.

In an interview with the Chinese channel of TDM, Fong also explained that, due to the expected influx of tourists, most of the F&B establishments had to cancel their workers' rest days and also had to negotiate with them to work overtime during this period. Some are also hiring more part-time workers to face this week's increased demand.

CHINA REPORTS RECORD RAILWAY TRIPS ON FIRST DAY OF MAY DAY HOLIDAY

RAILWAY trips in China hit a record high on Saturday, the first day of the five-day May Day holiday, data from the national railway operator shows. A total of 12,064 trains were in operation on Saturday, handling 19.66 million passenger trips, according to the China State Railway Group Co., Ltd. (China Railway).

The group expected to see about 18 million railway passenger trips and 11,217 trains in operation yesterday.

This year's May Day holiday runs from April 29 to May 3.

The country also reports strong demand for travel during this period.

About 120 million domestic trips are expected to

be made by Chinese railway passengers from April 27 to May 4 around the May Day holiday, earlier data shows.

A separate forecast by the Ministry of Transport projected that the total number of passenger trips on the first day of the holiday would hit 56.99 million, an increase of 151.8% from the same day of last year.

Road trips were expected to surge by 98.8% to 34.5 million, while air trips would rocket by 441.8% to 2.04 million, with passenger volume by ship rising by 86.2% to 950,000.

Highway passenger car flow is expected to grow by 120.03% to 56.35 million units. **MDT/AGENCIES**

ENVIRONMENT

IAM AIMS TO RESTORE 120 HECTARES OF MOUNTAIN FOREST BY 2024

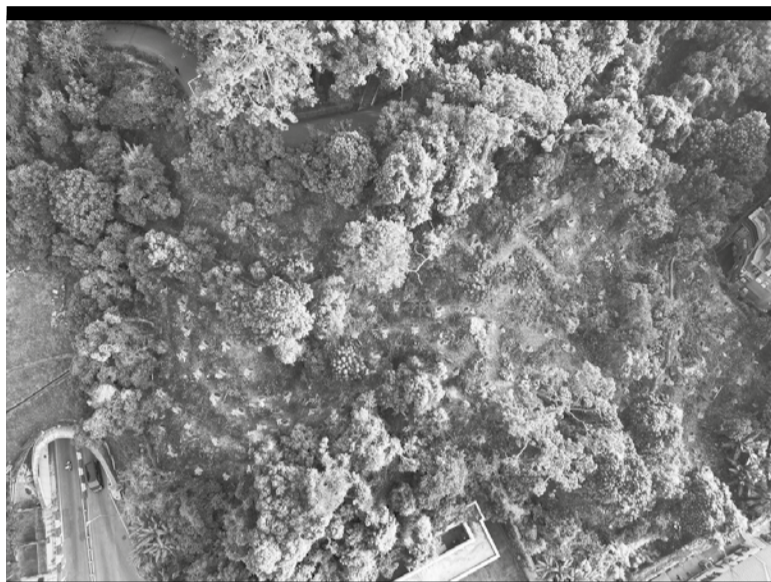
STAFF REPORTER

THE Municipal Affairs Bureau (IAM) is planning to restore at least 120 hectares of mountain forest by 2024, noting 40 hectares of emergency restoration has already been completed so far.

Since 2018, the bureau has been planning to restore Guia Hill, frequently damaged by typhoons and weakened by brown root disease, due to an invasion of vines.

Many super typhoons such as Hato, Mangkhut and Higos, which have hit Macau over the last few years, have severely damaged mountain forests, leaving more than 500,000 trees suffering different degrees of damage.

To protect the Guia Hill trees, IAM has established a designated ecological restoration area of 5.5 hectares of land in the periphery of the forest, and has implemented numerous measures, such as clearing vines and wilted trees, digging tree pits



and improving soil.

About 3,100 new saplings have also been planted to increase biodiversity, leading to an improvement in the natural ecological environment of Guia Hill.

Additionally, a special technique for reverse slope land reorganization has been used and root barrier panels have been installed

for the first time to prevent loss of water and soil in the slopes.

The Guia Hill mountain forest restoration plan includes 23 tree species chosen with Macau's climate and environmental characteristics in mind and to create conditions for the emergence of a habitat and food source for wild animals.



GAMING

WYNN RESORTS TO BUILD FIRST GAMING RESORT IN UAE FOR USD3.9B

STAFF REPORTER

LAS Vegas-based casino operator Wynn Resorts, which is one of the biggest in the world with resorts in Boston and Macau, has announced that it will build the United Arab Emirates' (UAE) first gaming resort.

The gaming complex, located on Wynn Al Marjan Island in Ras Al-Khaimah, will cost around USD3.9 billion and is expected to have 1,500 rooms, 24 dining and bar spaces, spa services, and high-end shops.

"We have spent the past year meticulously program-

ming and concepting Wynn Al Marjan Island, carefully considering its unique location," CEO of Wynn Resorts Craig Billings said in a statement.

With this development, the UAE aims to keep up with its neighbours in the rapidly growing gaming industry. The gaming resort will be a significant addition to the country's tourism and entertainment sector, and it is expected to attract a large number of tourists from around the world.

The construction, which has already started on Wynn Al Marjan Island, is expected to be completed by 2027.

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TRADE UNION LAW

On Labor Day, bill in discussion remains upsetting

LYNZY VALLES

THE trade union law under discussion remains upsetting to many as it has, they say, failed to "safeguard the basic fundamentals of trade unions' rights and interests."

Currently with the Second Standing Committee, the bill to legalize and regulate the creation of trade unions in Macau passed the legislature in January amid disapproval.

Former lawmaker Sulu Sou has lamented that on the 24th Labor Day after the establishment of the SAR, Macau still does not have a protective trade union law, "which is a dereliction of duty."

"Legislating a trade union law is a constitutional responsibility and an international treaty responsibility that the government must fulfill," Sou told the Times.

"Organizing trade unions, collective bargaining and strikes should be the three most important rights of workers, but the trade union law with 'Macau characteristics' has cut off the last two rights," said the former pro-democracy lawmaker who was disqualified in the last Legislative Assembly elections.

Last month, the head of the Second Standing Committee, Chan Chak Mo, expressed his support to the government's decision of not affording the right to strike in the bill, noting that the law should "reflect Macau's characteristics."

Lawmakers criticized the move, including Lei Chan U, who had stressed the lack of an institutionalized right to strike is "more harmful to the society's harmony, which violates the intention of the legislation regarding trade unions."

The government reiterated that the current law also protects the ri-



ghts of workers from being harmed by participating in the labor movement. However, the lack of clear legal and procedural regulations will only lead to employers and employees not knowing how to legally start and end the labor movement, said Sou.

Lawmaker José Pereira Coutinho, who had been strongly vocal about the bill, dubbed the bill as "erroneous."

For him, it is useless to discuss this law, as the basic fundamentals of trade union rights and interests are not safeguarded.

Also head of the Macau Civil Servants Association, Coutinho criticized the need to provide personal information of each union to the government, saying it breaches the privacy of the residents.

"If the law is published as they wanted, we had better be just a normal civil association, which have more freedom of movement, and more privacy," Coutinho told the Times.

"This is not something that we want. Once it's stated in the Basic Law, the government has the major responsibility to regulate. So if there is a right to strike in the Basic Law, then there is no need to regulate that in the trade union law," he further argued.

Previously, several lawmakers

representing labor interests criticized the bill for, in the words of lawmaker Che Sai Wang, "having significantly reduced the rights and guarantees that were proposed in other proposals submitted to the AL in the past and that were always voted down."

In March, the United Nations expressed concern over a lack of legislation protecting workers from possible retaliation, adding that legislation had been passed to regulate this right, and that the law does not provide for collective

bargaining nor specific protection from retribution against workers who strike.

According to the committee, workers in Macau were "not adequately covered by labor and social protection laws."

However, the local government issued a rebuttal, saying that the Labour Relations Law also clearly bars employers from preventing employees from exercising their rights.

The government began its public consultation on the trade union law in October 2021, which was then a much-awaited move.

The government's public consultation paper includes collective bargaining, but it was not included in the draft law that eventuated.

"The government explained that it was because 'there is no social consensus,' which is completely unreasonable, because it is bound to be difficult to achieve such a consensus between businessmen and laborers," Sou decried.

XI SENDS GREETINGS TO WORKING PEOPLE NATIONWIDE

PRESIDENT Xi Jinping yesterday extended festive greetings and best wishes to the country's working people ahead of International Workers' Day.

Xi, also general secretary of the Communist Party of China (CPC) Central Committee and chairman of the Central Military Commission, sent the greetings and wishes on behalf of the CPC Central Committee.

Xi called on the working people to foster an ethos of work, foster respect for model workers, and promote quality workmanship, as cited in a report issued by China Daily.

He asked them to work diligently and boldly engage in innovation to make solid progress in advancing Chinese modernization, encouraging them to play a leading role on the new journey to build China into a stronger country and realize national rejuvenation. Xi urged Party committees and governments at all levels to protect workers' legitimate rights and interests, earnestly help them solve their problems and difficulties, and promote a social atmosphere in which work and working people are treated with reverence and great respect.

