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AP PHOTO



Australia Business travel for Indonesians to Australia will be made easier in a bid to boost the economic partnership between the two countries following a deal struck yesterday between their leaders. Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese and Indonesian President Joko Widodo agreed on visa changes, climate initiative funding and education partnerships during talks at Sydney's Taronga Zoo.

AP PHOTO



Israeli troops pressed ahead with their hunt for Palestinian militants and weapons in a West Bank refugee camp yesterday, after military bulldozers tore through alleys and thousands of residents fled to safety. The two-day Palestinian death toll rose to 10. The large-scale raid of the Jenin camp is one of the most intense military operations in the occupied West Bank in nearly two decades. It came as Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu faces growing pressure from his ultranationalist political allies for a tough response to recent attacks on Israeli settlers.

AP PHOTO



NATO Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg will stay in office for another year, the 31-nation military alliance decided yesterday. Stoltenberg said in a tweet that he is "honoured by NATO Allies' decision to extend my term as Secretary General until 1 October 2024." "The transatlantic bond between Europe and North America has ensured our freedom and security for nearly 75 years, and in a more dangerous world, our Alliance is more important than ever," he said.

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P2

CHINESE LIVESTREAMERS: MACAU'S BIG OPPORTUNITIES IN SMALL DETAILS

ANTHONY LAM

MACAU should preserve the small details and elements as it brands itself, Chinese livestreamers and broadcasters said yesterday at the World Cities Branding Conference.

It was the second day of the conference.

Li Rui, well-known TV host and veteran planner in culture and tourism in China, said discussions on branding have involved too much, too big. He then discussed the topic using Hunan Province, where he has been residing, as an example.

He said that as the province was trying to define itself, it focused on food and gastronomy. After that, people started to visit Hunan.

The TV host added that after spending several days in Macau, he had discovered that the "small things" in Macau's culture and tourism have been stifled by major investments.

"It is good that the small things have not disappeared," he said.

He also said that during his previous trips to Macau, he could see small flowers and people playing music in front of tourist attractions, which he found charming.

As Maria Helena de Senna Fernandes, director of Macao Government Tourist Office (MGTO), was also at the event, his advice to Macau was that the MGTO could direct the major investments to support these small things.



Echoing Li's comments was Ding Junjie, director of the National Institute of Advertising.

"The small side of Macau was the basis for the big side of it," he said.

For example, he said, iconic people such as the conference participants – many of them mainland officials or showbiz stars – were seated around small tables for meals, where big ideas

and projects were discussed.

Zhao Pu, director of China Arts and Crafts Center and founder of the Chinese Craftsman Conference, said handicrafts speak to the heart, so they should be considered the vehicle for branding.

He said good stories are around, but it can be difficult to convey these stories and leave an imprint on people's minds.

Zhang Xiaolong, actor, Chinese

etiquette expert and promotional ambassador of China Domestic Tourism, found Macau attractive "from big to small."

He said mainland youths are thrilled with traditional aesthetics now, so he suggested Macau consider highlighting that.

During an earlier session, Ouyang Changlin, chairman of the Professional Committee of Livestreaming, China Television Artists

Association and former director of Hunan Broadcasting System, suggested Macau be proactive in rebranding itself.

He proposed that Macau use communications and channels to transform audiences and consumers into tourists.

Macau should also use branding and communication strategies to convince tourists and consumers to return or even to become frequent customers.

These transformations, however, rely heavily on the internal momentum and core competitiveness of a city.

He suggested Macau develop its charm using both local and external elements, adding that if tourists do not feel refreshed every time they visit, trips to Macau will not appear worthwhile to them.

Macau should discard its over reliance on the gambling industry and utilize the industry to develop entertainment, fashion, MICE and gastronomy. Then, Macau will have at least five critical industries.

Based on this, Ouyang further suggested Macau develop intellectual property, healthcare, artificial intelligence and pop culture with Chinese characteristics.

"As such, Macau will have nine major industries," he said.

He also suggested local brands work toward developing novelty, quality, momentum, healthcare, aesthetics and wisdom, to support the nine recommended major industries.

He called on Macau to develop its media industry. Programs should be broadcast in a multitude of languages to attract different audiences.

SURVEY

25% of elderly hold no emergency fund

STAFF REPORTER

A survey has revealed 25% of Macau's elderly do not have an emergency fund of three to six months of living expenses, according to The Macau Federation of Trade Unions.

The group found that, among 749 interviewees, 80% of senior citizens spend money from their pension or personal savings.

The survey also revealed that among the interviewed elderly without jobs, more than 20% are still willing to work. The main reason is that they believe that working can increase their income and they still have good working ability.

Lawmaker Ella Lei has called on the government to take the lead in promoting an increase in enterprises' social tolerance for the employment of

middle-aged and elderly people, and to create favorable conditions for them to return to the workplace with practical policies.

In addition, nearly half the survey respondents indicated they were in good psychological condition, while 35% indicated they had moderate or severe psychological distress.

The group surveyed local residents aged 55 or above, and more than 8 were 65 or above.



LYNZY VALLES

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Lawmakers call for additional temporary welfare

ANTHONY LAM

TWO lawmakers have separately asked the government to consider issuing further temporary welfare to help people cope with rising living costs.

Trade unionist Lei Chan U has said the necessities for daily life, such as LPG, gasoline, rice and eggs, have become more expensive in the past three years, with their prices having risen faster than the composite consumer price index.

His organization, the Macau Federation of Trade Unions, has repeatedly called out high vehicle gasoline prices for the delivery trade, criticizing the lack of competition between sellers of the commodity in Macau.

Lei said that despite the government's several rounds of Covid-19 subsidies that eased residents' burdens, the cessation of these subsidies had multiplied the effects of inflation on society, especially when in the past three years most working class people were faced with reduced income or even dismissal.



He also cited the International Labour Organization (ILO) that escalating inflation has led to de-facto salary reduction. The scenario has strongly impacted the purchasing power of the middle and lower classes.

The lawmaker said the government still has over MOP4 billion unused from the funds allotted for the MOP10 billion living cost subsidy scheme.

The government has said

the unused funds will be banked, should the economy revive.

Women's federation's Wong Kit Cheng made a similar suggestion, noting that fruits from the gradually reviving economy will not immediately be reflected in common residents' accounts. She made a comment similar to the ILO finding, according to local media Macao Daily News.

Living in an economy highly

reliant on external income and trade, it is difficult for the city to cope autonomously with its economic challenges, such as high commodity prices, she said.

She suggested the government extend special welfare and stimulus measures to next year, as well as lowering the thresholds for various regular subsidies and drafting subsidy schemes for disadvantaged families.

Gov't seeking around 1,000 non-local talents annually for key industries

RENATO MARQUES

THE government is aiming to attract around 1,000 non-local talents annually to Macau under a new program to attract highly qualified professionals.

The figure, stated yesterday by the Secretary-General of the Talents Development Committee (CDQQ), Chao Chong Hang, is not new, but Chao noted that it is not a fixed requirement. It only represents a guideline to orient the process and the final number will be set according to the real needs and applications received.

