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"THE TIMES THEY ARE A-CHANGIN' "

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LOCAL WOMAN WAS REPORTED TO HAVE LOST MOP320,000 AFTER ALLEGEDLY BEING SCAMMED OVER A MESSAGING APP: PJ

MACAU MEDICAL PERSONNEL ALLOWED TO PRACTICE IN HENGQIN FROM AUGUST

HONG KONG POLICE ARREST WOMAN ACCUSED OF KILLING THREE YOUNG DAUGHTERS



AP PHOTO



Japan Rescue workers searched yesterday for three people who went missing in or near rivers swollen by heavy rains last week that left one person dead and dozens injured. A man in his 60s who was pulled from a flooded car in the central city of Toyohashi was pronounced dead over the weekend. In Wakayama prefecture, a woman was seen being swept into a swollen river while driving and an older man who went to check on a friend in a riverside neighborhood is also believed to have been swept away.

AP PHOTO



New Zealand Former Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern yesterday received one of New Zealand's highest honors for her service leading the country through a mass shooting and pandemic. Ardern was made a Dame Grand Companion, the second-highest honor in New Zealand, as part of King Charles III's Birthday Honors. It means people will now call her Dame Jacinda. Royal honorees are typically chosen twice a year in New Zealand by the prime minister and signed off by Charles, the British king who is also recognized as New Zealand's king.

AP PHOTO



Germany and Indonesia agreed yesterday to strengthen their defense cooperation and plan a joint military exercise with other countries in the region. German Defense Minister Boris Pistorius discussed the growing ties in a meeting with his Indonesian counterpart, Prabowo Subianto, in Jakarta. "We talked about the possibility of having a deal about some submarines. We were talking about the two minesweepers, which are already on the way to Indonesia," Pistorius said.

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CITY SEES DETERIORATING AIR QUALITY

RENATO MARQUES

LRT
FUTURE OPERATIONS WILL NOT BE DIRECTLY AWARDED TO MTR

RENATO MARQUES



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PUBLIC WORKS
TIRE PARK PROJECT STILL CAUSING CONTROVERSY

P3

RESIDENTS' DEPOSIT AT MOP291B

Resident deposits decreased 0.5% from the preceding month to MOP702.3 billion while non-resident deposits dropped 2.6% to MOP291.4 billion. Meanwhile, public sector deposits with the banking sector decreased 3.7% to MOP219.6 billion. As a result, total deposits in the banking sector fell 1.6% from a month earlier to MOP1,213.2 billion. Domestic loans to the private sector decreased 0.9% from a month ago to MOP564.5 billion while external loans dropped 4.0% to MOP649.3 billion. As a result, total loans to the private sector fell 2.6% from a month earlier to MOP1,213.8 billion.

IFTM EXTENDS COLLABORATION WITH SWISS INSTITUTIONS

The Macao Institute for Tourism Studies (IFTM) and the Swiss Education Group (SEG) have extended their collaboration in a new agreement signed during an online ceremony yesterday. Representing four Swiss institutions specializing in hospitality, "SEG continues and grows its partnership with IFTM with a variety of programs, enriching students' learning experience, opportunities and employability," according to an IFTM statement. These include shorter duration options for students to spend six weeks or up to a semester in Switzerland, leading to obtaining certifications issued in Switzerland.

1,700 UM STUDENTS TO GRADUATE JUN. 10

The University of Macau (UM) will see 1,700 students graduating on June 10 at 4 p.m. in the UM Sports Complex in its Congregation 2023. The university will present graduation certificates to more than 1,700 students from the Faculties of Arts and Humanities, Business Administration, Education, Health Sciences, Law, Social Sciences and Science and Technology, including 126 who completed programs offered by the Honors College. The ceremony will also combine online and in-person elements to allow graduates and their families and friends from around the world to participate in the event.

CE MEETS WITH G19 HK DELEGATION

Over the weekend, the Chief Executive, Ho Iat Seng, met with the delegation of deputies of the G19 Group of Hong Kong at the Government Headquarters, exchanging opinions on matters such as the intensification of contact and cooperation between two Special Administrative Regions, the promotion of high-quality development of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area, and the joint integration of national development. During the meeting, other subjects discussed included the construction of the Deep Cooperation Zone, the development of sectors, the policy of "housing divided into five classes," the simplification of cross-border transport and human resources.

CITY ONLY RECORDED HALF YEAR OF 'GOOD' AIR QUALITY IN 2022

ANTHONY LAM

LAST year saw only around half of the year logging good air quality, the Environmental Protection Bureau (DSPA) disclosed yesterday.

Data from the Environmental Condition Report 2022 shows that only one out of six gauges, which is a roadside gauge, recorded good quality for 74% of days.

The DSPA also said some gauges saw a maximum of 33 days of poor air quality last year. The ordinary gauges in Taipa and in Coloane, as well as the roadside gauge in Ka-Ho recorded extremely poor air quality for one to three days.

June last year had better air quality and September worse, the report noted.

On the matter of water, last year Macau saw 8% less rainfall year-over-year. The salinity level of water dispatched from the Ilha Verde Water Plant remained at a good condition, and Escherichia coli bacteria remained at a legally acceptable level as well.

Three out of six barometers across the city recorded good data on average last year, with two of the remaining three logging a fair level and the re-

maining gauge a bad level.

Last year, the government banned the import of disposable non-biodegradable dining utensils. The DSPA also boasted the addition of recyclable collection points and machines.

A total of 2,000 electric light vehicle and 500 electric motorcycle chargers have been installed as of the end of last year.

In 2022, Macau had about the same amount of green areas managed by the government year-over-year, according to the report.

Data from the report, however, only concerns green areas under the management of the Municipal Affairs Bureau (IAM).

The number of trees on sidewalks on the Macau Peninsula in Taipa increased by 4.7%. The types of trees and bushes recorded in Macau saw no change.

IAM's hillside plantation restoration initiative has seen 3,100 saplings planted, with 4,000 mangroves planted on a west coast of Taipa.

The maximum number of black-faced spoonbills recorded at one time in the ecological reserves in Cotai has al-



RENATO MARQUES

most halved: from 59 in 2021 to 34 in 2022.

The numbers of birds and insects increased slightly last year, while those of amphi-

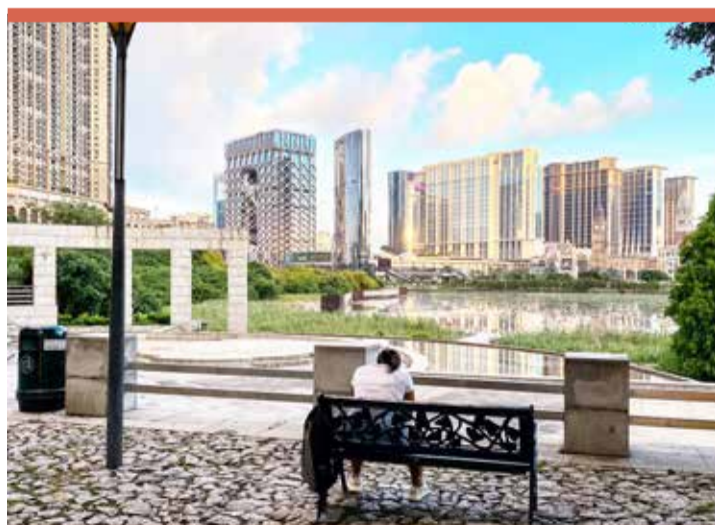
bians, mammals, fish and reptiles remained unchanged.

The English version of the report will be available soon on its website, the DSPA pledged.

GAMING

GGR to recover 74% of 2019 levels next year: Deutsche Bank

RENATO MARQUES



STAFF REPORTER

DEUTSCHE Bank Securities Inc. expects Macau's gross gaming revenue (GGR) to reach 74% of pre-pandemic levels in 2024, leading Wynn, Sands and MGM to expand their margins by 200 to 400 basis points.

According to the bank's analysts, Macau's GGR could even reach 85% of the 2019 levels and lead to a 500 to 700 basis points-expansion for the three gaming operators' margins, while a recovery of

only 64% of 2019 levels and an expansion of 200 to 400 basis points for the three gaming operators' margins are forecast in the worst-case scenario.

The analysts also noted Macau's spending per mass-market visitor rose 35 to 40% in April compared to the same period in 2019, highlighting a "very encouraging" trend.