MGTO ATTENDS APEC MEETING IN PHILIPPINES

The local tourism bureau has attended the recent 61st Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) Tourism Working Group (TWG) Meeting, which was held in a hybrid online-offline format in Iloilo City, Philippines. The Macao Government Tourism Office (MGTO) and the Economic and Technological Development Bureau (DSEDT) attended the two-day meeting, which included several activities such as discussions on plans, exchanges of information and a closing session. The bureau delivered an overview of Macau's tourism situation, the SAR Government's development strategy of "1+4" for adequate diversification, as well as major tasks to revive Macau's tourism industry and economy this year.

CROSS-BORDER VEHICLE TRAFFIC HIKES 71% IN MARCH

Macau's cross-border vehicle traffic in March hiked by 71.2% year on year to 573,022 trips. The latest report from the Statistics and Census Service showed that the gross weight of port containerized cargo went up 24.2% year on year to 18,214 tonnes last month. With an increase in the demand for air passenger transport services, arriving and departing commercial flights soared by 161% year on year to 2,519 trips in March. The report showed that traffic accidents last month decreased 0.9% year on year to 1,055, with one person killed and 357 injured.

SWIMMING POOLS REOPEN TODAY

From today, four Sports Bureau (ID) outdoor swimming pools will open to the public, including the Dr. Sun Yat Sen Swimming Pool, Taipa Central Park Swimming Pool, Hac Sa Park Swimming Pool and Cheoc Van Swimming Pool. Instant information on the availability of on-the-spot swimming tickets for each session of the day is shared on ID's website and mobile app.

FDCT LAUNCHES TRAINING FOR STAFF

The Science and Technology Development Fund (FDCT) will conduct a series of training lectures on professional knowledge related to science and technology expertise and integrity awareness. This program, mandatory for all FDCT staff, will be conducted monthly to strengthen professional capacity, improve scientific literacy and cultivate integrity and quality for FDCT staff. Academic and industry experts will be invited as keynote speakers about biomedicine and high technology, introducing basic scientific principles, application scope and the latest updates of technology development, among other topics.

Unemployment rate slightly drops in Q1

STAFF REPORTER

THE local residents' unemployment rate stood at 3.9% in the first quarter, as shown by data from the Statistics and Census Service.

The figure is a slight drop of 0.6 percentage points from the previous quarter, while it is a drop of 0.4 percentage points in the general unemploy-

ment rate, which stood at 3.1%.

Total employment was 359,300 and the number of employed residents totaled 281,200, down by 600 and 1,000, respectively, from the previous period.

The number of unemployed residents decreased by 700 from the previous period to 11,500. Among the unemployed

searching for a new job, most were previously engaged in the construction sector and gaming and junket activities. Meanwhile, the proportion of new labor market entrants seeking their first job fell 2.5 percentage points to 6.8% of the total unemployed.

The number of underemployed dropped 1,900 from the previous period

to 8,000, with a notable decline in the number of those engaged in gaming and junket activities.

Analyzed by industry, employment in wholesale and retail trade (47,400) and gaming and junket activities (66,400) fell 1,700 and 1,200, respectively, quarter-to-quarter, while that in the transport and storage sector (16,800) rose by 2,300.

Meanwhile, the median monthly employment earnings of the employed in the first quarter rose by MOP1,400 quarter-to-quarter to MOP17,000. The median earnings of those engaged in gaming and junket activities and the construction sector stood at MOP20,500 and MOP15,000, respectively.

LOCAL IP INFRINGEMENTS MOSTLY RELATE TO COUNTERFEIT GOODS: CUSTOMS

RENATO MARQUES

THE higher number of intellectual property (IP) infringement cases and prosecutions in Macau are for counterfeit goods, the Macau Customs Service (SA) has revealed to the Times in response to a written inquiry.

Last year, the SA investigated 107 suspected instances of intellectual property infringement based on reports.

"Twenty-two cases (20.6%) were successfully referred to the Public Prosecutions Office (MP) for further investigation," the SA told the Times, adding that seized goods included garments, bags and daily necessities.

The SA estimated that the products in these cases, numbering over 2000, had a market value of 6.64 million patacas.

The SA also told the Times that of the 107 cases reported, almost one-third (31 cases) involved the sale of counterfeit items on the internet.

When compared to 2021



(182 cases), case numbers registered in 2022 represent a decrease of 41%.

Cases reaching the MP fell 27%, the SA noted.

Q1 2023 RECORDING SIMILAR CASES

The SA noted this year's average first quarter (Q1) results are similar to 2022.

The SA investigated 24 cases during Q1 this year, with only three for online sales or advertising and it has already forwarded six to the MP.

Although growth in the number of cases and prosecutions is insignificant, the quantity of seized goods has grown to 2,852 in Q1, including some new types of items such as construction materials.

Goods seized during Q1 were said to be worth some 290,000 patacas.

Among the cases successfully reported to the MP between January 2022 to March 2023 (28) the crimes were almost exclusively for trademark infringements.

CURRENT LAWS SUFFICIENT TO TACKLE PROBLEM

"At the present, Macau's intellectual property protection laws can protect infringements faced by business operators and consumers," the SA said.

It added that while the laws are considered sufficient, the SA will constantly assess whether the laws meet the society's

needs, and discuss items that could potentially be reviewed with the Economic and Technological Development Bureau (DSED).

While the DSED manages Macau's IP laws promotion and disclosure, the SA has the power to inspect and conduct investigations of suspected infringements under law 11/2001, which is already 22 years old.

IP refers to a work or invention that is the result of creativity, such as a manuscript or a design, to which one has rights and for which one may request a patent, copyright, or trademark to protect this right.

In Macau, historically and currently, the only type of infringements prosecuted are those for trademark violation, namely those protected by international branding

Other forms of IP rights violations such as copyright, including use of ideas, images, projects without the author's consent - and/or the plagiarism of these original ideas and projects - tend never to be targeted.

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SOCIAL MEDIA

Telegram app back on in Brazil after judge lifts suspension

ELÉONORE HUGHES,
RIO DE JANEIRO

INTERNET providers and wireless carriers in Brazil stopped blocking Telegram this weekend after a federal judge partially revised a ruling suspending the social media app over its failure to surrender data on neo-Nazi activity.

However, the judge kept in place a daily fine of \$1 million reais (about \$200,000) for Telegram's refusal to provide the data, according to a press statement provided by the federal court that issued the ruling.

Complete suspension "is not reasonable, given the broad impact throughout the national territory on the freedom of communication of thousands of people who are absolutely strangers to the facts under investigation," judge Flávio Lucas was quoted as saying in the statement.

Telegram had been temporarily suspended pursuant to a police inquiry into school shootings in November, when a former student armed with a semiautomatic pistol and wearing a bulletproof vest fatally shot three people and wounded 13 after barging into two schools in the small town of Aracruz in Espírito Santo state.

The 16-year-old is believed to have been a member of extremist channels on Telegram, where tutorials on murder and the manufacture of bombs were disseminated, the court's statement said.

Federal police ordered Tele-

AP PHOTO



gram to provide details on names, tax identity numbers, profile photos, bank information and registered credit cards of channel members and later disputed Telegram's claim that it could not comply because the channel had been suspended, the court statement said.

Telegram founder and CEO Pavel Durov said in a statement Thursday that the company was appealing the Brazil-wide ban ordered the previous day, claiming

compliance was "technologically impossible" and arguing that it is Telegram's mission is to protect privacy and free speech.

The company says in an online FAQ that it has never shared data on users with any government.

It's unclear how much of the requested data Telegram is able to provide. Only a phone number is required to create a Telegram account and a pseudonyms are routinely used. Further, beginning in December, Telegram offered the

option of creating accounts with anonymous numbers.

The court statement noted Telegram's "past clashes with the judiciary" in Brazil. Last year, Supreme Court Justice Alexandre de Moraes ordered a nationwide shutdown of Telegram, arguing it hadn't cooperated with authorities. It lasted two days and was lifted after Durov blamed his company's initial lack of response on a communications snafu.

"Technology companies need

to understand that cyberspace cannot be a free territory, a different world ... with its own rules created and managed by the agents who commercially exploit it," Lucas, the judge in the current case, said in yesterday's [Macau time] statement.

Brazil has been grappling with a wave of school attacks. There have been almost two dozen attacks or violent episodes in schools since 2000, half of them in the last 12 months, including the killing of four children at a day care center April 5.

Brazil's federal government has strived to stamp out school violence with a particular focus on the influence of social media. The goal is to prevent further incidents, particularly holding platforms responsible for failing to remove content that allegedly incites violence.

Regulation of social media platforms was a recurring theme earlier this month when President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva met with his Cabinet ministers, Supreme Court justices, governors and mayors.

Telegram has been blocked in the past by other governments, including Iran, China and Russia.

Durov, an ethnic Russian whose company is based in the United Arab Emirates, has managed to coexist with the Kremlin despite its crackdown on speech and Western media following Moscow's invasion of Ukraine last year.

So-called "patriotic" hackers loyal to the Kremlin use the app to organize cyberattacks on Ukrainian and NATO targets. The other side uses it to fight back.