Chao's comments were made on the sidelines of yesterday afternoon's CDQQ meeting at the World Trade Center.

The same official noted that at the meeting, a task force was established to oversee the evaluation criteria and specific requirements for the different types of qualified talent



attraction.

On the line is the new recruitment method of qualified non-resident professionals that replaces previous programs running under the Macao Trade and Investment Promotion Institute.

The Secretary-General of the CDQQ also revealed the committee will regularly disclose

the number of people approved under the new programs by type but without revealing their identity or other sensitive and personal information.

The CDQQ believes this will make the process more transparent for public supervision.

As previously announced, Chao noted the application process will be online and can-

didates will not need to come to Macau to submit documents. Only those who have been conditionally approved, need to do so.

Chao said the focus will be on the four key industries Macau aims to promote although noted that some areas are also being considered, depending on the quality of the candidates and the work they propose to do.

Presiding over the meeting, the Chief Executive (CE), Ho Iat Seng, noted in his speech that Macau has been greatly affected by several factors that have reduced the flow of talent available.

It has lost some of these people to "regional competition," he said, noting that the goal is to win this competition and find ways to attract Macau professionals who will be of high value for Macau's new development direction under the (1+4) key industries.

HEALTH

MEDICAL COMMITTEE DISCUSSES MACAU DOCTORS PRACTICING IN HENGQIN

ANTHONY LAM

AT its 11th meeting for the current term, the Medical Committee has discussed arrangements for Macau medical professionals to practice in Hengqin.

Alvis Lo, committee president and director of the Health Bureau (SSM), has said administrative regulations concerning medical and pharmacy staff would be promulgated on Aug. 1.

Current regulations allow 15 types of local medical staff to practice in Hengqin after two years of licensed services in Macau and after Hengqin authorities have registered and licensed them.

The proposed regulation stipulates that Macau pharmacy technical staff, including pharmacists, Chinese medicinal pharmacists, traditional Chinese medicine doctors and pharmacy assistants, will be allowed to provide services at pharmacies in Hengqin once registered.

A new set of management guidelines will be released to govern the registration of Macau medical staff in Hengqin said Fong Fong Tan, vice director of the Livelihood Affairs Bureau of the in-depth cooperation zone on Hengqin, speaking at the meeting.

The guidelines will be a document supporting the implementation of the aforementioned regulations and will be released before the regulations. A public consultation is being conducted for the guidelines, she added.

A healthcare training base in Hengqin, accredited by the Macau Continuing Professional Development (CPD) scheme for medical staff, will constantly refine its programs and courses to suit the needs of Macau medical staff, Fong said.

The CPD scheme has approved courses for local medical staff to take to accumulate points for their license renewal.

A set of guidelines for registering pharmacy staff will be released later to accompany the aforementioned regulations, said Iau Iong Wa, vice director of the Business Services Bureau of the zone on Hengqin.

According to the committee, local medical staff welcome the arrangements.



CASINOS TO SEE 'ALL-TIME HIGH' REVENUE IN Q2

The casino sector is slated to see an "all-time high" in earnings in the second quarter, according to JP Morgan Securities (Asia Pacific) Ltd. As cited in a GGRAsia report, the institution estimated that the sector-wide EBITDA margin peaked at 26% during the period. Citing the brokerage's figures, second-quarter EBITDA were likely to stand at USD1.7 billion, 47% more than those recorded in the first three months of the year. "The quarter should not only drive continued beat-and-raises [by investment analysts], but also please investors with an all-time high margin – 26% versus a historical peak of 24% – thanks to a mix of improvements and cost savings," analysts DS Kim and Mufan Shi have noted.

UM PROJECTS 6.9M VISITORS IN Q3

The city's economy is set to grow by 47% this year, according to a revised forecast by the University of Macau. UM's Centre for Macau Studies and Department of Economics have projected exports of services will surge by 101.2%; the inflation rate will be 1.2%; the overall unemployment rate will be 2.6% while the unemployment rate of residents will be 3.3%. Meanwhile, the SAR's current revenue is expected to be MOP 76.5 billion. The research team also expects visitor arrivals will be 6.45 million in the second quarter (60% of 2019), 6.94 million in the third quarter (65% of 2019), and 6.90 million in the fourth quarter (70% of 2019).

PJ BUST SEVEN MEN OF ILLEGAL CURRENCY EXCHANGE

The Judiciary Police (PJ) has investigated 167 people during an anti-crime inspection, where it found seven mainland men were suspected of illegal currency exchange. The seven have been transferred to the Public Security Police. The police in Guangdong, Hong Kong and Macau jointly launched the "Thunder Operation" and yesterday sent 25 criminal investigators to inspect casinos in Macau and Cotai.

MAN ARRESTED FOR SCAMMING COMPATRIOTS OF WORK

The Judiciary Police (PJ) has arrested a 40-year-old mainland man for allegedly claiming he knew hotel executives and could introduce mainlanders to work in Macau. The PJ's preliminary investigation is continuing and has revealed about five to six other mainlanders were deceived. The suspect charged each person a referral fee of RMB5,000 to 6,000 yuan and has already received about RMB38,000. The suspect works as a cleaner in a Cotai hotel and has admitted to losing his money gambling.

CRIME

CCAC INVESTIGATES UM PHD CANDIDATE BRIBERY

RENATO MARQUES

THE Commission Against Corruption (CCAC) has concluded its investigation into a University of Macau (UM) doctoral candidate who tried to bribe a UM professor.

The PhD student is suspected of bribery under the Penal Code, and the CCAC has referred the case to the Public Prosecutions Office for further investigation, the anti-corruption watchdog has said in a press statement.

It is unclear when the alleged crime occurred, but the CCAC learned about the case from the professor's complaint, who claimed a PhD student he was supervising offered a bribe to be granted the degree although he had failed to submit his thesis proposal.



The CCAC's investigation found the mainland student had been admitted to UM's Faculty of Law, but was unable to submit his Ph.D. thesis proposal by the deadline.

According to the university's regulations, a student failing to submit a thesis proposal within three years of registration must discontinue their studies.

The professor told the CCAC that close to the deadline, the supervisor had found a book in his mailbox that he had given the student. Inside it was a red envelope (Lai Si) containing an undisclosed sum in cash.

The professor contacted the university's administrative staff and together they met the student, who confessed he had intended to give cash to the supervisor.

The same professor said this was not the first time the student had tried to bribe the supervisor, seeking unlawful help.

He said after the student was admitted to the university, he had also tried to give the professor shopping vouchers worth several thousand patacas.

At the time, the professor had rejected the offer and had warned the student not to repeat the unlawful behavior.

AMCM TRAINS 20 TALENTS IN WEALTH MANAGEMENT

RENATO MARQUES

THE Monetary Authority of Macau (AMCM) has promoted a training course for local talent in finance to train professionals in wealth management, the AMCM has noted in a press statement.

More than 100 students from local and international higher education establishments have enrolled in the course.

The 'Pilot project for training talent in the financial area – wealth management,' is based on the Summer Internship Program for University Students which the AMCM has been organizing since 2018.