May revenue from the casino sector has surged 366% from a year ago to total MOP15.6 billion in May, again hitting a three-year high following the end of pandemic-related restrictions that led to heavy losses and economic downturn.

For the first five months in 2023, revenues aggregated MOP64.93 billion, up 172.9% year-on-year.

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TRANSPORT

LRT operation will not be directly awarded to MTR, Secretary guarantees

RENATO MARQUES

FUTURE operations of the Light Rapid Transit (LRT) operations will not be directly awarded to the MTR Corporation, the Secretary for Transport and Public Works, Raimundo do Rosário, assured legislators yesterday.

Rosário was at the Legislative Assembly to participate in a Q&A session with the lawmakers about the transport and public works sector yesterday afternoon.

To an inquiry from lawmaker Ella Lei on the future operation of the LRT, Rosário said, "I am not sure yet [of the plan for operations] [after the end of the contract with MTR], but I can assure you operations won't be directly awarded to MTR," the Secretary said.

He noted too that the process is still being evaluated.

It will examine not only the Taipa line, which is the only one currently in operation, but also the extension of this line to the Peninsula through the Sai Van Bridge and to the new Barra Station, which he also confirmed will start operating at the end of this year.

Rosário said the new operating

RENATO MARQUES



contract will also examine another two lines planned to start operating during 2024, the Seac Pai Van line (a small extension of the Taipa line to reach the high-density residential area) and the Hengqin line that will link Macau to the mainland via LRT and will facilitate border crossing transportation.

Questioned by lawmakers about measures to incentivize use

of the transport system, Rosário said linking LRT fares with the buses is impossible to enforce.

The buses have a fixed fare that is very different from the LRT fares, making it impossible to create a more convenient combined fare system.

As for attracting passengers, the Secretary reiterated, as in the past, that the major difference in pas-

senger numbers using the LRT will only be felt after operations of the East Line begins.

This line will connect Taipa's Pac On area to the Border Gate passing through the Zone A of the new landfills and the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macau Bridge Post.

He said it is likely that with the start of operations of the two lines expected in 2024 (Seac Pai Van and

Hengqin border), the LRT will progressively transport more people than currently.

Also questioned by lawmaker Lei on the topic, the Secretary said that even if the MTR Company has no involvement in the management and operation of the LRT after the contract ends, no worker will lose their job as the government has been planning progressively for the integration of the workers being trained from the MTR to the LRT Company.

On the same topic, he also said the number of non-local workers has been reduced over time and that the percentage of locals working in both companies is now over 85%.

Rosário noted that the extension to Barra of the Taipa line has been undergoing daily testing since the start of 2023 adding that the Transport Bureau is also working on the bus routes that will operate from the Barra Station to link the passengers from LRT to their final destinations in the Peninsula.

Without advancing any details on this work, he said that such announcements would come "soon" and before the station begins operation.

AL PLENARY

Abandoned tire park project still causing controversy

RENATO MARQUES

THE abandonment of the project to build in Taipa's central district an amusement and leisure park using old tires is still causing controversy among the lawmakers of the Legislative Assembly.

Yesterday, during a Q&A session with government officials replying to lawmakers' inquiries, several continued to raise the issue of the government's U-turn and abandonment of the project, having allocated the land plot to the construction of residential buildings.

The discussion started via an inquiry from lawmaker Ma Io Fong who questioned the government on the current status of the urban planning of Taipa Island.

Ma's inquiry had a background of criticism of government policies for this area.

Using official statistics, Ma described the area as one of the most densely populated in Macau.

Ma also said it is the area where a large portion of the younger generation lives and called on the government for better planning in terms of leisure and sports areas and requested they refrain from approving additional high-rise residential states.

Responding to one of the many questions from lawmaker Ma, the Secretary for Transport and Public Works, Raimundo do Rosário, said the project to build and link more pedestrian flyovers is moving forward but will take some time as there are many high scale developments taking place at the moment.

At least for the present, the project to extend the same flyover to the Lake building, facilitating the

connection to the Taipa Central area, is canceled. The decision was made due to the many concerns expressed by the population, including lawmakers, over the protection of 10 trees located at the Cheok Ka Village.

Taking as background the events related to the tire park many lawmakers, including Ron Lam, have called on the government to make better use of the unused land plots that are government-owned, putting them, even if temporarily, at the service of the community while they are waiting for a final destination or project.

Many lawmakers have suggested using some of these plots as green leisure areas, camping sites, places to hold flower markets during the lunar new year or just to watch the fireworks, several lawmakers said.



Rendering of the tire park

Some also suggested they could be used as temporary sports facilities which do not require a great investment to be operational for such purposes, instead of being just fenced and waiting, in some cases for decades, for a project or

use from the government.

Rosário said the Secretary does not have the power to concede wishes and that he cannot on his own initiative establish such facilities, noting that such a policy would need to come from the

government.

He also said the detailed plans for the Taipa Center District-2 will soon be undergoing public consultation, and he called on the members of the public to express their opinions at that time.

CRIME

LOCAL WOMAN SCAMMED MOP320,000 BY ALLEGED 'BRITISH' MAN

ANTHONY LAM

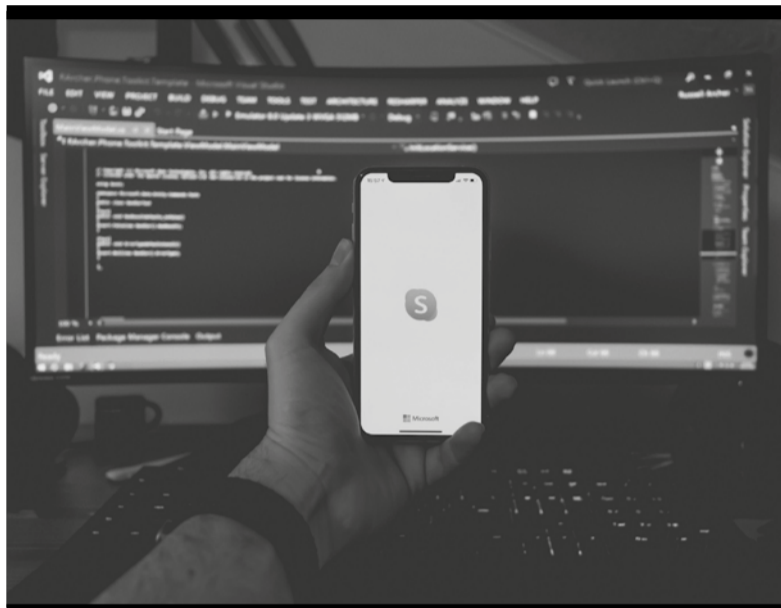
A local woman was reported to have lost MOP320,000 after allegedly being scammed by a self-identified British man over a messaging app, the Judiciary Police (PJ) announced yesterday.

At about 6 p.m. on June 4, the police received the report from the 33-year-old victim. According to her, in January last year she came across the so-called "British" man over a social app called "Shou." They then continued their virtual interactions over Skype.

The police said the woman only identified their relationship as a friendship.

Later, on an unspecified date, the man told the woman he was planning to visit her in Macau, and asked for the woman's address so he could mail some of his luggage in advance.

Afterwards, a supposed courier company contacted the woman and claimed to be holding mail addressed to her. She was told she would need to pay a fee to retrieve



the mail.

Believing that it was true, she paid MOP17,000 through her mainland Chinese account to a designated mainland account held by the "courier."

In February 2022, the victim received a Skype call from a woman who claimed to be the mother of the man. The "mother" told the

victim she was ill and needed some money for treatment. She agreed to lend her some money, bought MOP240,000 worth of bitcoin and transferred this to the "mother."

In June 2022, another man contacted the victim, claiming to be the lawyer of the "British" man. This "lawyer" said the man

had been arrested on criminal charges. He said the man was therefore in need of some money to handle the matter.

The woman then bought several tens of thousands' worth of bitcoin and transferred this to the "lawyer."

Several days before she reported the case, she was contacted by another "lawyer," who told her the man had passed away and left her a legacy. However, to obtain the inheritance, he advised that she needed to surrender her personal data and more money.

At this point, she had a feeling that she might have been scammed, so she reported the case to the police.

YUU MEMBERSHIP SCAMS

In three other cases, people have potentially lost over MOP100,000 in fraudulent Yuu membership privilege redemption requests.