Security researchers and intelligence agencies regularly track certain Telegram groups, focusing on ransomware gangs and other cybercriminals, disinformation purveyors, terror groups and others inciting violence.

MDT/AP

CORPORATE BITS

Wynn holds new 'Dine Like a Pro at Wynn' event



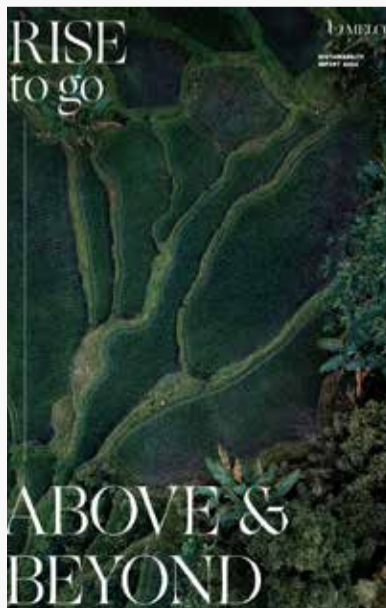
From now to June 30, Wynn will present its new event "Dine Like a Pro at Wynn" to give guests an opportunity to "savor the very best of Macau's gastronomy experiences."

Following accolades that restaurants at Wynn Macau and Wynn Palace have recently received from Michelin Guide Hong Kong and Macau, Asia's 50 Best Restaurants, Black Pearl

Restaurant Guide, and Forbes Travel Guide, among others, the dinner will include three types of experience, "Exploration," "Predilection," and "Degustation."

The Exploration package will allow guests to choose their own restaurants and dishes; the Predilection package includes an evening in the Encore Deluxe Suite at Wynn Macau or the Fountain Suite at Wynn Palace with an exclusive welcome food platter; while the Degustation package will take guests on a "journey to savor two classic dishes from each of the award-winning signature restaurants at the hotel."

Melco releases company's 2022 sustainability report



Melco Resorts & Entertainment has published its fifth sustainability strategy for the year 2022 "RISE to go Above & Beyond."

Adhering to four key material topics that underpin Melco's sustainability commitment, including "Restoring our World", "Inspiring our Communities", "Sustaining our Supply Chain" and "Empowering our Business", the strategy continues to drive performance and sustainability initiatives to help the Company reach its ambitious goals.

Lawrence Ho, chairman and CEO of Melco Resorts and Entertain-

ment, said, "Action with positive engagement has been key to our approach to sustainability. While our operations and communities have confronted many sustainability trials and tribulations in the past three years, it is evident that these challenges also present many meaningful opportunities."

"Our latest sustainability strategy is testament to an integrated resort business operating to the highest standards and for the long term. Melco will continue to sharpen its focus on the needs of the planet and those around us," he added.

FDI FOREIGN COMPANIES IN CHINA FACE GROWING SCRUTINY, PRESSURE

JOE MCDONALD, BEIJING

FOREIGN companies are under growing pressure in China from anti-corruption, national security and other investigations as President Xi Jinping's government tightens control over business, clashing with efforts to lure back investors after the pandemic.

This week, Bain & Co. said police questioned staff in its Shanghai office. The consulting company gave no details of what investigators were looking for. Last month, the corporate due diligence firm Mintz Group said its Beijing office was raided by police who detained five employees. Also last month, an employee of a Japanese drug maker was detained on spying charges and the government announced a security review of memory chip maker Micron Inc.

The ruling Communist Party is trying to reignite investor interest in China despite increased political control over the economy. Business groups have said global companies are shifting investment plans to Southeast Asia, India and other economies.

"At a time when China is proactively trying to restore business confidence to attract foreign investment, the actions taken send a very mixed signal," the European Union Chamber of Commerce in China said last week in a statement.

A foreign ministry spokesperson said she didn't know about the Bain & Co. case but defended Chinese law enforcement.

"China welcomes foreign companies to invest and do business in China. We are committed to building an internationalized, market-oriented and law-based business



environment," said Mao Ning. "All companies in China should operate in compliance with law."

Xi, China's most powerful leader in decades, is in the midst of multiple campaigns to tighten ruling party control over entrepreneurs, root out official corruption and reduce reliance on foreign technology and expertise.

China's relations with Washington, Europe and Tokyo are strained by disputes about human rights, Taiwan, security and technology. But there is no indication whether the investigations were politically motivated. Chinese companies have been targeted for more severe action.

The Beijing office of Deloitte Touche Tohmatsu was fined 211.9 million yuan (\$30.8 million) in March on charges that it failed to adequately audit state-owned China Huarong Asset Management Co. That came after Huarong's former boss was sentenced to death in 2021 on charges of taking bribes.

The ruling party has tightened

legal restrictions on access to information about companies and their employees. That has increased uncertainty for firms including Bain & Co. and Mintz Group that help clients spot fraud or other misconduct by business partners or acquisition targets.

"We can confirm that the Chinese authorities have questioned staff in our Shanghai office. We are cooperating as appropriate with the Chinese authorities," Bain & Co. said in a written statement.

Last week, China's legislature expanded the scope of its espionage law to give authorities powers to gain access to electronic information. The law covers all "documents, data, materials and items related to national security," said the official Xinhua News Agency, though it did not say how national security is defined.

The U.S. Chamber of Commerce on Friday expressed concern about the law's impact on firms that "are fundamental to establishing investor confidence."

"The additional scrutiny of firms

providing essential business services dramatically increases the uncertainties and risks of doing business in the People's Republic," the Chamber said. "This is a matter of serious concern for the investor community and likely is as well for their local business partners in China."

Foreign companies have for years advised employees visiting China not to carry computers or mobile phones with confidential information because they might be seized by authorities or stolen by industrial spies.

An employee of Japanese drugmaker Astellas Pharma Inc. was detained in March on what the foreign ministry said were suspicions of spying. Japanese Foreign Minister Yoshimasa Hayashi protested during a visit to Beijing this month.

The Chinese ambassador to Tokyo, Wu Jianguo, on Friday defended the handling of the case of the Astellas employee, whom he identified as Kan Nishiyama.

"The core of this incident, it's a

spy that involves China's national security. The facts are becoming more and more conclusive," Wu said. He gave no further details.

"Tens of millions of Japanese friends have dealt with China. How many over decades have been arrested?" the ambassador said. "We welcome normal, friendly activities and economic activities. But engaging in illegal espionage, we must ban in accordance with law."

Also last month, the government announced Micron's technology and manufacturing would be scrutinized for possible risks under China's cybersecurity law. The company is a leading supplier to Chinese factories.

The ruling party also has tightened control over private sector Chinese success stories including e-commerce giant Alibaba Group and ride-hailing service Didi Global Inc. by launching anti-monopoly and data security investigations.

Didi Global moved trading in its shares from the New York Stock Exchange to Hong Kong last June. The company was fined 8 billion yuan (\$1.2 billion) the following month on charges it mishandled customer information.

The crackdowns are a jarring backdrop for official efforts to reverse a decline in foreign business interest in China. The ruling party wants foreign companies in electric cars and other fields to bring in technology and provide competition to force Chinese companies to improve.

Business groups earlier said global companies were shifting investment plans to Southeast Asia, India and the United States due to the difficulty of visiting China, as well as higher costs and more cumbersome regulations.

At a forum in March with business leaders including Apple Inc. CEO Tim Cook, the country's top economic official, Premier Li Qiang, promised "broad space" for foreign competitors. **MDT/AP**

PMI Manufacturing contracts, signaling recovery concerns

CHINA'S factory activity declined in April, an official survey showed yesterday, signaling policymakers' challenges in sustaining momentum in the country's economic recovery.

According to the government statistics bureau and an official industry group, a monthly purchasing managers' index declined to 49.2 from March's 51.9 on a 100-point scale where numbers below 50 indicate activity contracting.

Measures of production, new orders and employ-

ment dropped from the previous month, the National Bureau of Statistics and the China Federation of Logistics & Purchasing said. But they said the index for production remained above 50, meaning that there was still an expansion.

China's economic growth accelerated in the first quarter of this year after the abrupt end of anti-virus controls. But authorities cautioned that the country will likely face import and export pressures in the coming months

amid an uncertain global economic outlook, and warned of inadequate domestic market demand in the world's No. 2 economy.

The bureau's senior statistician, Zhao Qinghe, said yesterday the decline in the manufacturing purchasing managers' index was partly caused by inadequate market demand and the relatively high base figure recorded in the first quarter when recovery was fast.

Official data also showed the index measuring non-manufacturing commercial activities ed-

ged down to 56.4 from 58.2 in March. The composite PMI dropped to 54.4 from 57 last month.

Earlier this year, China's government set this year's economic growth target at "around 5%," a conservative target that will only be met if GDP grows faster in the months ahead.

The government earlier said authorities will implement various policies to "stabilize growth" and stimulate domestic demand, as well as help support the development of emerging industries. **MDT/AP**



AP PHOTO

SPACE

China's Mars rover finds signs of recent water in sand dunes

In this April 30, 2021, file image taken by the Mars Perseverance rover and made available by NASA, the Mars Ingenuity helicopter, right, flies over the surface of the planet

MARCIA DUNN, CAPE CANAVERAL

WATER may be more widespread and recent on Mars than previously thought, based on observations of Martian sand dunes by China's rover.