The course was established by the Macau Institute of Financial Services and the Macau Banking Association.

The pilot project's inauguration ceremony

occurred Monday at the AMCM. The selected trainees will participate in theoretical and practical training over a period of five weeks.

Over the past years, the AMCM Summer program has been offering internships in the banking, insurance, financial technology, wealth management and leasing sectors to develop skills for professionals in the sector.

It has already provided training to some 290 students.

This year, 20 excellent students from economics and finance majors were selected to participate in this special course that will continue until Aug. 4. Upon completion of the pilot project, participants will receive a certificate.

In her speech at the inauguration ceremony, the Administrator of

the Board of Directors of AMCM, Dr. Verónica Kuan Evans, said talent in the financial area is essential for promoting the sustainable development of the financial sector.

She encouraged trainees to take advantage of the learning and training opportunity and to put into practice the knowledge acquired in the course and accumulate professional experiences.

POSITIVE IMPACTS FROM LARGE-SCALE GASTRONOMY EXCHANGE: MGTO

RENATO MARQUES

LAST weekend's Macao International Travel Industry Expo (MITE) will positively impact Macau's role as a platform, the Macao Government Tourism Office (MGTO) has said in a press statement.

Present at the Expo were 23 of 49 representatives from the UNESCO Creative Cities of Gastronomy.

According to the MGTO, the industry professionals' exchanges "reinforced gastronomy as an impetus for the city's sustainable development and showed



Macau's strengths as an international exchange platform."

The event was noted as the largest ever of its kind to have occurred in Macau.

This year's "City of Gastronomy Showcase" included almost half the world's Cities of Gastronomy, the MGTO noted, highlighting the 24 culinary showcase sessions that "drew a great num-

ber of spectators for a taste of the delicacies."

The same source said the showcase "enjoyed great applause and was broadcast live on MITE's website, engaging over 90,000 views online."

Among those present at the event were chefs from Usuki (Japan), hosting a master class for team members of The Venetian Macao.

Chefs from Popayan (Colombia), Tsuruoka (Japan), Merida (Mexico) and Phuket (Thailand) partnered with the chef team from Sofitel Macau at Ponte 16 to present a feast.

Chefs from Santa Maria da Feira (Portugal) and San Antonio (USA) joined chefs at MGM to present a feast, creating a memorable cultural symphony of flavors for patrons.

After the event, the MGTO organized a heritage tour through Macau's historical center and around 70 representatives and chefs of the Creative Cities of Gastronomy participated.

The tour included visits to local wet markets and distinctive bazaars in the Peninsula and Coloane.

The Macau Grand Prix Museum and the newly opened Lai Chi Vun Shipyards cultural space were also part of the tour.

AI

UN council to hold first meeting on potential threats of artificial intelligence to global peace

EDITH M. LEDERER,
UNITED NATIONS

THE U.N. Security Council will hold a first-ever meeting on the potential threats of artificial intelligence to international peace and security, organized by the United Kingdom which sees tremendous potential but also major risks about AI's possible use for example in autonomous weapons or in control of nuclear weapons.

UK Ambassador Barbara Woodward on Monday announced the July 18 meeting as the centerpiece of its presidency of the council this month. It will include briefings by international AI experts and Secretary-General Antonio Guterres, who last month called the alarm bells over the most advanced form of AI "deafening," and loudest from its developers.

"These scientists and experts have called on the world to act, declaring AI an existential threat to humanity on a par with the risk of nuclear war," the U.N. chief said.

Guterres announced plans to appoint an advisory board on artificial intelligence in September to prepare initiatives that the U.N. can take. He also said he would react favorably to a new U.N. agency on AI and suggested as a model the International Atomic Energy Agency, which is knowled-

AP PHOTO



United Kingdom Ambassador to the United Nations Dame Barbara Woodward

ge-based and has some regulatory powers.

Woodward said the UK wants to encourage "a multilateral approach to managing both the

huge opportunities and the risks that artificial intelligence holds for all of us," stressing that "this is going to take a global effort."

She stressed that the benefits

side is huge, citing AI's potential to help U.N. development programs, improve humanitarian aid operations, assist peacekeeping operations and support conflict

prevention, including by collecting and analyzing data. "It could potentially help us close the gap between developing countries and developed countries," she added.

But the risk side raises serious security question that must also be addressed, Woodward said.

Europe has led the world in efforts to regulate artificial intelligence, which gained urgency with the rise of a new breed of artificial intelligence that gives AI chatbots like ChatGPT the power to generate text, images, video and audio that resemble human work. On June 14, EU lawmakers signed off on the world's first set of comprehensive rules for artificial intelligence, clearing a key hurdle as authorities across the globe race to rein in AI.

In May, the head of the artificial intelligence company that makes ChatGPT told a U.S. Senate hearing that government intervention will be critical to mitigating the risks of increasingly powerful AI systems, saying as this technology advances people are concerned about how it could change their lives, and "we are too."

OpenAI CEO Sam Altman proposed the formation of a U.S. or global agency that would license the most powerful AI systems and have the authority to "take that license away and ensure compliance with safety standards."

Woodward said the Security Council meeting, to be chaired by UK Foreign Secretary James Cleverly, will provide an opportunity to listen to expert views on AI, which is a very new technology that is developing very fast, and start a discussion among the 15 council members on its implications.

Britain's Prime Minister Rishi Sunak has announced that the UK will host a summit on AI later this year, "where we'll be able to have a truly global multilateral discussion," Woodward said. **MDT/AP**

CORPORATE BITS

Wynn to host culinary events this month



Wynn will host a series of culinary events in July, with the International Wine Challenge (IWC) Prestige Sake Feast and a "Taste the Bounty of Land and Sea"

Celebrity Chef Series.

Wynn has welcomed the return of IWC – the world's largest wine competition – to Macau, where it will once again host the IWC Presti-

ge Sake Feast from July 21 to 22.

The IWC event will feature walkaround tasting sessions, an award-winning masterclass session conducted by Japan's first "master of wine," a champion sake dinner and the IWC trophy champion sake gala dinner.

One of the major highlights of the Celebrity Chef Series event, is the "Goh X Wing Lei Palace Collaborative Dinner," where owner-chef Takeshi Fukuyama of Goh restaurant in Japan and Executive Chef Tam Kwok Fung of Wing Lei Palace will create a dining experience in Macau.

MGM co-presents 'Star Chefs Discovery Journey' gastronomic event



MGM has joined its sister group in mainland China – Diaoyutai MGM Hospitality – to present the third "Star Chefs Discovery Journey" gastronomic event. Seven stellar chefs from

the two hospitality brands have been invited to flaunt culinary artistry across several cities in mainland China and Macau.

Hubert Wang, president and COO of MGM China

Holdings Limited, said, "Fully leveraging the comprehensive network and resources in mainland China of MGM's sister group – Diaoyutai MGM Hospitality – we bring to Macau a gastronomic extravaganza presented by great chefs from mainland China and Macau."