The three victims are a local man aged 41 years, a local woman aged 34 years and a local

woman aged 49 years. They have reported suspicious transactions of HKD20,398, HKD40,796 and MOP32,200 respectively.

On June 3, they all independently received a text message claiming to be from Yuu, saying they had unredeemed privilege points in their account that would expire if they were not used.

All of the text messages came with a fake redemption link.

After clicking the link, the victims were presented with a redemption gift option page, on which they surrendered their credit card information after choosing the gifts they wanted to redeem.

They also surrendered the one-time password for the transaction they received from their respective banks.

The next day, they received text notifications from their banks, saying that their credit card had been used for some transactions. They each contacted their banks to inspect the transactions and freeze their cards. They all reported they had not used their cards for the said transactions.

According to the police, they will not have incurred any actual monetary loss for the time being, unless their banks do honor the alleged suspicious transactions.

This case was also reported to the police on June 4.

Civil Aviation Security Programme to take effect in July

STAFF REPORTER

THE Chief Executive issued a dispatch on the Civil Aviation Security Programme (MCASP), which stipulates the statutory requirements for the protection of civil aviation security activities from unlawful interference.

The program will come into effect on July 1.

Published yesterday in the Official Gazette, the program aims to establish civil aviation security legal requirements to safeguard the security operations of the city's aviation against acts of unlawful interference.

In accordance with Article 8 of the Administrative Regulation No. 16/2022 - "Air Transport Facilitation and Civil Aviation Security Systems," the Civil Aviation Authority (AACM) worked on the drafting of the MCASP which stipulates the statutory requirements for the protection of civil aviation security activities from unlawful interference.

The program ensures compliance with the standards and recommended practices of civil aviation security set out in international conventions, as well as the application of the relevant provisions of the city's laws and regulations.



The program shall apply to all the activities within an aerodrome located in the SAR or in an aircraft registered or operated in Macau, as well as all the activities related to the provision of goods or services to or through aerodromes located in the SAR by entities that apply civil aviation security standards and requirements and operate from facilities located inside or outside those aerodromes.

The AACM is the competent authority for civil aviation security activities.

"All operators within the scope of application are required to develop their own security programs in accordance with the requirements of the MCASP and submit their programmes and any subsequent changes to the AACM for approval," according to the dispatch.

If there are findings of non-compliance, the Authority will carry out investigation and might penalize the operators in accordance with the penalty scheme of the "Air Transport Facilitation and Civil Aviation Security Systems."

GBA

MACAU MEDICAL PERSONNEL ALLOWED TO PRACTICE IN HENGQIN FROM AUGUST

STAFF REPORTER

STARTING from August 1 this year, qualified practitioners from Macau will be granted to work in medical institutions in the Guangdong-Macao In-Depth Cooperation Zone in Hengqin, according to a recent press conference held by the Cooperation Zone authority.

They need to fulfill the requirements of having been practicing in Macau for at least two years and being not prohibited from providing medical and health services in accordance with the laws and regulations of the Chinese mainland. They don't have to obtain professional qualifications or short-term practicing applications given by the Chinese mainland authority.

Pharmaceutical technicians will also be allowed to provide pharmaceutical services in pharmacies in Hengqin.

Pharmaceutical technicians from Macau meeting the requirements also do not need to take related examinations in the Chinese mainland. They can register with the drug supervision and administration authority of the Cooperation Zone.

According to the regulation, Macau's pharmaceutical technicians who have registered with the drug supervision and administration authority of the Cooperation Zone can serve at licensed pharmacies in Hengqin. They can also apply for licenses to set up their own pharmacy in this region.

Meanwhile, the SAR has 53 traditional Chinese medicine pharmacists and pharmacy technicians who are undergoing a six-month internship program before registration, according to Macau's Pharmaceutical Administration Bureau.

MEDIA

Award-winning HK journalist wins appeal in rare court ruling upholding media freedom

KANIS LEUNG, HONG KONG

An award-winning Hong Kong journalist won an appeal yesterday quashing a conviction related to research for an investigative documentary, in a rare court ruling upholding media freedom in the Chinese territory.

Bao Choy was found guilty in April 2021 of deceiving the government by getting vehicle ownership records for journalistic purposes after she had declared in her online application that she would use the information for "other traffic and transport related issues."

The investigative journalist was trying to track down perpetrators of a mob attack on protesters and commuters inside a train station during massive anti-government protests in 2019 for her documentary.

Choy was fined 6,000 Hong Kong Dollars (\$765) for two counts of making false statements at that time and called it "a very dark day for all journalists in Hong Kong." That ruling also sparked outrage among local journalists over the city's shrinking press freedom.

Yesterday, judges of the city's top court unanimously ruled in Choy's favor in a written judgment, quashing her conviction and setting aside the sentence.

"The issues of falsity and knowledge were wrongly decided against the appellant because her journalistic investigation into the use of the vehicle on the dates

AP PHOTO



Journalist Bao Choy, center, speaks to members of the press after being cleared by the city's top court in Hong Kong, yesterday

in question did fall into the wide catchall category of 'other traffic and transport related matters,' the judgment read.

Even if it did not, it was "not an irresistible inference that she knew that to be false," the judgment said. There is no reason that "bona fide journalism" should be excluded from the phrase, it added.

Choy told reporters outside the court she was happy to learn about the judgment, saying it had stated the importance of the city's constitutionally protected free-

dom of press and speech.

"Over the last few years, we might have found that many things have disappeared quietly," she said. "But I believe our beliefs in our hearts can't be taken away that easily. No matter I win or lose today, the persistence (demonstrated) over the last few years is already a meaningful thing."

She said she hoped the outcome would be encouraging news to all reporters still working hard in the city.

The story Choy co-produced, titled "7.21 Who Owns the Truth,"

won the Chinese-language documentary award at the Human Rights Press Awards in 2021. The judging panel hailed it as "an investigative reporting classic" that had chased "the smallest clues, interrogating the powerful without fear or favor."

In the crackdown on dissent that followed the 2019 protests, two vocal media outlets — Apple Daily and Stand News — have been forced to shut down and some of their top managers have been prosecuted.

Apple Daily founder Jimmy

Lai faces collusion charges under the national security law enacted in 2020. Two former Stand News editors were charged under a colonial-era sedition law that has been used increasingly to snuff out critical voices.

Hong Kong ranked 140th out of 180 countries and territories in Reporters Without Borders' latest World Press Freedom Index released last month. The global media watchdog said the city has experienced an unprecedented setback since 2020, when the security law was introduced. **MDT/AP**

CORPORATE BITS

Brasserie at The Parisian launches new menu promoting sustainable seafood



To celebrate World Oceans Day on June 8, the French-inspired restaurant Brasserie located at The Parisian

is offering a new specially designed dinner menu from June 6 to 16, highlighting sustainable seafood.

Following a campaign initiated by the Hong-Kong Sustainable Seafood Coalition, which has already involved numerous leading restaurants and supermarkets in Hong Kong and Macau, this new menu from Brasserie aims to minimize the burden of seafood demand on the environment through good sourcing practices, as well as to raise awareness among gourmets.

"Sustainability is embedded in all elements of our food and beverage operations, from the selection of sustainable food with credible certifications to menu design," the senior vice president of Food and Beverage Operations at Sands China, Tom Connolly, said.

CEM organizes first debate on energy saving and carbon reduction



As the world is going through global warming and other climate issues, the Companhia de Electricidade de Macau (CEM) has organized, in partnership with the Deba-

ting and Speech Culture Association of Macau, the first edition of the "Energy Saving and Carbon Reduction Debating Competition," involving eight schools and

several dozens of students.

The contest featured four rounds highlighting different topics, such as the coexistence between economic development and energy conservation, the importance of education in the climatic combat, the interest of technology in promoting energy conservation and how the environment should be protected.

"We hope that through the debates, the students can learn [more] about energy conservation and carbon reduction, acquire the correct concepts, develop good habits, as well as spread the message to every corner of society," the principal advisor to CEM executive committee, Benjamin Yue, said.

DIPLOMACY

US DEFENSE SECRETARY DISCUSSES UPGRADING TIES WITH INDIA TO COUNTER CHINA

U.S. Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin yesterday discussed upgrading partnership with India, a major arms buyer, and set a roadmap for cooperation for the next five years as both countries grapple with China's economic rise and increased belligerence, officials said.