The finding highlights new, potentially fertile areas in the warmer regions of Mars where conditions might be suitable for life to exist, though more study is needed.

The news comes days after mission leaders acknowle-

dged that the Zhurong rover has yet to wake up since going into hibernation for the Martian winter nearly a year ago.

Its solar panels are likely covered with dust, choking off its power source and possibly preventing the rover from operating again, said Zhang Rongqiao, the mission's chief designer, last week.

Before Zhurong fell silent, it observed salt-rich dunes with cracks and crusts, which researchers said likely were mixed with melting morning frost or snow as recently as a few hundred thousand

years ago.

Their estimated date range for when the cracks and other dune features formed in Mars' Utopia Planitia, a vast plain in the northern hemisphere: sometime after 1.4 million to 400,000 years ago or even younger.

Conditions during that period were similar to now on Mars, with rivers and lakes dried up and no longer flowing as they did billions of years earlier.

Studying the structure and chemical makeup of these dunes can provide insights into "the pos-

sibility of water activity" during this period, the Beijing-based team wrote in a study published in *Science Advances*.

"We think it could be a small amount ... no more than a film of water on the surface," co-author Xiaoguang Qin of the Institute of Geology and Geophysics said in an email.

The rover did not directly detect any water in the form of frost or ice. But Qin said computer simulations and observations by other spacecraft at Mars indicate that even nowadays at certain ti-

mes of year, conditions could be suitable for water to appear.

What's notable about the study is how young the dunes are, said planetary scientist Frederic Schmidt at the University of Paris-Saclay, who was not part of the study.

"This is clearly a new piece of science for this region," he said in an email.

Small pockets of water from thawing frost or snow, mixed with salt, likely resulted in the small cracks, hard crusty surfaces, loose particles and other dune features like depressions and ridges, the Chinese scientists said. They ruled out wind as a cause, as well as frost made of carbon dioxide, which makes up the bulk of Mars' atmosphere.

Martian frost has been observed since NASA's 1970s Viking missions, but these light dustings of morning frost were thought to occur in certain locations under specific conditions.

The rover has now provided "evidence that there may be a wider distribution of this process on Mars than previously identified," said Trinity College Dublin's Mary Bourke, an expert in Mars geology.

However small this watery niche, it could be important for identifying habitable environments, she added.

Launched in 2020, the six-wheeled Zhurong — named after a fire god in Chinese mythology — arrived at Mars in 2021 and spent a year roaming around before going into hibernation last May. The rover operated longer than intended, traveling more than a mile. **MDT/AP**

DIRE STRAIT

US ex-security adviser calls for closer ties with Taiwan

A former U.S. national security adviser called for deeper interaction between his country and Taiwan during a visit over the weekend to the self-ruled island, which has seen increasing military threats from China.

John Bolton, a potential Republican presidential candidate in 2024, said at a pro-Taiwan independence event in Taipei that national security teams from both sides must develop contingency plans on how to respond to actions Beijing might take, warning it would be too late once an attack occurs.

"And we have to tell China and Russia what the consequences are if they take actions against Taiwan. Not just in the immediate response, but over the longer term, to



Former U.S. national security advisor John Bolton delivers a speech to discuss a subject titled "Maintaining Long Term Peace and Security in Taiwan" at the Global Taiwan National Affair Symposium XII in Taipei

basically excommunicate China from the international economic system if

it did take military actions against Taiwan or attempt to throw a blockade arou-

nd it," Bolton said.

Bolton, former President Donald Trump's hawkish national security adviser, started his week-long trip to Taiwan on Wednesday. The visit reflects the importance of the island's democracy as an issue in the U.S. presidential election next year amid heightened tensions between Washington and Beijing.

The U.S. remains Taiwan's closest military and political ally, despite the lack of formal diplomatic ties between them. U.S. law requires Washington to treat all threats to the island as matters of "grave concern," though it remains ambiguous over whether American forces would be dispatched to help defend the island.

Bolton said the backlog

of U.S. military sales to Taiwan is estimated to be \$19 billion and it needs to be resolved.

"Part of that is a U.S. problem. Our defense industrial base is not as strong as it used to be. We need to improve that for global reasons, but particularly for Taiwan," he said.

On Friday, the Taiwanese government said China's military flew 38 fighter jets and other warplanes near Taiwan. That was the biggest such flight display since the large military exercise in which it simulated sealing off the island after the sensitive April 5 meeting between Taiwan leader Tsai Ing-wen and U.S. House Speaker Kevin McCarthy. China opposes any exchanges at the official level between Taiwan

and other governments.

Later Friday, China's People's Liberation Army also issued a protest over the flight of a United States Navy P-8A Poseidon anti-submarine patrol aircraft through the Taiwan Strait, calling it a provocation that the U.S. "openly hyped up." But the U.S. 7th Fleet said Thursday's flight was in accordance with international law and "demonstrates the United States' commitment to a free and open Indo-Pacific."

Bolton is scheduled to join a banquet today organized by the Formosan Association for Public Affairs, a pro-independence organization headquartered in Washington, D.C. Tsai will also attend the event. **MDT/AP**

AP PHOTO



The powerful sister: Kim Yo Jong

KOREAS

North insults Biden, slams defense agreement with Seoul

KIM TONG-HYUNG, SEOUL

THE powerful sister of North Korea's leader says her country would stage more provocative displays of its military might in response to a new U.S.-South Korean agreement to intensify nuclear deterrence to counter the North's nuclear threat, which she insists shows their "extreme" hostility toward Pyongyang.

Kim Yo Jong also lobbed personal insults toward U.S. President Joe Biden, who after a summit with South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol last week stated that any North Korean nuclear attack on the U.S. or its allies would "result in the end of whatever regime" took such action.

Biden's meeting with Yoon in Washington came amid heightened tensions in the Korean Peninsula as the pace of both the North Korean weapons demonstrations and the combined U.S.-South Korean military exercises have increased in a cycle of tit-for-tat.

Since the start of 2022, North Korea has test-fired around 100 missiles, including multiple demonstrations of intercontinental ballistic missiles designed to reach the U.S. mainland and a slew of short-range launches the Nor-

th described as simulated nuclear strikes on South Korea.

North Korean leader Kim Jong Un is widely expected to up the ante in coming weeks or months as he continues to accelerate a campaign aimed at cementing the North's status as a nuclear power and eventually negotiating U.S. economic and security concessions from a position of strength.

During their summit, Biden and Yoon announced new nuclear deterrence efforts that call for periodically docking U.S. nuclear-armed submarines in South Korea for the first time in decades and bolstering training between the two countries. They also committed to plans for bilateral presidential consultations in the event of a North Korean nuclear attack, the establishment of a nuclear consultative group and improved sharing of information on nuclear and strategic weapons operation plans.

In her comments published on state media, Kim Yo Jong said the U.S.-South Korean agreement reflected the allies' "most hostile and aggressive will of action" against the North and will push regional peace and security into "more serious danger."

Kim, who is one of her brother's top foreign policy officials, said the summit further strengthened the North's conviction to enhance its nuclear arms capabilities. She said it would be especially important for the North to perfect the "second mission of the nuclear war deterrent," in an apparent reference to the country's escalatory nuclear doctrine that calls for preemptive nuclear strikes over a broad range of scenarios where it may perceive its leadership as under threat.

She lashed out at Biden over his blunt warning that North Korean nuclear aggression would result in the end of its regime, calling him senile and "too miscalculating and irresponsibly brave." However, she said the North wouldn't simply dismiss his words as a "nonsensical remark from the person in his dotage."

"When we consider that this expression was personally used by the president of the U.S., our most hostile adversary, it is threatening rhetoric for which he should be prepared for far too great an after-storm," she said.

"The more the enemies are dead set on staging nuclear war exercises, and the more nuclear assets they deploy in the vicini-

ty of the Korean Peninsula, the stronger the exercise of our right to self-defense will become in direct proportion to them."

She called Yoon a "fool" over his efforts to strengthen South Korea's defense in conjunction with its alliance with the United States and bolster the South's own conventional missile capabilities, saying he was putting his absolute trust in the U.S. despite getting only "nominal" promises in return.

"The pipe dream of the U.S. and (South) Korea will henceforth be faced with the entity of more powerful strength," she said.

South Korea's Unification Ministry, which handles inter-Korean affairs, described her comments as "absurd" and insisted that they convey the North's "nervousness and frustration" over the allies' efforts to strengthen nuclear deterrence.

Kim Yo Jong's comments toward Biden were reminiscent of when her brother called former U.S. President Donald Trump a "mentally deranged U.S. dotard" while they exchanged verbal threats during a North Korean testing spree in 2017 that included flight tests of ICBMs and the North's sixth nuclear test.

Kim Jong Un later shifted toward diplomacy and held his first summit with Trump in Singapore in June 2018, where they issued aspirational goals for a nuclear-free Korean Peninsula without describing when and how it would occur.