The third "Star Chefs Discovery Journey" took place in June across three cities of Macau, Qingdao and Shanghai. The joint venture of chefs from MGM Cotai, Diaoyutai Qingdao, MGM Qingdao, Shanghai Bellagio Hotel, Shanghai West Bund, Diaoyutai Boutique Hotel Chengdu and MGM Grand Sanya, has curated an extravaganza under the theme of "Art of Gastronomy".

HONG KONG

Leader says 8 pro-democracy activists who now live in the West 'will be pursued for life'

KANIS LEUNG, HONG KONG

HONG Kong's leader said yesterday that eight pro-democracy activists who now live in the United States, Britain, Canada and Australia will be pursued for life for alleged national security offenses, dismissing criticism that the move to have them arrested was a dangerous precedent.

Chief Executive John Lee expressed his support for the police's efforts to arrest the eight. At his weekly media briefing, Lee said anyone, including their friends and relatives, who offered information leading to their arrests would be eligible for the bounties offered by the police.

"The only way to end their destiny of being an abscondee who will be pursued for life is to surrender," he said.

The arrest warrants were issued for former pro-democracy lawmakers Nathan Law, Ted Hui and Dennis Kwok, lawyer Kevin Yam, unionist Mung Siu-tat and activists Finn Lau, Anna Kwok and Elmer Yuen. They were accused of breaching the National Security Law by committing offenses such as collusion and inciting secession.

More than 260 people have



Hong Kong Chief Executive John Lee

been arrested under the law enacted in 2020, but the rewards of 1 million Hong Kong dollars (\$127,600) for information leading to each arrest were the first under the law.

The move quickly drew ire from the U.S. and British governments, which took issue with the extraterritorial application of the security law.

The U.S. said such an application of the security law was a dan-

gerous precedent that threatened human rights. Australian Foreign Minister Penny Wong also tweeted that her country was "deeply concerned" by reports of Hong Kong authorities issuing arrest warrants for democracy advocates.

But Lee insisted extraterritorial power exists in the national security laws of many countries. He said how overseas officials and politicians commented on the go-

vernment's moves will not change his administration's strong belief in safeguarding national security.

"I'm not afraid of any political pressure that is put on us because we do what we believe is right," he said.

The Chinese Foreign Ministry's office in Hong Kong also rejected the criticism from the U.S. and Britain, warning "foreign interference forces" to stop shielding "criminals" immediately.

The row reflects a fresh source of contention between Beijing and the West over the alleged overseas reach of China's enforcement agencies following the issue of China's alleged "secret overseas police stations."

These stations have been reported across North America, Europe and in other countries where Chinese communities include critics of the Communist Party who have family or business contacts in China.

Beijing denied they are police stations, saying that they exist mainly to provide citizen services such as renewing driver's licenses.

But the crackdown did not stop these overseas activists from speaking up.

Law, who is accused of foreign collusion and inciting secession, said on his Facebook the latest development signaled he was again being targeted by China's ruling Communist Party and that he felt the "invisible pressure." However, he refused to surrender.

"All I did was reasonable, justifiable and peaceful advocacy work," the British-based activist said.

Mung also pledged in a statement that he would not cease advocacy work for Hong Kong labor rights abroad.

"If I were ever found guilty, my only 'crime' would be speaking the truth for my fellow Hong Kongers," he said.

Police on Monday acknowledged they will not be able to arrest the eight if they remain overseas.

Eunice Yung, a pro-Beijing lawmaker, who is the daughter-in-law of Yuen, supported the police's move on her Facebook page, reiterating she had already cut ties with Yuen in last August.

"All his acts have nothing to do with me," she said. **MDT/AP**

ENVIRONMENT

EU climate chief is concerned over the expansion of the coal industry in China

THE European Union's climate chief on Monday expressed concern over the expansion of China's coal industry, with the building of new coal-fired plants.

At a conference in Beijing, Frans Timmermans said that while China is forging ahead with plans to expand its use of renewable resources such as wind and solar energy, the country has also been constructing an ever-growing number of coal-fired plants in the past few years.

"And that seems to be in a contradiction and it is in



contradiction," said Timmermans. "But at the same time, I do understand the anxiety caused by potential blackouts."

China is the world's biggest and fastest-growing producer of renewable energy. It aims to turn one-third of its total power supply

renewable by 2025.

As more cities are experiencing sweltering temperatures this summer, the country may face power

shortages and challenges to electricity grids, similar to what happened last year. At the same time, water shortages have led to reductions in hydropower generation.

China's climate envoy Xie Zhenhua attended the conference and presented a commemorative plate to Timmermans, who is on a two-day visit to China for the EU-China High-level Environment and Climate Dialogue.

Official plans called for boosting coal production capacity by 300 million tons last year, at least the third consecutive year of growth.

Although China is one of the biggest investors in wind and solar, anxious leaders called for more coal-fired power after economic growth plunged and shortages caused blackouts and factory shutdowns. Russia's attack on Ukraine added to

the anxiety that foreign oil and coal supplies might be disrupted.

China is the top producer and consumer of coal. Global trends hinge on what Beijing does.

The Communist Party has rejected binding emissions commitments, citing its economic development needs. Beijing has avoided joining governments that promised to phase out the use of coal-fired power.

China has said carbon emissions will peak by 2030 and the country will become carbon neutral by 2060 by planting trees and through other offsets.

Some European and American officials have called on China to adopt more ambitious targets. China accounts for 26.1% of global emissions, more than double the U.S. share of 12.8%. **MDT/AP**

MARI YAMAGUCHI, TOKYO

UN nuclear chief is visiting Japan to give a final report on release of treated radioactive water

THE head of the U.N. nuclear agency is in Japan to meet with government leaders yesterday and to see final preparations for the release of treated radioactive wastewater into the sea from the damaged Fukushima nuclear plant, on a visit Japan hopes will give credibility to the contentious plan.

International Atomic Energy Agency head Rafael Mariano Grossi will meet with Prime Minister Fumio Kishida later Tuesday to submit IAEA's final report on the water release. All of IAEA's interim evaluations have been positive and the final report is expected to say that the water sampling, testing and monitoring plans involved in the release are adequate and fulfill international requirements.

Grossi, at a joint news conference after meeting with Foreign Minister Yoshimasa Hayashi, said the report sums up the IAEA's work over the past two years and handing it to Kishida marks "an important chapter."

Hayashi thanked "IAEA's impartial and professional efforts on their review from safety and regulatory aspects." He promised Japan's further effort to provide detailed explanations to the international community "based on scientific evidence and with high degree of transparency."

The treated radioactive water, stored in about 1,000 tanks that are nearing their 1.37 million ton capacity, must be removed to prevent accidental leaks and to make room for the plant's decommissioning.

Japanese regulators finished their final safety inspection of the equipment last Friday and



International Atomic Energy Agency head Rafael Mariano Grossi shakes hands with Foreign Minister Yoshimasa Hayashi, in Tokyo, yesterday

the plant operator Tokyo Electric Power Company Holdings is expected to receive a permit for discharging the water in about a week. It could do so anytime afterward, though the start date is still undecided amid concerns and protests.