Austin's visit comes as India strengthens its domestic defense industry by acquiring new technologies and reducing reliance on imports, particularly from Russia, its largest supplier of military hardware despite the ongoing war in Ukraine.

Austin and his Indian counterpart, Rajnath Singh, explored ways of building resilient supply chains, a statement from India's Defense Ministry said. They decided "to identify opportunities for the co-development of new technologies and co-production of existing and new systems and facilitate increased collaboration between defense startup ecosystems of the two countries."

They also discussed regional security issues and committed to strengthening operational collaboration across all military services, with an eye to supporting India's leading role as a security provider in the Indo-Pacific, the statement said.

The new roadmap for U.S.-India defense industrial cooperation will fast track technology cooperation and co-production in areas such as air combat and land mobility systems, intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance, munitions and the under-sea domain, the U.S. Embassy in New Delhi said.

"This initiative aims to change the paradigm for cooperation between U.S. and Indian defense sectors, including a set of specific proposals that could provide India access to cutting-edge technologies and support India's defense modernization plans," it said.

The discussions also included cooperation in space, cyberspace, and artificial intelligence. Austin also met with India's National Security Adviser Ajit Doval.

"I'm returning to India to meet with key leaders for discussions about strengthening our Major Defense Partnership. Together, we're advancing a shared vision for a free and open Indo-Pacific," Austin tweeted after his arrival in New Delhi yesterday [Macau time].

Austin, who is on his second visit to India, was expected to lay the groundwork for Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to Washington on June 22, which has fuelled speculation about a possible announcement of defense contracts. **MDT/AP**

DIRE STRAIT

US releases video showing close-call with Chinese destroyer

DAVID RISING, BANGKOK

THE United States military released video yesterday of what it called an "unsafe" Chinese maneuver in the Taiwan Strait on the weekend, in which a Chinese navy ship cut sharply across the path of an American destroyer, forcing the U.S. vessel to slow to avoid a collision.

The incident occurred Saturday as the American destroyer USS Chung-Hoon and Canadian frigate HMCS Montreal were conducting a so-called "freedom of navigation" transit of the strait between Taiwan and mainland China.

China claims the democratic self-governing island of Taiwan as part of its own territory, and maintains the strait is part of its exclusive economic zone, while the U.S. and its allies regularly sail through and fly over the passage to emphasize their contention that the waters are international.

During the Saturday transit, the Chinese guided-missile destroyer overtook the Chung-Hoon on its port side, then veered across its bow at a distance of some 137 meters, according to the U.S. Indo-Pacific Command. The American destroyer held its course, but reduced speed to 10 knots "to avoid



In this photo provided by the U.S. Navy, the USS Chung-Hoon observes a Chinese navy ship in the Taiwan Strait, Saturday

a collision," the military said.

The video released yesterday shows the Chinese ship cutting across the course of the American one, then straightening out to start sailing in a parallel direction.

The Indo-Pacific Command said the actions violated maritime rules of safe passage in international water.

The Chinese ship did not attempt a similar maneuver on the Canadian frigate, which was sailing behind the American destroyer.

"Chung-Hoon and Montreal's transit through the Taiwan Strait demonstrates

the combined U.S.-Canadian commitment to a free and open Indo-Pacific," the Indo-Pacific Command said.

"The U.S. military flies, sails, and operates safely and responsibly anywhere international law allows."

Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Wang Wenbin defended the maneuver, saying it was undertaken "in accordance with the law."

"China's military actions are completely justified, lawful, safe and professional," he told reporters in Beijing. "It is the U.S. that should deeply reflect upon itself and correct the

wrongdoings."

The U.S. recently accused China of also performing an "unnecessarily aggressive maneuver" in the air, saying a Chinese J-16 fighter jet late last month flew directly in front of the nose of a U.S. Air Force reconnaissance aircraft over the South China Sea.

The close-calls have raised concerns of a possible accident that could lead to an escalation between the two countries' militaries at a time when tensions in the region are already high.

The incident in the Taiwan Strait came on a day when both U.S. Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin and Chinese Defense Minister Gen. Li Shangfu were in Singapore for an annual defense conference.

Li on Sunday suggested that the U.S. and its allies have created the danger with their patrols, and was intent on provoking China.

"The best way is for the countries, especially the naval vessels and fighter jets of countries, not to do closing actions around other countries' territories," he said through an interpreter. "What's the point of going there? In China we always say, 'Mind your own business.'" Austin had invited Li to talk on the sidelines of the conference; Li refused. **MDT/AP**

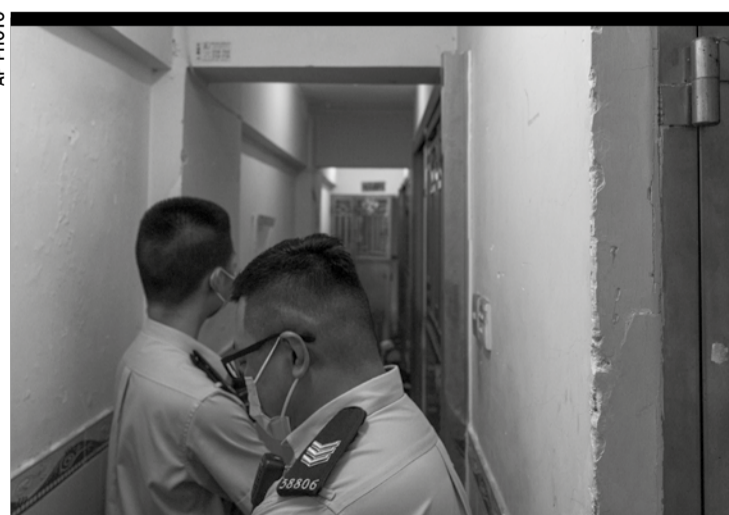
HONG KONG

Police arrest woman accused of killing 3 young daughters

HONG Kong police arrested a woman accused of killing her three young daughters yesterday in a case that has shocked many in the city, where violent crime is rare.

The three girls, aged 2, 4 and 5, were unresponsive when officers arrived at their apartment after receiving a call from the woman, who told police that they had been killed by her husband, police said. Police Superintendent Alan Chung said the woman and her husband had been separated for about a year, and they believe the woman was guilty of the killings.

The children were declared dead at a hospital. Chung said no wounds were found on their bodies and no sharp objects or



Police officers stand outside an apartment where three children were killed in Sham Shui Po

drugs were found at the scene. He said a bloodstained pillow was found and it was possible it

was used to smother the children. An investigation indicated

that the case was linked to family relationship problems, Chung said.

"This is a very serious family violence case," he said.

The woman and the girls lived in a small apartment in Sham Shui Po, one of the poorest districts in the financial hub, Chung said.

The woman appeared normal when police arrived at the apartment and there was no evidence that she had a bad relationship with the girls, he said. yesterday's case was the second in three days involving killings that has shocked many Hong Kong residents.

Last Friday, a man fatally stabbed two women at a shopping mall in an apparently random attack. An initial investigation found no evidence of any relationship between the suspect and the victims, police said.

A local court yesterday ordered a psychiatric examination for the suspect, according to the South China Morning Post. **MDT/AP**

INDIA

Opposition leader Rahul Gandhi calls on US audience to stand up for 'modern India'

SHARON L. LYNCH, NEW YORK

INDIAN opposition leader Rahul Gandhi pressed his criticism of the country's leadership in a speech yesterday [Macau time], calling for Indians in the U.S. and back home to stand up for democracy and the Indian constitution.

Gandhi, a sharp critic of Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi who was expelled from Parliament, accused Modi and his Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) of dividing the country and failing to focus on important issues such as unemployment and education.

"To be nasty to people, to be arrogant, to be violent, these are not Indian values," Gandhi, 52, told a crowd of about 700 at the Indian Overseas Congress USA event at the Jacob Javits Center in Manhattan. He spoke just after a minute of silence recognizing a massive train derailment in eastern India



that killed 275 people and injured hundreds more.

Gandhi has been on a three-city tour of the United States, including speaking engagements at Stanford University in California and the National Press Club in Washington, D.C.

Meanwhile, U.S. congressional leaders have invited Modi to ad-

dress a joint meeting of Congress later this month. House Speaker Kevin McCarthy, Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer and other leaders announced the address as an "opportunity to share your vision for India's future and speak to the global challenges our countries both face."

Grandson of former Indian Pri-

me Minister Indira Gandhi, Rahul Gandhi is a member of the Indian National Congress party. He is considered to be Modi's main challenger in the upcoming 2024 elections.