But their diplomacy never recovered from the collapse of their second summit in February 2019 in Vietnam, where the Americans rejected North Korean demands for major sanctions relief in exchange for a limited surrender of their nuclear capabilities.

Kim Yo Jong did not specify the actions the North is planning to take in response to the outcome of the U.S.-South Korea summit.

Kim Dong-yub, a professor at the University of North Korean Studies in Seoul, said the North will likely dial up military exercises involving its purported nuclear-capable missiles to demonstrate pre-emptive strike capabilities. The North may also stage tests of submarine-launched ballistic missile systems in response to the U.S. plans to send nuclear-armed submarines to the South, he said.

Kim Jong Un said this month that the country has built its first military spy satellite, which will be launched at an unspecified date. The launch would almost certainly be seen by its rivals as a banned test of long-range missile technology.

In March, he called for his nuclear scientists to increase production of weapons-grade material to make bombs to put on his increasing range of nuclear-capable missiles, as the North unveiled what appeared to be a new warhead possibly designed to fit on a variety of delivery systems. That raised questions on whether the North was moving closer to its next nuclear test, which U.S. and South Korean officials have been predicting for months.

North Korea has long described the United States' regular military exercises with South Korea as invasion rehearsals, although the allies described those drills as defensive. Many experts say Kim likely uses his rivals' military drills as a pretext to advance his weapons programs and solidify his domestic leadership amid economic troubles.

Facing growing North Korean threats, Yoon has been seeking stronger reassurances from the United States that it would swiftly and decisively use its nuclear weapons if the South comes under a North Korean nuclear attack.

His government has also been expanding military training with the U.S., which included the allies' biggest field exercises in years last month and separate drills involving a U.S. aircraft carrier battle group and advanced warplanes, including nuclear-capable B-52 bombers and F-35 fighter jets. **MDT/AP**

Pope in final Mass in Budapest urges Hungary to open doors

NICOLE WINFIELD
& JUSTIN SPIKE, BUDAPEST

POPE Francis urged Hungarians to open their doors to others on Sunday, as he wrapped up a weekend visit with a plea for Europe to welcome migrants and the poor and for an end to Russia's war in Ukraine.

Francis issued the appeal from the banks of the Danube as he celebrated Mass on Budapest's Kossuth Lajos Square, with the Hungarian Parliament and Budapest's famed Chain Bridge as a backdrop. The celebration provided the visual highlight of Francis' three-day visit that has been dominated by the Vatican's concern for the plight of neighboring Ukraine.

Citing local organizers, the Vatican said some 50,000 people attended the Mass, more than 30,000 of them in the square on a brilliantly sunny spring morning. Among them were President Katalin Novak and Hungary's right-wing populist prime minister, Viktor Orban, whose lukewarm support for Ukraine has rankled fellow European Union members.

Francis has expressed appreciation for Hungary's recent welcome of Ukrainian refugees. But he has challenged Orban's hard-line anti-immigration policies, which in 2015-2016 included building a razor wire fence on the border with Serbia to stop people from entering. Upon arrival, Francis urged Hungary and Europe as a whole to welcome those who are fleeing war, poverty and climate change,



Pope Francis arrives for a mass in Kossuth Lajos' Square in Budapest, Hungary, yesterday

calling for safe and legal migration corridors.

"How sad and painful it is to see closed doors," Francis said in his Sunday homily on the Danube. "The closed doors of our selfishness with regard to others; the closed doors of our individualism amid a society of growing isolation; the closed doors of our indifference towards the underprivileged and those who suffer; the doors we close towards those who are foreign or unlike us, towards migrants or the poor," Francis said.

In a final prayer at the end of the Mass, Francis prayed for peace in Ukraine and "a future of hope, not war, a future full of cradles, not tombs, a world of brothers and sis-

ters, not walls."

The 86-year-old Francis has tried to forge a diplomatic balancing act in his pleas to end Russia's war, expressing solidarity with Ukrainians while keeping the door open to dialogue with Moscow. On Saturday, he prayed with Ukrainian refugees and then met with an envoy of Russian Patriarch Kirill, who has firmly supported Moscow's invasion and justified it as a metaphysical battle against the liberal West.

Francis kissed the cross of Metropolitan Hilarion in a sign of respect for the Russian Orthodox Church during what the Vatican said was a "cordial" 20-minute meeting at the Vatican's embassy

in Budapest. Hilarion, who developed good relations with the Vatican as the Russian church's longtime foreign minister, said he briefed Francis on his work now as the Moscow Patriarchate's representative in Budapest.

Hilarion attended Francis' Sunday Mass, along with representatives of Hungary's other Christian churches and Jewish community, Vatican News said.

Francis' visit to Hungary, his second in as many years, brought him as close as he's been to the heart of Europe, where Orban's avowedly right-wing Christian government has cast itself as a bulwark against a secularizing

Western world.

Francis, though, has used the visit to call for the continent to find again its spirit of unity and purpose, referencing Budapest's bridges across the Danube as symbols of unity and connection. The visit comes as the European Union's legislature continues to put pressure on Hungary to counter what EU lawmakers consider a deterioration in the rule of law and democratic principles, including media freedom and LGBTQ+ rights.

The site for his final Mass couldn't have been more appropriate for Francis' message: The sprawling square is named for one of Hungary's most famous statesmen who served as its first prime minister after the 1848-1849 revolution against Habsburg rule. It is separated from the left bank of the Danube river only by Hungary's iconic neo-Gothic parliament, the country's largest building and home of its National Assembly. Nearby is the Chain Bridge, one of several bridges spanning the river and linking the Pest and Buda sides of the city.

Sister Marta, a nun of Hungarian origin from Brazil who attended the Mass, said she hoped Francis' message of welcome would be heard in Hungary. "We (Brazilians) have gotten accustomed to openness towards others, and we hope that Hungary as well will open in this direction," she said after the liturgy.

But Budapest resident Erno Sara said the country is fine as it is.

"I don't know if we (Hungarians) need to change. There is nothing at all in this country that is out of the ordinary, any kind of behavior that we would have to change," Sara said.

Francis ends his visit Sunday with a speech on European culture at Budapest's Pazmany Peter Catholic University. **MDT/AP**

Iran's Parliament sacks minister over alleged mismanagement

IRAN'S Parliament voted yesterday to fire the country's industries minister over alleged mismanagement amid widespread dissatisfaction with the government.

Parliament Speaker Mohammad Bagher Qalibaf said 162 of 272 lawmakers present voted in favor of dismissing Reza Fatemi Amin. The chamber has 290 seats. Fatemi Amin survived a previous impeachment in 2022.

The decision came following discussion among lawmakers and government officials who

questioned the minister.

Iran's President Ebrahim Raisi defended Fatemi Amin saying all the fields related to the minister's portfolio showed growth. He urged lawmakers to reinstate the minister.

"The point is that stability in the ministry is important," he said.

Opponents said the minister failed to manage his field of activities in industry, mines and trade citing skyrocketing prices of products.

The impeachment marks the sixth change in Raisi's Cabinet in the less

than two years since he came to power.

In March, Raisi replaced the minister of agriculture and the head of planning and budget. Raisi dismissed the education minister after a delay in payments to teachers in April. In December, Raisi replaced the minister of roads after he became terminally ill. Last year, Raisi replaced the labor minister after protests by workers and retirees over payments.

Iran is still reeling after months of protests and a violent security force crackdown following the Sep-

tember death of 22-year-old Mahsa Amini after her arrest by the country's morality police.

The country's economic conditions, including high inflation, have contributed to widespread anger at the government. Retirees, workers and teachers have held scattered protests and strikes in recent months.

Reports on social media say authorities have detained leaders of teachers' unions and other labor leaders who have long protested over payments of their wages.

Iran's currency the rial



Iranian Industries Minister Reza Fatemi Amin, center, listens during an open session of parliament for his impeachment, in Tehran, Iran, yesterday

is at a low of 545,000 to the dollar as the effects of sanctions following the breakdown of Iran's 2015 nuclear deal with world powers shake the economy. The rial was trading at 32,000 to

the dollar when the country signed the nuclear accord. The agreement lifted international sanctions in return for strict limits on, and surveillance of, its nuclear activities. **MDT/AP**

AP PHOTO



Smoke rises in Khartoum, Sudan, Saturday, as gunfire and heavy artillery fire continued despite the extension of a cease-fire between the country's two top generals.

EMERGENCY AID SUPPLIES REACH SUDAN, AS FIGHTING SPUTTERS ON

NOHA ELHENNAWY, CAIRO

AN aircraft carrying eight tons of emergency medical aid landed Sunday in Sudan to resupply hospitals devastated by more than two weeks of fighting between forces loyal to rival generals.

The supplies are enough to treat hundreds of wounded, as the civilian death toll from the countrywide violence topped 400. The conflict erupted on April 15 between the nation's army and its paramilitary force, and threatens to thrust Sudan into a raging civil war.

More than two-thirds of hospitals in areas with active fighting are out of service, a national doctors' association has said, citing a shortage of medical supplies, health workers, water and electricity.