South Korea, China and some

Pacific Island nations oppose the water release because of safety concerns and political reasons. Local fishing groups are worried their reputation will be damaged even if their catch is uncontaminated, and others like local water and beach businesses and tourism outfits are concerned.

Japan has sought support from the IAEA to gain credibility for the plan and assurances that its safety measures meet international standards. The IAEA has made several trips to Japan since early 2022 but acknowledges it can't make decisions for the Japanese government, inclu-

ding stopping the wastewater release.

Grossi on Tuesday will also meet with heads of Japanese ministries and nuclear agency relevant to the water release. He later will visit the Fukushima plant to see some of the newly constructed facilities for the water release during his four-day visit.

To ease concerns overseas, Grossi is expected to visit South Korea, New Zealand and the Cook Islands after his visit to Japan.

Japan's government and TEPCO say the treated but still slightly radioactive water will be diluted to levels safer than international standards and will be released gradually into the ocean over decades, making it harmless to people and marine life.

Some scientists say the impact of long-term, low-dose exposure to radionuclides is unknown. Others say the release plan is safe but call for more transparency in sampling and monitoring of the release.

The government says questionable documents have been circulated, including one alleging that Japan pressured the IAEA to remove negative information from its final report. Hayashi and other officials have denied them. **MDT/AP**

VIETNAM'S state media have reported that the government banned distribution of the popular "Barbie" movie because it includes a view of a map showing disputed Chinese territorial claims in the South China Sea.

The newspaper Vietnam Express and other media said posters advertising "Barbie" were removed from movie distributors' websites after Monday's decision.

With Margot Robbie playing Barbie opposite Ryan Gosling's Ken in Greta Gerwig's comedic look at their "perfect" world, "Barbie" was supposed to open July 21 in Vietnamese theaters.

The reports cited Vi Kien Thanh, director general of the Vietnam Cinema Department, as saying the National Film Evaluation

Vietnam bans 'Barbie' movie due to an illustration showing disputed sea



Council made the decision. It said a map in the film shows China's "nine-dash line," which extends Bei-

jing's territorial claims far into waters that fall within areas claimed by Vietnam and other countries.

The "nine-dash line" is an arcane but sensitive issue for China and its neighbors that shows Beijing's

maritime border extending into areas claimed by other governments and encompasses most of the South China Sea.

That has brought it into tense standoffs with the ASEAN nations of Indonesia, Vietnam, Malaysia, Brunei and the Philippines, with Chinese fishing boats and military vessels becoming more aggressive in the disputed waters.

Asked about the issue at a daily briefing yesterday, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Mao Ning said, "China's position on the South China Sea issue is clear and consistent."

"We believe that the

countries concerned should not link the South China Sea issue with normal cultural and people-to-people exchanges," Mao said.

When an international court ruled in 2016 that the "nine-dash line" has no basis in law and the Philippines was entitled to an exclusive economic zone in part of the area claimed by Beijing, China rejected the ruling.

Warner Bros. offices were closed Tuesday for the July 4 holiday.

In 2019, Vietnam ordered showings of "Abominable" canceled after moviegoers complained about a scene showing the "nine-dash line." Politicians in the Philippines called for a boycott of all DreamWorks releases to protest the scene, and Malaysia ordered the scene to be cut from the movie. **MDT/AP**

Putin says Russia is 'united as never before' at meeting of Russia-China led security group

ASHOK SHARMA &
KRUTIKA PATHI, NEW DELHI

PRESIDENT Vladimir Putin claimed yesterday that the Russian people were "united as never before," as he sought to project confidence in the wake of a short-lived revolt during a meeting of a rare international organization where he can find a sympathetic audience.

The Shanghai Cooperation Organization meeting, hosted via videoconference by India, offered Putin one of the few remaining platforms in international politics where he can get a sympathetic hearing. It was his first multilateral summit since an armed rebellion rattled Russia.

The Asian security grouping founded by Russia and China to counter Western alliances also welcomed Iran as a new member, bringing its membership to nine nations.

Speaking via video link from the Kremlin, Putin praised the SCO for "playing an increasingly significant role in international affairs, making a real contribution to maintaining peace and stability, ensuring sustainable economic growth of the participating states, and strengthening ties between peoples."

He thanked the SCO nations for supporting the Russian authorities during the short-lived armed mutiny mounted by Wagner chief Yevgeny Prigozhin, and said the West had turned Ukraine into "a virtually hostile state — anti-Russia."

For Putin, the summit presents an opportunity to show he is in control after an insurrection that left some wondering about divisions among Russian elites.

"The Russian people are united as never before," he said. "The solidarity and responsibility for the fate of the fatherland was clearly demonstrated by the Russian political circles and the entire society by standing as a united front against the attempted armed rebellion."

Earlier speakers avoided directed references to the



war, while bemoaning its global consequences.

In his opening speech to the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, Prime Minister Narendra Modi warned of global challenges to food, fuel and fertilizer supplies. Trade in all three has been disrupted by Russia's 14-month-long war in Ukraine, but SCO members have largely avoided direct mention of the war.

He also took a veiled swipe at Pakistan, saying the group should not hesitate to criticize countries that are "using terrorism as an instrument of its state policy."

"Terrorism poses a threat to regional peace and we need to take up a joint fight," Modi said without naming Pakistan. India regularly accuses Pakistan of training and arming insurgent groups, a charge Islamabad denies.

In his speech, Pakistan's Prime Minister Sharif denounced terrorism and defended his country's role in the fight against it. "While the sacrifices made by Pakistan in fighting terrorism are without parallel, this scourge continues to plague our region and remains a serious obstacle to the maintenance of peace and stability," Sharif said. "Any temptation to use it as a cudgel for diplomatic point scoring must be eschewed."

Sharif also hailed the China-Pakistan Economic

Corridor, a flagship project of China's Belt and Road Initiative, saying it could be a "game-changer for connectivity, stability, peace and prosperity in the region."

The SCO also includes the four Central Asian nations of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan, all former Soviet republics in which Russian influence runs deep. Pakistan became a member in 2017. Belarus is also in line for membership.

The United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres said in a message to the summit that it was taking place amid growing global challenges and risks. "But at a time when the world needs to work together, divisions are growing, and geopolitical tensions are rising."

"These differences have been aggravated by several factors: diverging approaches to global crises; contrasting views on nontraditional security threats; and, of course, the consequences of COVID-19 and Russia's invasion of Ukraine," he said.

Chinese President Xi Jinping called on SCO members to work toward achieving "long-term peace and stability in the region," according to a readout of his speech posted by state broadcaster CCTV.

He also called on SCO members to "focus on practical cooperation and accelerate economic recovery," say that wants to "better

synergize" the country's Belt and Road Initiative — a trillion-dollar infrastructure investment project criticized in the West for burdening smaller countries with large amounts of debt toward China — with other nations' own development strategies and regional cooperation initiatives.

This year's SCO meeting is hosted by India, which became a member in 2017. It's the latest venue for Prime Minister Narendra Modi to showcase the country's growing global clout.