"Modern India cannot exist without our constitution and our democracy," he said. He also urged a stronger partnership between India and the U.S. to offset China's influence.

"One of the things we have to think about is the bridge between India and the United States," he said. "How do we compete with the challenge the Chinese have placed on the table," he asked, specifically citing issues of mobility and the world's energy supply.

The Congress Party defeated the BJP in recent state elections in the Himachal Pradesh and Karnataka states, wins that came after a series of state elections defeats after Modi became India's prime minister in 2014. Gandhi now holds

no official position in his party. He gave up the post of party president after his severe defeats by Modi's Hindu nationalist party in 2019 national elections, though his supporters hope the more recent results will impact the country's 2024 national elections, which are likely to be held before May.

Gandhi suffered a serious setback in March when a court convicted him in a criminal defamation case for mocking Modi's surname, a decision that led to him being expelled from parliament. He could lose his eligibility to run for a parliamentary seat for the next eight years if an appeals court doesn't overturn his conviction. The conviction came in connection with a speech he gave in 2019.

Gandhi, who is not related to Mahatma Gandhi, also invoked the assassinated Indian leader's name several times during his speech, praising his model of non-violence. **MDT/AP**

INDONESIA

Berlin, Jakarta agree to strengthen defense ties

EDNA TARIGAN, JAKARTA

GERMANY and Indonesia agreed yesterday to strengthen their defense cooperation and plan a joint military exercise with other countries in the region.

German Defense Minister Boris Pistorius discussed the growing ties in a meeting with his Indonesian counterpart, Prabowo Subianto, in Jakarta.

"We talked about the possibility of having a deal about some submarines. We were talking about the two minesweepers which are already on the way to Indonesia," Pistorius said.

Germany and Indonesia are also planning a joint military exercise with other regional partners, but no details have been disclosed.

Both ministers attended the Shangri-La Dialogue in Singapore, Asia's annual defense and security forum, where U.S. Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin on Saturday criticized China's "bullying or coercion" in the



German Defense Minister Boris Pistorius (left) shakes hands with Indonesian Defense Minister Prabowo Subianto during their meeting in Jakarta, yesterday

Indo-Pacific region, including tensions over Taiwan and the South China Sea.

Pistorius said Germany is committed to contributing to peace and security in the region.

"And we are ready to strengthen our engagement in the years to come," Pistorius said.

Subianto said at the forum on Saturday that the security situation in the Indo-Pacific, especially in East Asia, is dominated by tensions resulting from the rise of China as a major power in a world which has long been led by the United States.

"History teaches us when a rising great power meets a preeminent global power, tensions do arise and the historical record shows many of these conflicts result in open conflict, kinetic conflict. However, this rivalry, some have suggested, has turned into a new Cold War. It is being called the Second Cold War," Subianto said.

Chinese Defense Minister Gen. Li Shangfu said at the conference that the U.S. has been "deceiving and exploiting" Asia-Pacific nations to advance its own self interests to preserve "its dominant position." **MDT/AP**

AUSTRALIA

MOTHER IMPRISONED 20 YEARS FREED BECAUSE OF DOUBT SHE KILLED HER FOUR CHILDREN

AN Australian woman who spent 20 years in prison was pardoned and released yesterday based on new scientific evidence that her four children died by natural causes as she had insisted.

The pardon was seen as the quickest way of getting Kathleen Folbigg out of prison, and a final report from the second inquiry into her guilt could recommend the state Court of Appeals quash her convictions.

Folbigg, now 55, was released from a prison in Grafton, New South Wales state, following an unconditional pardon by Gov. Margaret Beazley.

Australian state governors are figureheads who act on instructions of governments. New South Wales Attorney-General Michael Daley said former justice Tom Bathurst had advised him last week there was reasonable doubt about Folbigg's guilt based on new scientific evidence that the



Kathleen Folbigg appears via video link during a convictions inquiry at the NSW Coroners Court, Sydney, on May 1, 2019

deaths could have been from natural causes.

"There is a reasonable doubt as to Ms. Folbigg's guilt of the manslaughter of her child Caleb, the infliction of grievous bodily harm on her child Patrick and the murder of her children Patrick, Sarah and Laura," Daley told reporters.

"I have reached a view that there is reasonable doubt as to the guilt of Ms. Folbigg of those offenses," Daley added.

Bathurst has conducted the second inquiry into Folbigg's guilt, initiated by a petition that said

it was "based on significant positive evidence of natural causes of death" and signed by 90 scientists, medical practitioners and related professionals.

Prosecutors acknowledged to his inquiry in April that there was reasonable doubt about her guilt.

Folbigg was serving a 30-year prison sentence that was to expire in 2033. She would have become eligible for parole in 2028.

The children died separately over a decade, at between 19 days and 19 months old. **MDT/AP**

PERSIAN GULF

US Navy says Iran fast-attack boats 'harassed' ship in Strait of Hormuz

JON GAMBRELL DUBAI

THE U.S. Navy said yesterday its sailors and the United Kingdom Royal Navy came to the aid of a ship in the crucial Strait of Hormuz after Iran's Revolutionary Guard "harassed" it.

Three fast-attack Guard vessels with armed troops aboard approached the merchant ship at a close distance Sunday afternoon, the U.S. Navy said in a statement. It offered black-and-white images it said came from a U.S. Navy Boeing P-8 Poseidon overhead, which showed three small ships close to the commercial ship.

The U.S. Navy's guided-missile destroyer USS McFaul and the Royal Navy's frigate HMS Lancaster responded to the incident, with the Lancaster launching a helicopter.

"The situation deescalated approximately an hour later when the merchant vessel confirmed the fast-attack craft departed the scene," the Navy said. "The merchant ship continued transiting the Strait of Hormuz without further incident."

The Strait of Hormuz, the narrow mouth of the Persian Gulf, sees 20% of the world's oil pass through it.

While the Navy did not identify the vessel involved, ship-tracking data from MarineTraffic.com analyzed by The Associated Press showed the Marshall Islands-flagged bulk carrier Venture erratically changed course as it traveled through the strait at the time of the incident. Its location also matched information about the incident given by the United Kingdom Maritime Trade Operations, a British military operation overseeing traffic



This still image taken from surveillance video from a U.S. Navy Boeing P-8 Poseidon shows three Iranian Revolutionary Guard fast-attack vessels near a commercial ship in the Strait of Hormuz

in the region. The vessel also resembled the images released by the Navy.

The ship's registered manager, Trust Bulkers of Athens, Greece, did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

Iranian state media and the Revolutionary Guard did not immediately acknowledge the incident. Iran's mission to the United Nations did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

This latest incident comes after a series of maritime incidents involving Iran following the U.S. unilaterally withdrawing from Tehran's nuclear deal with world powers in 2018.

The suspected American seizure of the Suez Rajan, a tanker linked to a U.S. private equity firm believed to have been carrying sanctioned Iranian crude oil off Singapore, likely sparked Tehran to recently take the Marshall Islands-flagged tanker Advantage Sweet. That ship carried Kuwaiti crude oil for energy firm Chevron Corp. of San Ramon, California.

While authorities have not acknowledged the Suez Rajan's seizure, the vessel is now off the coast of Galveston, Texas, according to ship-tracking data analyzed by the AP.

Meanwhile, Iran separately seized the Niovi, a Panama-flagged tanker, as it left a dry dock in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, bound for Fujairah on the UAE's eastern coast. While not carrying any cargo, data from S&P Global Market Intelligence seen by the AP showed the Niovi in July 2020 received oil from a ship known then as the Oman Pride.

The U.S. Treasury in August 2021 sanctioned the Oman Pride and others associated with the vessel over it being "involved in an international oil smuggling network" that supported the Quds Force, the expeditionary unit of the Guard that operates across the Mideast. Purported emails published online by Wikiran, a website that solicits leaked documents from the Islamic Republic, suggest that cargo carried by the Niovi was sold on to firms in China without per-

mission.

Satellite images analyzed by the AP show those two vessels anchored off Bandar Abbas, Iran.

The recent seizures have put new pressure on the U.S., long the security guarantor for Gulf Arab nations. The United Arab Emirates claimed last week it earlier "withdrew its participation" from a joint naval command called the Combined Maritime Forces though the U.S. Navy said it was still in the group. Meanwhile, the U.S. military's Central Command said Saturday its chief visited the region, met with Emirati leader Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan and "discussed shared regional security concerns as well as U.S. and UAE security partnerships."