On Sunday, the aircraft carrying medical aid took off from Jordan and landed in the city of Port Sudan, said the International Com-

mittee of the Red Cross.

The supplies, including anesthetics, dressings, sutures and other surgical material, are enough to treat more than 1,000 people wounded in the conflict, the ICRC said.

"The hope is to get this material to some of the most critically busy hospitals in the capital" of Khartoum and other hot spots, said Patrick Youssef, ICRC's regional director for Africa.

The Sudan Doctors' Syndicate, which monitors casualties, said Sunday that over the past two weeks, 425 civilians were killed and 2,091 wounded. The Sudanese Health Ministry on Saturday put the overall death toll, including fighters, at 528, with 4,500 wounded.

Some of the deadliest battles have raged across Khartoum. The fighting pits the army chief, Gen. Abdel Fattah Burhan, against Gen. Mohammed Hamdan Dagalo, the head of a paramilitary group known as the Rapid Support Forces.

The generals, both with powerful foreign backers, were allies in an October 2021 military coup that halted Sudan's fitful transition to democracy, but they have since turned on each other.

Ordinary Sudanese have been caught in the crossfire. Tens of thousands have fled to neighboring countries, including Chad and Egypt, while others remain pinned down with dwindling supplies. Thousands of foreigners have been evacuated in airlifts and land convoys.

On Sunday, fighting continued in different parts of the capital where residents hiding in their homes reported hearing artillery fire. There have been lulls in fighting, but never a fully observed cease-fire, despite repeated attempts by international mediators.

Over the weekend, residents reported that shops were reopening and normalcy gradually returning

in some areas of Khartoum as the scale of fighting dwindled after yet another shaky truce. But in other areas, terrified residents reported explosions thundering around them and fighters ransacking houses.

Youssef, the ICRC official, said the agency has been in contact with the top command of both sides to ensure that medical assistance could reach hospitals safely.

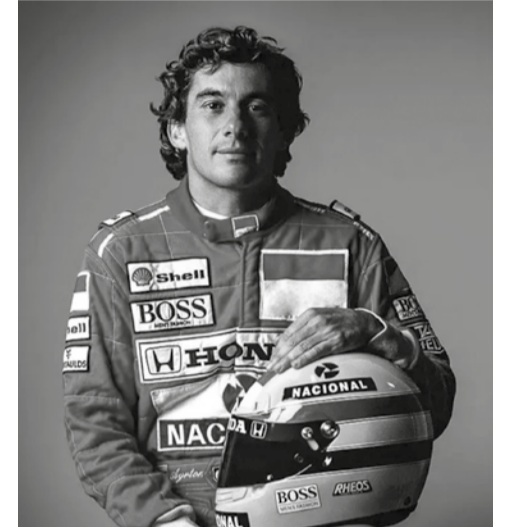
"With this news today, we are really hoping that this becomes part of a steady coordination mechanism to allow other flights to come in," he said.

Youssef said more medical aid was ready to be flown into Khartoum pending necessary clearances and security guarantees.

Sudan's healthcare system is near collapse with dozens of hospitals out of service. Multiple aid agencies have had to suspend operations and evacuate employees. **MDT/AP**

this day in history

1994 RACE ACE SENNA KILLED IN CAR CRASH



The Brazilian racing driver Ayrton Senna has been killed in a crash at the San Marino Grand Prix at Imola, near Bologna in Italy. He was just 34-years-old.

His Williams FW16 Formula One car was travelling at a speed of 192 mph (309 km/h) when it ran wide at a curve and crashed into a concrete wall.

Winner of 41 Grands Prix, Senna was considered the finest motor racing driver of his generation and will be mourned by fans the world over.

Only yesterday, the Austrian driver Roland Ratzenberger was killed at nearly the same spot, known as the Tamburello curve.

The two tragedies have rocked the racing world - and the people of Brazil who regarded Senna as a demi-god.

"This is the blackest day for Grand Prix racing that I can remember in the many, many years I have been covering the sport," said veteran BBC sports commentator Murray Walker.

"For there to be two casualties on successive days is quite appalling - and that arguably one of them should be that of the greatest driver that has ever lived in the history of Grand Prix racing makes it doubly so."

Senna was well-known for his aggressive driving style. In 1989 he collided with French driver Alain Prost in the Japanese Grand Prix. He was disqualified and lost his title.

The following year, the same thing happened and this time, Senna went on to win as Prost dropped out. Afterwards he told reporters: "Winning is like a drug. I cannot justify in any circumstances coming second or third."

The cause of the accident remains a mystery but already many are blaming new regulations designed to make races more exciting.

The sport itself is now set for a critical period of self-examination.

Courtesy BBC News

LABOR

Canada makes new contract offer to striking public workers

CANADA'S government made a new contract offer to the country's biggest public workers union Friday as thousands of federal employees remained on strike for a 10th day.

The office of Treasury Board President Mona Fortier called it a "comprehensive offer" but provided no details.

The Public Service Allian-

ce of Canada, which had said Wednesday that negotiations were stalemated, confirmed receiving the offer, but did not comment on what it contained. "We hope to continue bargaining this weekend in order to reach a fair deal," the union said in a statement.

The government previously had offered to increase pay by 9% over three years.

The union initially asked for 13.5% raises over the same time frame.

Other issues described by the government as sticking points earlier this week include the flexibility to work remotely, a reduction in the government's use of outside contractors and the implementation of seniority rules in the event of layoffs.

More than 100,000 members of the union went on strike April 19 after the union and government failed to reach agreement on replacing contracts that expired in 2021.

The contracts affect 155,000 federal workers in total, but the government deemed about 46,000 of them to be essential workers and they are not taking part in the strike.

As the strike continues, Canadians are facing a wide range of federal service disruptions, including an inability to process immigration and passport applications. **MDT/AP**

IN CONTEXT

Ayrton Senna's body was flown home, and on 5 May about half a million people watched the coffin pass by in a state funeral in Sao Paulo.

In 1997, Williams-Renault team principal Frank Williams, Adrian Newey, the team designer and Patrick Head, the technical chief were put on trial for manslaughter under Italian law. They were accused of being responsible for what the prosecutor said was a faulty steering column weld on Senna's car.

The FIA, the sport's governing body, threatened to boycott Italy if any of the defendants were found guilty. But all three were acquitted and the verdict upheld after an appeal in 1999.

Then in January 2003 the Italian courts said Patrick Head and Adrian Newey would have to be tried for a third time because of "material errors" in the 1999 hearing. The move threatens the future of Italian and San Marino grands prix.

MACAU'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

YOUR STARS

ARIES
Mar. 21-Apr. 19
 You must consider yourself for a change. You'd be wise to control your spending so your debts don't get out of hand. Expressing yourself in novel ways should lead you down new avenues.

TAURUS
Apr. 20-May. 20
 Use discretion in your dealings and refrain from making verbal promises of any kind. Weigh the pros and cons and make a decision that will change the conditions you've been living under.

GEMINI
May. 21-Jun. 21
 Don't let children or elders put demands on your time. You may have difficulties finishing projects you start. Your irritability may drive your loved ones crazy.

CANCER
Jun. 22-Jul. 22
 Confusion at an emotional level will cause you to make wrong decisions concerning your personal life. You may be able to get some good advice about your personal problems.

LEO
Jul. 23-Aug. 22
 Someone important may be watching you from afar. Avoid disputes with family; their complaints can't change anything anyway. You can make changes that will enhance your appearance.

VIRGO
Aug. 23-Sep. 22
 Use your quick wit to win points with friends. Don't tell others of your plans. Unforeseen changes in your location are apparent.

LIBRA
Sep. 23-Oct. 22
 Someone you work with could have a personal interest in you. A romantic infatuation from your past may surface if you frequent places that you both used to go.

SCORPIO
Oct. 23-Nov. 21
 Spend some time with the one you love. Pleasure trips will be satisfying. Do not travel unless absolutely necessary. Be careful. It may not be the best time to socialize with clients or colleagues today.

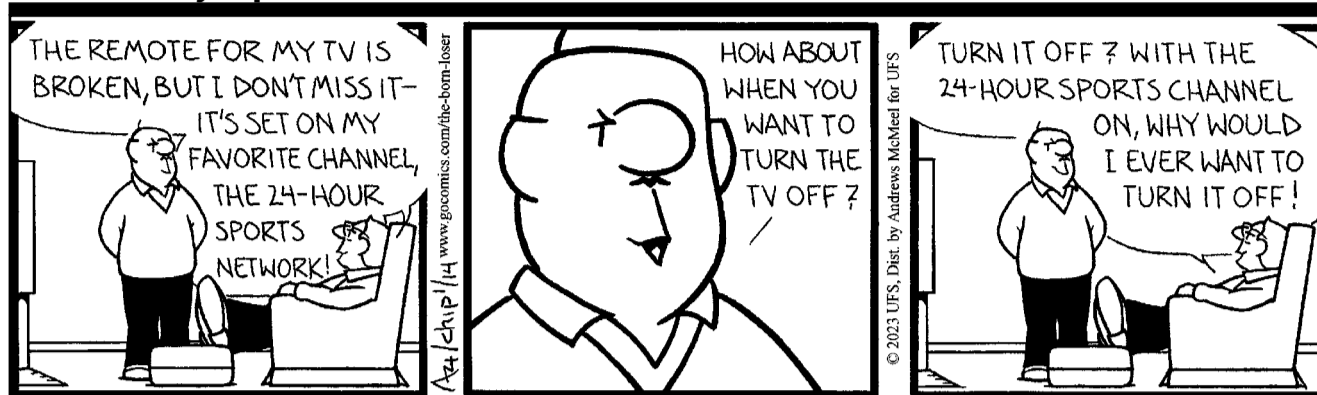
SAGITTARIUS
Nov. 22-Dec. 21
 Face any emotional problems head-on. Don't lament to a friend about any grievance regarding your mate, or it may be hard to rectify your relationship.