Days after his return from a high-profile visit to the United States, India's Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Friday had a telephone conversation with Putin about the recent developments in Russia, India's External Affairs Ministry said.

Modi reiterated calls for dialogue and diplomacy between Russia and Ukraine, ministry spokesman Arindam Bagchi said.

India has avoided condemning Russia for its war on Ukraine and abstained from voting on U.N. resolutions against Russia.

When SCO foreign ministers met in India last month, Russia's war in Ukraine barely featured in their public remarks but the fallout for developing countries on food and fuel security remains a concern for members of the group, analysts say. **MDT/AP**

this day in history

1954 BBC LAUNCHES
DAILY TV NEWS



The BBC has broadcast its first daily television news programme.

The 20-minute bulletin was introduced by Richard Baker as an "Illustrated summary of the news... Followed by the latest film of events and happenings at home and abroad."

The present Television Newsreel programme, which is to be discontinued, is prepared in advance and contains news items which are often days old.

The new service is intended to be more up-to-date and will also eventually include studio interviews.

Tonight's edition began with news of truce talks being held near Hanoi and an item on French troop movements in Tunisia.

While the news was read, a series of headlines, still photographs and maps were shown on the screen.

BBC Director General Sir Ian Jacob acknowledged last week there had been significant difficulties producing the new television bulletins.

"News is not at all an easy thing to do on television. A good many of the main news items are not easily made visual - therefore we have the problem of giving news with the same standards that the corporation has built up in sound."

He added that the format of the programme was likely to change, but said the BBC was committed to television news.

"This is a start on something we regard as extremely significant for the future," he said.

Courtesy BBC News

IN CONTEXT

The first television news bulletin was not met with universal approval.

The programme was variously described as "absolute ghastly", "crazy" and "as visually impressive as the fat stock prices". BBC Radio was also very sceptical of the new service and insisted it retain editorial control over the headlines and story content.

But between 1954 and 1955 the amount of television time devoted to news was doubled and in September 1955 Independent Television News launched its first service. BBC television news has expanded considerably since its early days and is now available round-the-clock on BBC News 24. In July 2004, the corporation celebrated 50 years since the first daily 20-minute bulletin.

MACAU'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

YOUR STARS

ARIES
Mar. 21-Apr. 19
You will have the ability to capture the interest of others. Romantic encounters will be full of excitement. This is a great day to mingle with people you would like to impress.

TAURUS
Apr. 20-May. 20
Try to put your money away for a rainy day. Opportunities for new partnerships will develop through the organizations you encounter. Be prepared to overcome frustrations and obstacles at work.

GEMINI
May. 21-Jun. 21
You will be able to work in fine detail and present the best possible proposal. You can dazzle members of the opposite sex with your quick wit and aggressive charm.

CANCER
Jun. 22-Jul. 22
You may want to take a look at courses offered at a local institute. Your ability to visualize will help you convince others of the possibilities.

LEO
Jul. 23-Aug. 22
Most partner problems are a result of both people not living up to their promises. Avoid boredom by being creative in your endeavors.

VIRGO
Aug. 23-Sep. 22
Don't let someone try to bully you into doing things their way. You will upset your partner if you have spent money on things that aren't necessary.

LIBRA
Sep. 23-Oct. 22
Don't let your partner put you down. Don't be afraid to make additions to your house. If you're willing to cut loose you will find yourself in the midst of an exciting encounter.

SCORPIO
Oct. 23-Nov. 21
Escapist tendencies will result in a poor reputation and a lack of confidence. A quiet restful day just staying in bed or catching up on reading will be your best bet.

SAGITTARIUS
Nov. 22-Dec. 21
You will meet new romantic partners through the company you keep. Be aware of any emotional deception. Do not sign legal contracts or documents today. Look into family outings or projects.

CAPRICORN
Dec. 22-Jan. 19
Overindulgence could lead to problems with digestion. Your emotional reaction will be dependent upon your partner's responsiveness. Make creative changes to your living quarters.

AQUARIUS
Jan. 20-Feb. 18
Pleasure trips should be on your agenda. Don't upset elders in your family who don't understand your present situation. Go out shopping today.

PISCES
Feb. 19-Mar. 20
Friends or groups that you're affiliated with may want you to contribute more cash than you can really afford. Accept the inevitable.

The Born Loser by Chip Sanson



SUDOKU

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

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

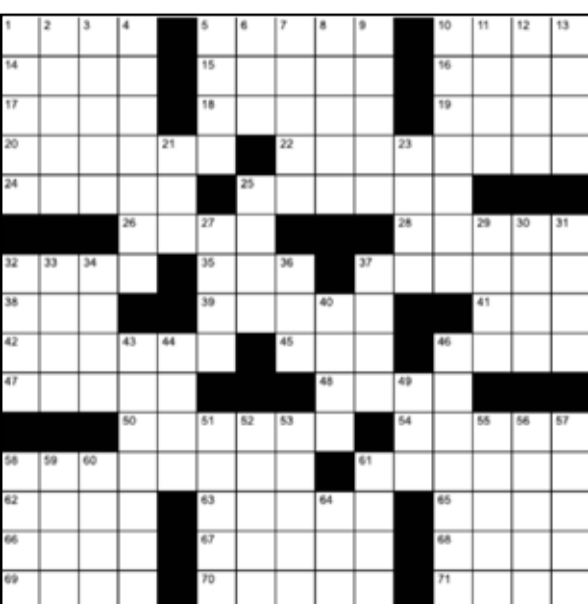
WEATHER

	MIN	MAX	CONDITION
CHINA			
Beijing	21	36	fine
Changchun	20	26	thunderstorms
Chengdu	20	34	fine
Chongqing	21	33	fine
Fuzhou	28	36	cloudy
Guangzhou	25	34	cloudy
Guiyang	19	29	cloudy
Haikou	26	34	cloudy
Hangzhou	27	31	rain
Harbin	20	23	rain
Hefei	23	34	cloudy
Nanjing	25	33	cloudy
Shanghai	27	31	overcast
Taipei	26	33	cloudy
Wuhan	22	31	fine
Hong Hong	29	32	thunderstorms
WORLD			
Moscow	16	27	thunderstorms
Frankfurt	11	24	thunderstorms
Paris	13	23	cloudy
London	12	21	cloudy
New York	23	31	overcast

CROSSWORDS

ACROSS 1- Rent-; 5- Old Testament book; 10- Faint, with "over"; 14- Narcotic; 15- Pains; 16- Golfer Aoki; 17- Med. care providers; 18- Maker of Pong; 19- Mountain lake; 20- Lozenge-shaped; 22- Make fun of; 24- Loses heat; 25- Language communication; 26- Colorado resort; 28- Conger catcher; 32- Fill to surfeit; 35- Silent bid; 37- Congenitally attached; 38- Leb. neighbor; 39- Halts; 41- Lord, is ___?; 42- Makeshift shelter; 45- Double curve; 46- Teheran's country; 47- Take place; 48- Meerschaum part; 50- Snap; 54- Name; 58- Leaping up or over; 61- Based on fact; 62- Longfellow's bell town; 63- Guitar ridges; 65- Rock blasters; 66- Fall faller; 67- From head ___; 68- Species of antelope found in South Africa; 69- Slippery; 70- Perspective; 71- Scottish Gaelic;