The Mideast-based commanders of the U.S., British and French navies last month also transited the Strait of Hormuz on Friday aboard an American warship, a sign of their unified approach to keep the crucial waterway open after Iran seized the two oil tankers. **MDT/AP**

this day in history



1944 D-DAY MARKS START OF EUROPE INVASION

Thousands of Allied troops have begun landing on the beaches of Normandy in northern France at the start of a major offensive against the Germans.

Thousands of paratroops and glider-borne troops have also been dropped behind enemy lines and the Allies are already said to have penetrated several miles inland.

The landings were preceded by air attacks along the French coast.

About 1,300 RAF planes were involved in the first wave of assaults then 1,000 American bombers took up the attack dropping bombs on targets in northern France.

The Prime Minister Winston Churchill has told MPs that Operation Neptune - the codename for the Normandy landings - is proceeding "in a thoroughly satisfactory manner".

He said the landing of airborne troops was "on a scale far larger than anything there has been so far in the world" and had taken place with extremely little loss.

The assault began shortly after midnight under the command of General Bernard Montgomery.

Timing of the Normandy landings was crucial. They were originally scheduled to take place in May - then postponed until June and put off again at the last minute for 24 hours by bad weather.

Upwards of 4,000 ships and several thousand smaller craft crossed the Channel to the northern coast of France.

Enemy reports say the landings took place between the port of Le Havre and the naval base at Cherbourg.

King George VI broadcast a message last night warning of the "supreme test" the Allies faced and he called on the nation to pray for the liberation of Europe.

The Allied naval commander, Admiral Sir Bertram Ramsay, said the landings had taken the Germans completely by surprise. There were no enemy reconnaissance planes out and the opposition of coastal batteries was much less than expected.

He added: "There was a slight loss in ships but so slight that it did not affect putting armies ashore.

"We have got all the first wave of men through the defended beach zone and set for the land battle."

A statement broadcast from Berlin at midday said the German troops were "nowhere taken by surprise". It said many parachute units were wiped out on landing or taken prisoner.

Hits were also scored on battleships and on landing craft from the "guns of the Atlantic Wall" - the German defensive positions.

President Franklin D Roosevelt told a news conference the invasion did not mean the war was over.

He said: "You don't just walk to Berlin, and the sooner this country realises that the better."

Courtesy BBC News

IN CONTEXT

The Normandy landings were the beginning of Operation Overlord - or the invasion of German-occupied Europe.

Originally planned to take place on 1 May 1944, the operation was postponed a month to allow time to gather more troops and equipment. The timing was important to allow for the right weather, a full moon, and tidal conditions.

To keep the destination of the landings secret, a deception plan Operation Fortitude was mounted which led the Germans to believe the main target was the Pas de Calais, much farther east.

When the landings finally began there were only 14 of the 58 German divisions in France facing the Allies. While there was stiff resistance at other beaches, Omaha was the only one where the success of the Allied mission was in serious doubt.

The invasion of Normandy was the largest amphibious assault ever launched. It involved five army divisions in the initial assault and over 7,000 ships. In addition there were 11,000 aircraft.

In total 75,215 British and Canadian troops and 57,500 US troops were landed by sea on D-Day. Another 23,400 were landed by air.

By 11 June the Allies had secured the Cotentin Peninsula beyond Cherbourg but progress continued slowly as the Germans put up fierce resistance. The end of the Normandy campaign came with the destruction of the German 7th Army in the Falaise pocket in August. Although the Allies had reached the German frontier by September they decided to re-group during the winter, because of the failure of Market-Garden and the setback in the battle of the Bulge, and the invasion of Germany only began in January 1945.

MACAU'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

YOUR STARS



ARIES

Mar. 21-Apr. 19

Be prepared to make changes to your personal documents. However, you must not neglect your family. Romance may be likely if you travel.



TAURUS

Apr. 20-May. 20

Be cautious while traveling to foreign countries. Don't believe everything you hear. Be discreet about any information you uncover.



GEMINI

May. 21-Jun. 21

Sudden changes regarding colleagues may surprise you. You will do extremely well if you get involved in competitive activities today. You may have a problem at work with a female coworker.



CANCER

Jun. 22-Jul. 22

Your ability to come up with good solutions for problems related to work will no doubt help you in getting a promotion. Don't let domestic problems interfere with your objectives.



LEO

Jul. 23-Aug. 22

Work diligently and you will get ahead today. Look into ways to better yourself through improving your dietary habits and daily routines.



VIRGO

Aug. 23-Sep. 22

Purchases will be well worth it and they will last a long time. Move forward if you want to turn your life around. It's time to reevaluate your motives.



LIBRA

Sep. 23-Oct. 22

You will be best suited to doing things around the house or inviting friends over for a visit. Stress coupled with diet will add to stomach problems.



SCORPIO

Oct. 23-Nov. 21

You are best to work at home if you can. Minor accidents could occur if you don't take precautions. Opportunities for romance will flourish through travel.



SAGITTARIUS

Nov. 22-Dec. 21

Your greatest enjoyment will come through social activities and pleasure trips. You'll communicate easily and develop new friendships.



CAPRICORN

Dec. 22-Jan. 19

Take care of matters involving institutions or government agencies. You may want to get involved in financial investments presented to you.



AQUARIUS

Jan. 20-Feb. 18

Opportunities to get involved in self-improvement projects will be rewarding. You can get a promotion if you put in a little extra detail. Overstatement will be your downfall.



PISCES

Feb. 19-Mar. 20

Changes in your home are apparent, and you must be willing to bend if you don't want to find yourself alone. Your dramatic approach to life has probably gotten to your mate.

The Born Loser by Chip Sanson



SUDOKU

EASY

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

EASY+

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

MEDIUM

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

HARD

5	2				1			
		4						
		6						
		3		7	6			
	1					2		
	5			8				
			1		8			
6	4							
3								

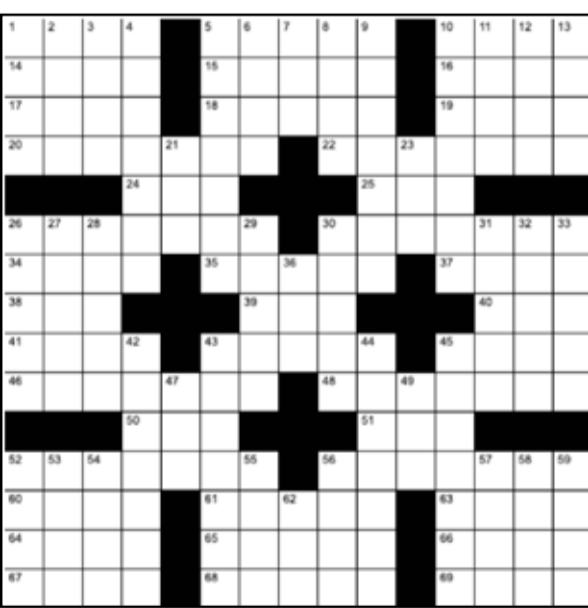
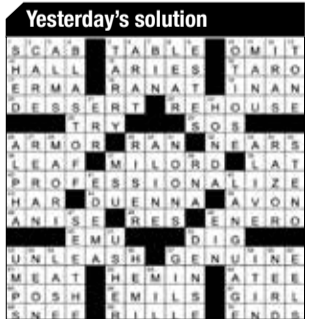
WEATHER

	MIN	MAX	CONDITION
CHINA			
Beijing	21	35	fine
Changchun	15	26	cloudy
Chengdu	19	30	cloudy
Chongqing	19	29	cloudy
Fuzhou	26	37	cloudy
Guangzhou	26	34	thunderstorms
Guiyang	17	25	cloudy
Haikou	25	31	thunderstorms
Hangzhou	22	28	rain
Harbin	13	26	thunderstorms
Hefei	16	28	cloudy
Nanjing	16	27	cloudy
Shanghai	20	26	overcast
Taipei	24	29	rain
Wuhan	18	28	fine
Hong Kong	28	31	thunderstorms
WORLD			
Moscow	10	19	cloudy
Frankfurt	14	24	overcast
Paris	14	28	overcast
London	9	19	cloudy
New York	15	27	overcast