CAPRICORN
Dec. 22-Jan. 19
 You haven't been totally honest with yourself and it's time to review your motives. Avoid any over indulgences. Spend time with your lover today.

AQUARIUS
Jan. 20-Feb. 18
 Put your efforts into moneymaking ventures. Although it does look promising, be careful not to overextend yourself or you will lose in the long run. Travel for pleasure will be enticing.

PISCES
Feb. 19-Mar. 20
 Real estate investments could be prosperous. Your compassion will be appreciated more than you can imagine. You can make wonderful contributions to any organization that you join.

The Born Loser by Chip Sanson



SUDOKU

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

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

WEATHER

	MIN	MAX	CONDITION
CHINA			
Beijing	11	27	fine
Changchun	3	18	fine
Chengdu	15	25	cloudy
Chongqing	17	28	cloudy
Fuzhou	15	23	cloudy
Guangzhou	20	29	cloudy
Guiyang	13	23	cloudy
Haikou	21	28	cloudy
Hangzhou	11	26	fine
Harbin	2	19	fine
Hefei	10	29	fine
Nanjing	12	27	cloudy
Shanghai	15	29	fine
Taipei	18	22	cloudy
Wuhan	11	28	fine
Hong Kong	21	23	overcast
WORLD			
Moscow	1	11	showers
Frankfurt	9	19	overcast
Paris	9	18	overcast
London	8	18	rain
New York	9	16	overcast

CROSSWORDS

ACROSS 1- Western Australia's capital; 6- Actress Charlotte; 9- Central point; 14- ___ having fun yet?; 15- Unwell; 16- Square; 17- Vegetable; 19- Teatime treat; 20- Some NFL linemen; 21- Actress Downey; 22- Connected series of rooms; 23- Antlered animal; 25- Musical drama; 26- Bright golden brown; 29- Christiania, today; 31- "Peer Gynt Suite" dancer; 32- Type of story?; 36- Editorial notation; 37- Extra-wide shoe size; 38- Sharp to the taste; 40- Study of mountains; 43- Congolese river; 45- Energy units; 46- Trust; 47- Freight; 50- Pudding ingredient; 51- Marisa of "My Cousin Vinny"; 52- Arguing; 54- Switch settings; 57- Toothbrush brand; 58- Stunt performer; 61- Discussion group; 62- Dr. of rap; 63- Yoga posture; 64- Delight; 65- Turf; 66- Postpone;

DOWN 1- Early late-night host; 2- Formerly, formerly; 3- Gym counts; 4- Defunct airline; 5- Not him; 6- Strictness; 7- Homecoming guest; 8- Socialite Maxwell; 9- Idealist; 10- When prompted; 11- Church singers; 12- Utah's ___ Mountains; 13- Graf ___; 18- Concert venue; 23- Same here; 24- Musical aptitude; 25- No longer young; 26- ___ in turkey; 27- Enthusiastic about; 28- Echelon; 29- Follows orders; 30- Spot; 33- Novelist Calvino; 34- Numerous; 35- So; 37- Early bird?; 39- Metallic element; 41- Readable; 42- Acapulco gold; 43- Liquid waste component; 44- Implore; 47- Reef material; 48- Maytag brand; 49- Sublease; 50- Brought into being; 51- Drink to excess; 52- Increases; 53- Edible corn; 54- Egg-shaped; 55- Simone of jazz; 56- Leave rolling in the aisles; 59- Pop; 60- Ending for legal or Japan;

Friday's solution

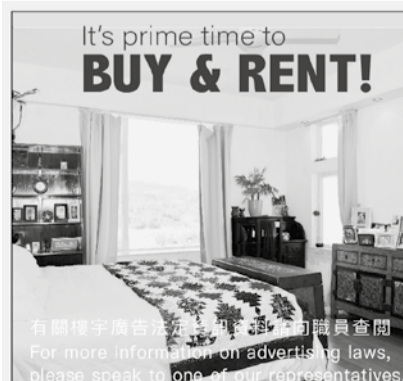
G	O	S	H		C	O	T	T	A		T	R	E	A			
O	D	E	A		A	R	I	A	S		P	A	S	T			
L	O	T	I		S	T	O	C	K		I	S	A	O			
F	R	A	N	C	E		K	E	T	C	H	O	P				
		A	I	M		A	S	W	E								
M	E	A	N	D	E	R	S		A	R	E	N	A				
E	L	L	I		N	A	H		R	E	L	E					
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G	A	S	S							H	E	L	P	L	E	S	S
B	R	O	W	N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

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



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NBA

LeBron sets Lakers on playoff run with limitless possibility

GREG BEACHAM

LEBRON James didn't respond at first after Dillon Brooks called him old and questioned his abilities early in the Lakers' first-round playoff series with Memphis.

A day after James and the Lakers eliminated Brooks' Grizzlies in dominant fashion, James let Jay-Z speak for him.

The top scorer in NBA history tweeted some particularly pointed lyrics Saturday from Hova's 2006 track, "Trouble." Among several more profane bars was the phrase: "It's apparent you're staring at a legend."

Perhaps to everybody except Brooks, James' legend has been fully secure for years. He is working on another chapter this season, and the league is starting to realize there's no telling how far James and his Lakers can take the story of his 20th NBA season.

The Lakers are on a 14-4 roll after finishing off the 51-win Grizzlies in six games. After becoming the first No. 7 seed in the best-of-seven first-round playoff era to win a series, they're on to the second round tomorrow, where they'll face the winner of yesterday's Game 7 between Golden State and Sacramento.

"It gets even harder when you move a level up," James said. "We were able to conquer Level 1, and now we move up."

After losing their first five games under rookie head coach Darvin Ham, after beginning the season 2-10, after sitting six games under .500 on Valentine's Day, the Lakers have been surging ever since the trade deadline.

Although new additions D'Angelo Russell, Jarred Vanderbilt and Rui Hachimura have contributed impressively, the 38-year-old James has led the charge when healthy while becoming the top scorer in NBA

AP PHOTO



history along the way.

Anthony Davis likely has been their most valuable player on the court in recent weeks, turning in a six-game defensive masterclass with 26 blocked shots against Memphis. But even Davis says the Lakers will go as far as James takes them.

"He just leaves it all out on the floor," Davis said. "A lot of us are exhausted. He's obviously has a little bit more miles on him than all of us probably combined, but we just try to do our part around him to make his job a lot easier (so) he doesn't have to overexert himself the entire game."

James scored at least 21 points in five of the six games against the Grizzlies, and he had the first 20-point, 20-rebound performance of his two-decade career in Game 4 — when he also made a difficult layup to force overtime in the final second of regulation.

After a rough Game 5, James brought his best in the clincher, highlighted by a reverse dunk in traffic that would be a stunner for any baller of

any age.

"I'm telling you, man, it's unreal," said Ham, a Lakers assistant late in Kobe Bryant's career before moving to Milwaukee's staff. "Like, Kobe was nothing short of amazing. You know, Giannis (Antetokounmpo). I've been around some top-tier, elite top-five NBA talent. But Bron, man, I've never seen anything like it."

While James isn't one of the Lakers' best defensive players, his overall focus and mentality have contributed to their evolution into a dominant defensive team. Los Angeles capably handled Ja Morant's talent while largely shutting down his supporting cast, embodying the defense-first attitude preached by Ham since his arrival.

It's also the mentality that the Lakers had under Frank Vogel during their 2020 championship run, but lost for long stretches of the ensuing two seasons. Defensive domination is much easier with a healthy Davis in the paint, and the oft-injured big man was in top form against Memphis.

"I think he was AD," James said. "I think we all know it, the world knows it, the basketball guys know, the competition knows ... how dominant AD is defensively. He was AD. He was spectacular."

The Lakers' clincher was a laugher thanks to Russell, who scored a career playoff-high 31 points with five 3-pointers.

Russell has a particularly strong bond with the Lakers' home crowd, which cheered him through the difficult first two seasons of his NBA career. The high-scoring guard has been inconsistently effective since returning, but the Lakers are awfully difficult to stop when he's scoring and distributing the ball at the peak of his skill.