DOWN 1- Concerned with a specific subject; 2- Small jazz band; 3- Speed skater ___ Anton Ohno; 4- Determine; 5- Dutch name of The Hague; 6- Fall mo; 7- Acute; 8- So spooky as to be frightening; 9- Line in a play directed to the audience; 10- Culinary department; 11- Son of Isaac and Rebekah; 12- British nobleman; 13- The ___ Ranger rode a horse called Silver; 21- Code-cracking org.; 23- Chilled; 25- Token taker; 27- Not ___ many words; 29- Den of wild animals and dragons; 30- Bluesy James; 31- Bridle; 32- Farm structure; 33- Wait ___; 34- ___ (razor brand); 36- Her partner would be a buck; 37- Kind of prof.; 40- Hey, over here!; 43- Render legally void; 44- Horse's gait; 46- Copy; 49- And so on; Abbr.; 51- Uses a sieve; 52- Matriculate; 53- ___ Kick Out of You; 55- Swollen part; 56- Reindeer herders; 57- Beast of Borden; 58- Low-lying area; 59- To ___ (perfectly); 60- Russian river; 61- I'd hate to break up ___; 64- Unit of weight;



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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1,500 DISNEYLAND COLLECTIBLES GO UP FOR AUCTION

JEFF TURNER & BROOKE LEFFERTS, BURBANK

FANS who agree Disneyland is indeed the happiest place on Earth will soon be able to take home more than a souvenir.

A passionate collector has brought Disney magic to a sprawling 30,000-square-foot building in Burbank, California, where fans can hear birds chirping in the Enchanted Tiki Room section or giggle at the animated ghosts from the Haunted Mansion ride as they preview more than 1,500 items up for auction later this month.

Joel Magee has been building his collection of more than 6,000 items — including costumes, rare posters, and life-size vehicles from rides like Dumbo and Peter Pan — for 30 years, and he's finally ready to share some of it with the public.

"I'm one of those guys — go big or go home. And if you don't have the biggest, then it ain't the best," Magee told The Associated Press in a recent interview, as fans milled about the exhibit. Magee's is the largest individually owned Disneyland/Disney Park col-



lection in the world.

"It's really kind of exciting. This is the first time that all of my things have been in the same room at the same time," he said.

Magee is known in the collectible industry as "the toy scout," and has amassed a huge collection of toys and Disney items. He says he watched "The Wonderful World of Disney" on TV every week as a kid but had never been to the

park and never thought about collecting until he was at a toy show where he met a man selling Disneyland artifacts and got hooked.

"At the time, I couldn't afford too much. I bought a couple of pieces, but that's where it all began," Magee said. "In my travels as 'the toy scout,' I meet people all over the country and for the last 25 years, they've just been bringing me all their stuff and here it is today."

The items for sale are as small as a trading card and as large as a 1917 Model T moving van from Disneyland's original Main Street that Magee says Walt Disney created himself.

Mike Van Eaton is the co-owner of Van Eaton Galleries, which is running the auction. He says among the most sought-after items are those from the Haunted Mansion attraction, including original stretch paintings from the elevator in

the iconic ride, and a "doom buggy" — the vehicle guests ride on.

"Joel also has one of the most amazing Disney attraction poster collections in the world. He has every attraction poster ever in the park. And those are also going to do very well," Van Eaton said.

There are items for every price point, with some starting as low as \$50 — but most go way up from there.

"Some of these items, such as the Dumbo ride vehicle, may go for \$200,000 to \$300,000. We have trash cans from the park that may go for \$5,000 or \$6,000, and posters that could reach \$50,000 to \$60,000," Van Eaton said.

Magee says it's hard to choose his favorites in such a large collection but he is partial to the static props he's brought to life.

"The Tiki birds, oh my gosh, they were piles of junk when we got them! They were worn out, pieces were missing," Magee said. "Some good friends of mine that do a lot of work ... in that field brought them all back to life better than you could ever imagine. And ... people look at that and you can just see the magic in their eyes when they see them."

The exhibition is at the Burbank Town Center Mall and runs through July 16. The auction will be held July 17 through 19. MDT/AP

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MAIPORI

Japan court finds consultant guilty of taking bribes in sprawling Tokyo Olympics trial

YURI KAGEYAMA, TOKYO

ONE of several Japanese officials charged in a widespread bribery scandal involving Tokyo Olympic organizers was found guilty yesterday but avoided jail time.

The verdict in Tokyo District Court for Joji Matsui, the former head of Amuse consulting company, was the first for someone on the receiving end of the bribes from companies seeking sponsorships and licensing for the 2020 Games.

Matsui was sentenced to two years in prison, suspended for four years.

Presiding Judge Kenji Yasunaga said the facts showed Matsui had allowed his company bank account to be used to disguise the transfer of funds to Haruyuki Takahashi, who, as an executive on the Japanese



Olympic and Paralympic organizing committee, wielded considerable influence in selecting sponsors.

Yasunaga said the bribes involved, totaling about 27 million yen (\$186,000), were significant and "the damage to public trust

has been great."

Matsui, who acknowledged guilt during the trial, remained silent and nodded.

His defense had argued Matsui was just following orders from Takahashi. That and his expression of remorse were fac-

tors in the decision on a suspended sentence, which kept him out of prison.

Takahashi has been charged with receiving bribes from five companies, estimated at nearly 200 million yen (\$1.4 million). The date for his trial has not

yet been set. He has denied the charges.

Previous verdicts in the sprawling Olympic bribery scandal, in which 15 people have been charged, have included suspended sentences.

They included officials at Sun Arrow, which made the Olympic mascots, and clothing manufacturer Aoki Holdings, tapped to dress the Japanese Olympic team.

Another verdict is set for next week, for Shinji Ueno, former president of ADK, an advertising company, also accused of bribing Takahashi.

Corruption concerns have dogged the Olympics.

Last month, French police searched the headquarters of the Paris Olympic organizing committee as part of an investigation into contracts linked to the Games, according to French prosecutors. Paris is set to host the Summer Olympics next year.

The northern Japanese city of Sapporo had initially hoped to raise its hand for the 2030 Winter Olympics, although the bid has recently been muted amid the Tokyo bribery trials.