CROSSWORDS

ACROSS 1- Smelting waste; 5- Book after Jonah; 10- Weight; 14- Young salmon; 15- Gay; 16- Omnium-gatherum; 17- "East of Eden" director Kazan; 18- In check; 19- Seemingly forever; 20- West Indian musical style; 22- Start for fish, meatballs, or massage; 24- Proverb ending?; 25- How was ___ know?; 26- Mañoso; 30- Thief; 34- Beehive State; 35- Fine fur; 37- "A Doll's House" heroine; 38- Ave. crossers; 39- I didn't know that!; 40- Gumshoe; 41- Able was ___; 43- George of "Just Shoot Me"; 45- Web-footed swimming bird; 46- Broken; 48- Abhors; 50- Nasser's org.; 51- Martini liquor; 52- Bodily; 56- Overturn; 60- Somewhat; 61- Examine account books; 63- It's a thought; 64- Prefix with Tibetan; 65- Steak order; 66- Drop of water expelled by the eye; 67- Skin marking, often due to injury; 68- Lauder of cosmetics; 69- Quick sharp bark;

DOWN 1- Blueprint detail, for short; 2- In ___ land; 3- Seed cover; 4- Like grandpa's hair?; 5- Rubella; 6- A big fan of; 7- Corn holder; 8- Woe is mel; 9- Out of control; 10- Dancing party; 11- "The Time Machine" race; 12- Fish appendages; 13- Nonsense; 21- Touch lightly; 23- DDE's command; 26- Melody; 27- Aquatic mammal; 28- Iraq/port; 29- Stormed; 30- Make one's case; 31- Yoga position; 32- Construct; 33- Prepares for billiards; 36- Panhandle; 42- Republic in South America; 43- Arranged in order; 44- Beneficiary; 45- Compactness; 47- Crazy ___; 49- Apex; 52- Lip; 53- Auricular; 54- "Give that ___ cigar!"; 55- Young bears; 56- Motion picture; 57- Nice notion; 58- Fervor; 59- Clanton foe; 62- Morse "E";



Crossword puzzles provided by BestCrosswords.com

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

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



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AD

ANALYSIS

Racist abuse of Vinícius Júnior highlights entrenched problem in football

TALES AZZONI &
STEVE DOUGLAS, MADRID

HANGING from a highway bridge in Madrid, an effigy of one of the world's most famous Black soccer players stands as a graphic reminder of the racism that sweeps through European soccer.

In truth, the signs are everywhere.

In Italy, where monkey chants swirled around the stadium in April as a Black player celebrated a goal. In England, where a banana peel thrown from a hostile crowd during a game in north London landed at the feet of a Black player after he scored a penalty. In France, where Black players from the men's national team were targeted with horrific racial abuse online after they lost in last year's World Cup final.

Go outside Europe and you'll find them, too.

In Australia, where there were monkey noises and fascist chan-

ting during last year's Australia Cup final. In South America, where matches in the continent's biggest competition, the Copa Libertadores, have been blighted by monkey chants. In North Africa, where Black players from visiting teams from sub-Saharan Africa have complained of being targets of racist chants by Arab fans.

The manifestation of a deeper societal problem, racism is a decades-old issue in soccer — predominantly in Europe but seen all around the world — that has been amplified by the reach of social media and a growing willingness for people to call it out. And to think that it was only 11 years ago that Sepp Blatter, then president of soccer governing body FIFA, denied there was any racism in the game, saying any abuse should be resolved with a handshake.

The Black player currently subjected to the most vicious, relentless and high-profile racist insults is Vinícius Júnior, a 22-year-old Brazilian who plays for Real

Madrid, arguably the most successful soccer team in Europe.

It was around the neck of an effigy of Vinícius that a rope was tied and the figure hung from an overpass near Madrid's training ground in the Spanish capital in January. It was Vinícius who, two weeks ago in perhaps a defining incident for the Spanish game, was reduced to tears during a match after confronting a fan who called him a monkey and made monkey gestures toward him.

It's Vinícius who is emerging as the leading Black voice in the fight against racism, which continues to stain the world's most popular sport.

"I have a purpose in life," he said on Twitter, "and if I have to keep suffering so that future generations won't have to go through these types of situations, I'm ready and prepared."

Vinícius' biggest concern is that Spanish soccer authorities are doing little to stop the abuse, leading to racism being an accepted part of the game in a country where



Real Madrid's Vinícius Junior (left) confronts Valencia fans, in a match last May

he has played since he was 18.

Indeed, federations around the world have been too slow — in

some cases, apparently unwilling — to equip themselves with the powers to sanction teams for the

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C&C RECEIVED THE 1ST SILVER
"DEIGNAN AWARD"
FOR RESPONSIBLE ENTREPRENEURSHIP
IN MACAU (2023)



racist behavior of their fans, despite being given the authority by FIFA to do so since 2013.

Fines? Sure. Partial stadium closures? OK. But more stringent punishments, like point deductions or expulsion from competitions? They are typically reserved for matters such as financial mismanagement, not racial abuse of players.

The result is frustration and a sense of helplessness among Black players and those wanting to protect them. Asked what he expects to happen after the Vinicius incident, Real Madrid coach Carlo Ancelotti said: "Nothing. Because it has happened lots of times and nothing happens."

Anti-racism campaigns and slogans are welcomed but increasingly viewed as tokenism, especially when fines handed to clubs or federations for racial abuse committed by fans often are so pitiful.

Take the juxtaposition, in 2012, of European governing body UEFA handing the Spanish soccer federation a \$25,000 fine for fans directing racial abuse at a Black player for Italy during the European Championship with, around the same time, a Denmark player getting fined five times that amount for revealing underpants with the name of a bookmaker on it.

Experts believe the global outrage, widespread reaction and outpouring of support for Vinicius following his latest abuse could

mark a turning point in the fight against racism in Spain. It certainly struck a chord in Brazil, where there were protests outside the Spanish Consulate in Sao Paulo, while the Spanish league is now seeking to increase its authority to issue sanctions. Its protocol up to now has been to detect and denounce incidents and pass evidence to courts, where cases are typically shelved.

Jacco van Sterkenburg, a professor of race, inclusion and communication in soccer and the media at Erasmus University in Rotterdam, said explicit racism in stadiums is more accepted and normalized in some parts of Spanish and southern European soccer culture compared to places like England and the Netherlands, where the media, former players and soccer federations have openly addressed the issue.

"When, as a football association, you don't take a firm stance against it and you don't repeat that message time and time again, it will reappear," Van Sterkenburg said in a video call. "You have to repeat the message that this isn't allowed, this isn't accepted."

"When nothing happens, you should still repeat this message. Some clubs have programs in place where they repeat the message, even when nothing happens. It sets

the norm, continuously."

Jermaine Scott, an assistant professor of history at Florida Atlantic University, told the AP that while overt racism is no longer a recurring problem in mainstream American sports, institutional racism is very much evident, reflected in the lack of coaches and executives through the sports landscape who are Black, Indigenous or people of color. He sees this same institutional racism in European soccer, too.

For Scott, a player like Vinicius might be at odds with European soccer's values.

Vinicius is emerging as leading Black voice in the fight against racism, which continues to stain the beautiful game

"As soccer spread throughout the world, different cultures made the game their own, and instilled different values, like creativity and innovation, and importantly, joy, and some would even say freedom," Scott said.

"So when a player like Vinici Jr. plays with the classic Afro-Brazilian style, accompanied by the samba celebrations, it upsets the value sys-

tem of European soccer, which has historically disciplined those who challenge such value systems."

Soccer needs outside help with racism and gets it through anti-discrimination campaigners such as Kick It Out in Britain and LICRA in France. The Fare network, a pan-European group set up to counter discrimination in soccer, places undercover observers in crowds at Europe's biggest games to detect racist chants and extremist symbols on banners.

Fans also are increasingly likely to raise awareness of racist incidents by reporting them to federations and campaign groups or posting videos and photos on social media, with the material often used by authorities as evidence to punish perpetrators.

Then again, the growth of social media has its downsides when it comes to the amplification of racist abuse in soccer compared to previous generations, where it was mostly restricted to inside stadiums.

Now, people can fire off racist insults over their phone anonymously, directly to the accounts of the world's best players on Instagram and Twitter. That leads to the paradox of soccer players, eager to boost their brands, using the same platforms on which they are being abused.