"I think the energy since we made that trade, or made that decision to bring guys here, we've had an energy that was contagious with our group," Russell said. "That was one thing we could control. We brought our energy to this team, and it trickled down and it was contagious." MDT/AP

AD



BENFICAMACAU ACADEMY
澳門賓菲加體育學校



FOOTBALL | BASKETBALL | DAILY TRAININGS

OPINION

China Daily

Fan Lijun, Zhao Rigetu & Huang Tonglaga, China Daily*

CHINA, MONGOLIA
NEED BETTER
ECO-COORDINATION

The frequent and strong sandstorms that have swept across northern China and some parts of southern China this year have surprised many people after years of relative lull during what had come to be known as the “sandstorm season” in March and April. Many are surprised also because the sandstorms occurred despite China combating desertification for decades.

Since the sandstorms originated in Mongolia, China should strengthen cooperation in environmental management with Mongolia to prevent such weather conditions.

North China shares a similar monsoonal climate, a variant of the continental climate, with southern Mongolia. The fact is, Mongolia has a rather fragile ecological environment with an arid climate that can be greatly influenced by climate change and environmental degradation elsewhere.

Also, in Mongolia, the average temperature has increased by 2.25 degrees Celsius, twice the world average, over the past 80 years. And while more than three-quarters of Mongolia's land is either desert or arid or facing desertification and soil degradation, climate-related natural disasters have increased, especially over the past 10 years. And sandstorms, in particular, could cause huge losses to the local people.

Although the Mongolian government has taken measures to address the desertification problem, the huge gap between human activities and environmental and ecological revival remains a chronic environmental problem.

The over-exploitation of soil for farming — less than 2 percent of Mongolia's land area is arable — excessive use of water for agriculture and construction, overgrazing of land, including on pastures, and the unrestrained extraction of underground resources have been continuously reducing the underground water tables and turning the land bare, making it easier for even strong winds to carry millions of tons of sand southward.

China has been working with Mongolia to combat desertification and reduce sandstorms. Still, more efforts are needed to raise the underground water tables and revitalize the soil, including the surface soil, in order to prevent sandstorms.

In 2021, Mongolian President Ukhnaagiin Khurelsukh launched a national campaign for planting 1 billion trees by 2030 as part of the country's fight against climate change. The campaign started in earnest this year.

The Xinjiang Uygur and Inner Mongolia autonomous regions, which share their border with Mongolia, can boost cooperation with Mongolia and help it build a green great wall. This will also help better protect China's “Green Great Wall”, and promote the Three-North Shelter Forest Program and the afforestation projects in northern, northwestern and northeastern China.

Moreover, as parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Paris Agreement, China and Mongolia can also boost bilateral cooperation through the two authoritative international agreements, as well as through the UN Convention to Combat Desertification.

Under the framework of the Silk Road Fund-established with the aim of promoting cooperation and development in Belt and Road countries — China and Mongolia can jointly establish a “green fund” so Mongolia can have easy access to financing for green development projects, including the “One Billion Trees” campaign.

Besides, the Mongolian National Climate Committee approved the 2023 action plans to bolster the national campaign, including tree-planting programs and improvement of policies and laws to fight climate change by, among other things, setting carbon dioxide emission goals and improving the energy, agriculture and construction sectors.

Inner Mongolia and Xinjiang can deepen cooperation with Mongolia in these sectors. By doing so, they can also benefit China's green development projects.

Climate change is a common global challenge. Only with the harmonious coexistence between humans and nature, better planning to achieve sustainable development, and a change in people's lifestyle to reduce environmental damage can a solution to the climate problem be found. Global governance of climate issues is an objective requirement and inevitable trend for all countries. [Abridged]

*Fan Lijun is a research fellow at the Inner Mongolia Academy of Social Sciences; Zhao Rigetu is an associate research fellow at the Inner Mongolia Academy of Social Sciences; and Huang Tonglaga is a doctoral candidate at the National University of Mongolia.

LOUIS VUITTON TURNS SEOUL
BRIDGE INTO MASSIVE RUNWAY

THE
BUZZ

Louis Vuitton transformed a bridge spanning the Han River into a massive runway for its latest collection this weekend.

Models strutted down the Jamsilgyo Bridge to music to showcase the luxury fashion house's pre-fall collection that included sunglasses, chunky black-and-white loafers and sandals as well as an assortment of large, colorful bags and smaller ones adorned with the label's logo.



The audience for Louis Vuitton's first South Korea show included a mix of K-pop stars including Taeyeon from Girls' Generation, members of Le Sserafim and Yeji from ITZY and celebrities like Chloë Grace Moretz, Jaden Smith and “Squid Game” director Hwang Dong-hyuk.

The show opened with a burst of traditional Korean music before the lighting changed and cast the bridge in an eerie blue.

AP PHOTO



The Stone of Destiny is seen during a welcome ceremony ahead of the coronation of Britain's King Charles III, in Westminster Abbey, London, Saturday

UK

DETAILS REVEALED ABOUT
KING CHARLES III'S
CORONATION SERVICE

DANICA KIRKA, LONDON

It will be a coronation of many faiths and many languages.

King Charles III, keen to show that he can be a unifying figure for everyone in the United Kingdom, will be crowned in a ceremony that will for the first time include the active participation of faiths other than the Church of England.

Buddhist, Hindu, Jewish, Muslim and Sikh leaders will take part in various aspects of the coronation, the Archbishop of Canterbury's office said Saturday, as it revealed details of a service it described as an act of Christian worship that will reflect contemporary society.

The ceremony also will include female bishops for the first time, as well as hymns and prayers sung in Welsh, Scottish Gaelic and Irish Gaelic, as well as English.

“The service contains new elements that reflect the diversity of our contemporary society,” Archbishop Justin Welby, spiritual leader of the Church of England, said in a statement. “It is my prayer that all who share in this service, whether they are of faith or no faith, will find ancient wisdom and new hope that brings inspiration and joy.”

The coronation ceremony reflects Charles' efforts to show that the 1,000-year-old monarchy

is still relevant in a country that is much more diverse than it was when his mother was crowned 70 years ago. While the king is the supreme governor of the Church of England, the latest census showed that less than half of the population now describe themselves as Christian.

Built around the theme “Called to Serve,” the coronation service will begin with one of the youngest members of the congregation — a Chapel Royal chorister — greeting the king. Charles will respond by saying, “In His name and after His example, I come not to be served but to serve.”

The moment is meant to underscore the importance of young people in the world today, according to Lambeth Palace, the home of the Archbishop of Canterbury.

The service will also include many historic elements underscoring the ancient traditions through which power has been passed on to new kings and queens throughout the centuries.

In the most sacred part of the service, the Archbishop of Canterbury will anoint the king with oil, consecrating him and setting him apart from his subjects.

A screen will cover Charles at this moment, and the anointing won't be visible on television or to most people in the abbey, except for a few senior members of the clergy.

“When the screen which will surround the coronation chair is removed, the king is revealed to us all as someone who has taken on the responsibility of serving God and serving the people,” a Lambeth Palace spokesperson said while speaking on customary condition of anonymity.

This will be followed by the presentation of the coronation regalia, sacred objects like the orb and scepter that symbolize the monarch's power and responsibilities.

In another innovation that reflects the changed religious landscape in Britain, members of the House of Lords from the Hindu, Jewish, Muslim and Sikh traditions will present the king with objects with no explicit Christian symbolism.

The new king will then be crowned and the refrain “God Save the King” will echo through the Abbey.

After Charles is crowned, the traditional homage of the peers will be replaced by an “homage of the people,” in which people in the Abbey and those watching on television will be invited to affirm their allegiance to the king.

Camilla will then be anointed, in a form similar to that of Queen Elizabeth, the queen mother, in 1937. However, Camilla's anointing won't be hidden behind a screen. MDT/AP

AP PHOTO



Ukraine welcomed the European Union's hard-fought deal to keep farm exports flowing into and through the bloc to world markets, saying that the Middle East and Africa would specifically stand to benefit from it. Late Friday, the 27-nation EU ended a damaging internal standoff over a destabilizing glut of Ukraine farm imports by granting five eastern member countries the right to temporarily ban the most problematic produce while allowing all farm products to transit onward.

AP PHOTO



Russia A massive fire erupted at an oil depot in Crimea after it was hit by two of Ukraine's drones, a Russia-appointed official there reported Saturday, the latest in a series of attacks on the annexed peninsula as Russia braces for an expected Ukrainian counteroffensive. Mikhail Razvozhayev, the Moscow-installed governor of Sevastopol, a port city in Crimea, posted videos and photos of the blaze on his Telegram channel. Razvozhayev said the fire at the city's harbor was assigned the highest ranking in terms of how complicated it will be to extinguish.

Turkey's first astronaut will travel to the International Space Station by the end of the year, President Recep Tayyip Erdogan said Saturday after an illness forced him to cancel several days of appearances. Air force pilot Alper Gezeravci, 43, was selected to be the first Turkish citizen in space. His backup is Tuva Cihangir Ataserver, 30, an aviation systems engineer at Turkish defense contractor Roketsan.

HOLIDAY TIMES

Macau Daily Times will not be published during the holiday. The Times will be back on the stands on Wednesday May 3. However the MDT website will be updated with breaking news during the recess period. We wish our readers, advertisers and friends the best of times.