As for the Black players themselves, some — such as Vinicius and others like Samuel Eto'o, Mario Balotelli and Romelu Lukaku — call out the abuse when they see it, intent on leading the fight against racism. That's something Paul Canoville, the target of racist insults as the first Black player of English club Chelsea in the 1980s, wishes he had done.

"They should say something right there and then," Canoville said of Black players. "I didn't at that time and I've had to learn from that. That's something I teach to up-and-coming players now."

Van Sterkenburg and Scott said more education and stronger punishments were vital in the ongoing fight to stamp out racism. That's also the opinion of a former World Cup winner who played in Spain and experienced similar abuse to Vinicius.

"Racism is ingrained, it's something people are used to, it's something that is passed from one generation to another," said the player, who declined to be named because he's not allowed by his current employer to give interviews.

"People think it's normal, something that is not wrong, so it's hard to fight against that. And we can't even say that it's something that will get better with time, because it was the same thing many decades ago and nothing has changed." MDT/AP

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OPINION

China Daily
 Editorial, China Daily

CRITICAL TO DE-RISK WITH DEEDS NOT WORDS

According to a statement issued by the US State Department on Saturday, US Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs Daniel J. Kritenbrink is on a visit to China starting Sunday. But as of Sunday afternoon, the Chinese side has not announced anything.

It is rare for the Chinese Foreign Ministry not to disclose any information about a senior US diplomat's visit to China. The trip, if it is indeed happening, will make Kritenbrink the most senior US diplomat to visit China since Deputy Secretary of State Wendy Sherman visited the country in July 2021.

On Jan 17, Beijing clearly expressed its welcome to US Secretary of State Antony Blinken, who was due to visit China on Feb 5-6, as agreed by the two countries' leaders during their meeting in Bali, Indonesia, in November. The visit was unilaterally called off by the US side because of the so-called Chinese spy balloon incident. The nonchalance the Chinese side has displayed to the visit this time is a telling sign that Beijing has become more pragmatic toward bilateral interactions.

Kritenbrink is accompanied by the senior national security official for the Chinese mainland and Taiwan island affairs, Sarah Beran.

With Washington's proposal that the defense ministers of the two countries meet on the sidelines of the Shangri-La Dialogue in Singapore on the past weekend given a cold shoulder by Beijing, the visit by Kritenbrink and Beran may prove to be one of the last chances for the two sides to try and find some space in which to maneuver in order to find a diplomatic solution to arrest the deterioration in bilateral relationship.

The whole world knows that it is the US that is resorting to military suppression, trade bullying, diplomatic deception, economic coercion, geopolitical isolation, ideological stigmatization and strategic containment to hinder the development of another country.

About two and a half years after the Joe Biden administration took office, its China policy has been given three descriptors: competition (with guardrails), decoupling and competition (in a rules-based order) and so-called de-risking (in the face of national security threats).

The cross-the-board tensions between China and the US have escalated dramatically in recent months since Washington allowed the meteorological research airship to balloon into such a sensationalized threat to the US.

Washington should save itself the trouble of trying to invent any new concept or discourse to camouflage the nature of its China policy. Beijing now only cares about what Washington does rather than what it says.

RUSSIA SAYS UKRAINE IS LAUNCHING MAJOR ATTACKS; KYIV ACCUSES MOSCOW OF MISINFORMATION

THE BUZZ

Ukrainian forces were making a major effort to punch through Russian defensive lines in southeast Ukraine for a second day, a Moscow-installed official said yesterday as Russia's Defense Ministry declared that it had foiled an assault in an illegally annexed region of the invaded country.

Kyiv authorities suggested the attack reports were a Russian misinformation ruse as the Ukrainian military prepares for a widely anticipated counteroffensive.

Vladimir Rogov, an official in the Russia-backed administration of Ukraine's partly occupied Zaporizhzhia province, said that fighting resumed on its border with the eastern Donetsk region on Monday

after Russian defenses beat back a Ukrainian advance the previous day.

"The enemy threw an even bigger force into the attack than yesterday (Sunday)," and the new attempt to break through the front line was "more large-scale and organized," Rogov said, adding: "A battle is underway."

Rogov interpreted the Ukraine military movements as part of an effort by Kyiv to reach the Sea of Azov coast and cut the land corridor to the Crimean Peninsula, which Moscow annexed in 2014.

Analysts have long viewed that strategy as likely because it would cut the Russian forces in two and severely strain supplies to Crimea.

AP PHOTO



PRINCE HARRY A NO-SHOW ON FIRST DAY OF COURT SHOWDOWN WITH TABLOID PUBLISHER

BRIAN MELLEY & JILL LAWLESS, LONDON

A broken thumb, a back injury, dabbling with drugs and dating girls.

No event in the life of a young Prince Harry was too trivial or private for the journalists of Mirror Group Newspapers to resist, and the demand for such scoops led to the use of illegal means to dig up the dirt, his lawyer said yesterday in opening statements in his phone hacking lawsuit.

"Nothing was sacrosanct or out of bounds and there was no protection from these unlawful information-gathering methods," attorney David Sherborne said.

Harry's highly anticipated showdown with the publisher of the Daily Mirror in his battles with the British press was anticlimactic when the star of the show failed to turn up — to the chagrin of the judge and defense lawyer.

The Duke of Sussex was unavailable to testify that afternoon because he'd taken a flight from Los Angeles after the birthday of his 2-year-old daughter, Lilibet, on Sunday, Sherborne said.

"I'm a little surprised," said Justice Timothy Fancourt, noting he had directed Harry to be in court for the first day of his case

if time allowed for him to begin testifying.

Mirror Group's lawyer, Andrew Green, said he was "deeply troubled" by Harry's absence, adding he'd need a day and a half to cross-examine the prince.

The case against Mirror Group is the first of the prince's several lawsuits against the media to go to trial, and one of three alleging tabloid publishers unlawfully snooped on him in their cutthroat competition for scoops on the royal family.

When he enters the witness box, Harry, 38, will be the first member of the British royal family in more than a century to testify in court. He is expected to describe his anguish and anger over being hounded by the media throughout his life, and its impact on those around him.

He has blamed paparazzi for causing the car crash that killed his mother, Princess Diana, and said harassment and intrusion by the U.K. press, including allegedly racist articles, led him and his wife, Meghan, to flee to the U.S. in 2020 and leave royal life behind.

Mirror Group has admitted using a private investigator to target Harry, but only once. Sherborne said phone hacking and forms of unlawful information-gathering were carried

out on such a widespread scale that this was implausible.

"The ends justify the means for the defendant," Sherborne said.

Stories about Harry were big sellers for the newspapers, and some 2,500 articles had covered all facets of his life — from injuries at school to experimenting with marijuana and cocaine to the ups and downs with girlfriends, Sherborne said.

The articles at issue in the trial date back to his 12th birthday, in 1996, when the Mirror reported he felt "badly" about the divorce of his mother and father, now King Charles III.

Harry said in court documents that he suffered "huge bouts of depression and paranoia" over concerns that friends and associates were betraying him by leaking information to the newspapers. Relationships fell apart as the women in his life — and even their family members — were "dragged into the chaos."

He says he later discovered the source wasn't disloyal friends but aggressive journalists and the private investigators they hired to eavesdrop on voicemails and track him to locations as remote as Argentina and an island off Mozambique.

MDT/AP

AP PHOTO



Russia Alexei Navalny voiced hope for a better future in Russia as his supporters defied a crackdown on dissent to hold pickets and demonstrations to mark the imprisoned opposition leader's 47th birthday on Sunday, with at least 90 people reported arrested. Navalny is serving a nine-year sentence for fraud and contempt of court, charges he says were trumped up to punish him for his work to expose official corruption and organize anti-Kremlin protests.

AP PHOTO



Poland Hundreds of thousands of people marched in an anti-government protest in the capital, with citizens traveling from across the country to voice their anger at officials who they say have eroded democratic norms and created fears that the nation is following Hungary and Turkey down the path to autocracy. Warsaw Mayor Rafal Trzaskowski, who belongs to the opposition party that led the march, estimated that 500,000 people took part. The Onet news portal estimated there were at least 300,000 at the march's culmination.

AP PHOTO



UK government will house hundreds more asylum-seekers on barges, Prime Minister Rishi Sunak said yesterday, as he unveiled the latest migration figures that he said showed that his plans to crack down on small boat crossings on the English Channel are working. Two more barges will house about 1,000 migrants, Sunak said, alongside one that's set to be docked in Portland in southern England within the next two weeks.