A separate trial is ongoing in Japan involving bid-rigging for contracts related to the 2020 Tokyo Games. Advertising giant Dentsu is among those accused in that scandal. **MDT/AP**

AD

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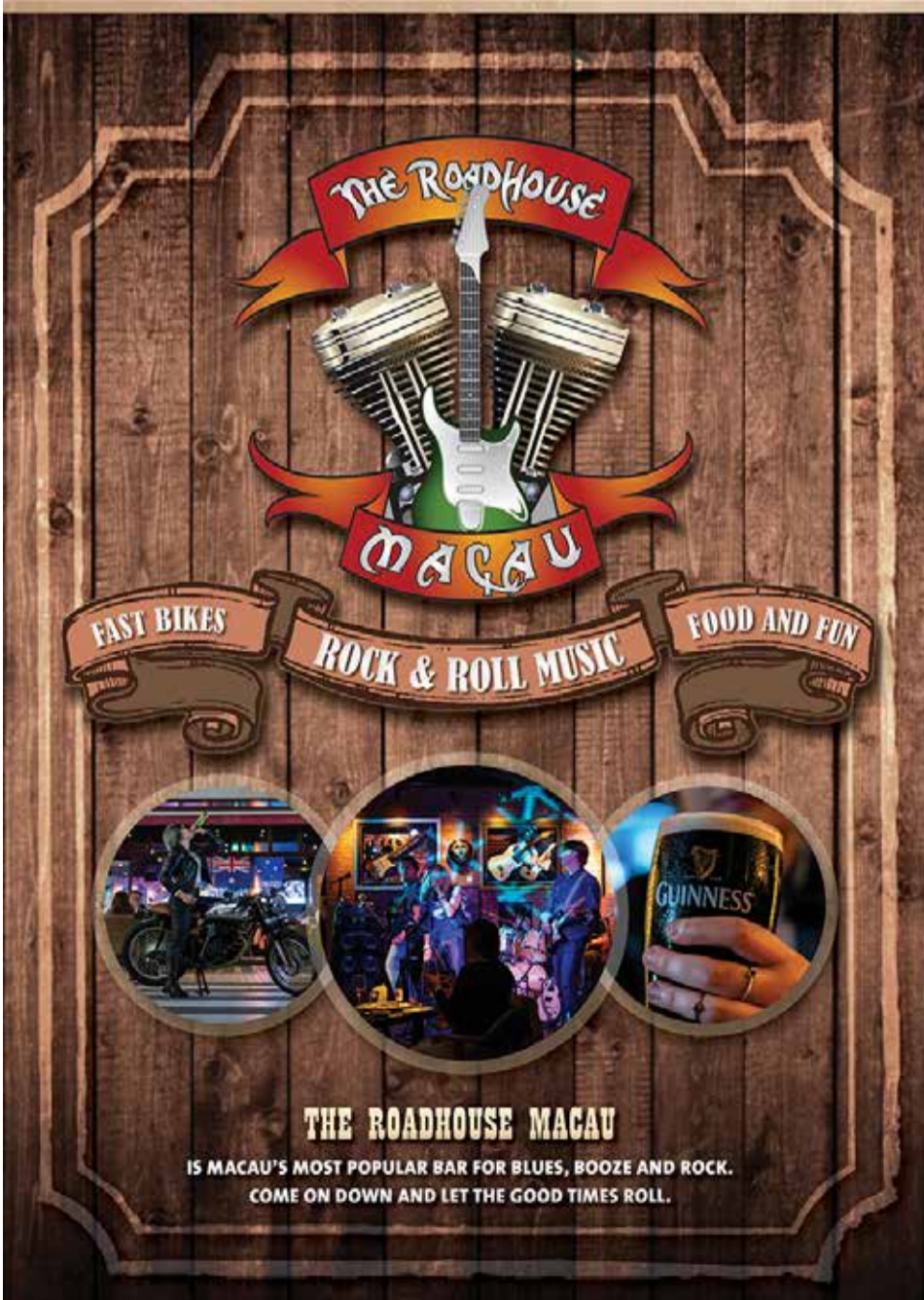
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OPINION

China Daily
 Editorial, China Daily

**UNDERLYING ISSUES
 FERTILE GROUND
 FOR UNREST**

The riots in France, which erupted nationwide after a teenager of North African descent was shot dead by police during a traffic stop on June 27, have shaken the country and shocked the rest of the world.

So far, more than 3,000 people have been detained, with the violence accompanied by widespread arson, looting and vandalism. Hundreds of police and firefighters have been injured in the worst social upheaval in the country for years.

The riots have forced Emmanuel Macron to delay what would have been the first state visit to Germany by a French president in 23 years which was scheduled to start Sunday evening.

Racial discrimination in law enforcement seems to have been the direct cause of the riots — there have been 21 fatal police traffic-stop shootings in France since 2020, most of the victims being of Black or Arab origin. Yet the latest killing was just the lighter that sparked the gas. The unleashing of violence and fury on such a scale reflects the wider problems in French society, such as poverty, joblessness and increasing social alienation. By the end of 2020, there were 10 million French people living in poverty, which was eight times more than in 1980. The COVID-19 pandemic and the Russia-Ukraine conflict have further aggravated the problem.

Moreover, immigrants and their descendants are more likely to be unemployed than non-immigrants in general. The jobless rate among immigrants reached 12.9 percent in France in 2020, compared with 7.4 percent for non-immigrants. According to the French National Institute of Statistics, the living conditions of the country's 7 million immigrants are marked by greater poverty and difficulties related to employment.

For years France has been applying a "color-blind" approach to public policy to reflect its tradition of universalism in the hope of uniting all French citizens regardless of their color and race. It even removed the word "race" from the country's Constitution arguing the term was outdated.

But turning a blind eye to the sensitive issue has not prevented the gap between the reality and ideal from widening, nor has it helped the government properly address racial disparities that are becoming more acute within the country. France, like many other European countries, has taken in a large number of immigrants and refugees from North Africa after the "Arab Spring" and the wars and chaos caused by the US-led Western powers in the Middle East. This has aggravated racial tensions. Many people in France have already called on the government to recognize that universalism is a myth and explore alternative ways to address the problems that have emerged.

At the same time, it should be noted that the violence is being exploited by some who hope to make trouble for Macron, who has been a vocal critic of Europe's Washington-led stance on the Ukraine conflict. With the immediate anger seemingly burning itself out, it is to be hoped that order can be restored in France at an early date before the flames of unrest are fanned and spread throughout an already troubled Europe.

CHINA RESTRICTS EXPORTS OF HIGH-TECH METALS AHEAD OF YELLEN'S VISIT

THE BUZZ

China has imposed export curbs on two metals used in computer chips and solar cells, expanding a squabble with Washington over high-tech trade ahead of Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen's visit to Beijing this week.

The controls on gallium and germanium are intended to "safeguard national security," the Commerce Ministry said yesterday (Macau time).

It said exports will require official permission once the rules take effect Aug. 1 but did not say what restrictions might be applied.

Chinese leader Xi Jinping's government is frustrated by U.S. curbs on

access to advanced processor chips and other technology on security grounds. But Beijing has been slow to retaliate, possibly to avoid disrupting China's fledgling developers of chips, artificial intelligence and other technology.

Yellen is due to arrive Thursday as part of efforts by the Biden administration to revive relations that have plunged to their lowest level in decades.

The United States gets about half its supply of both metals directly from China, according to the U.S. Geological Survey.

AP PHOTO



French President Emmanuel Macron

FRANCE

**MACRON WEAKENED
 BY CRISIS OVER TEEN
 KILLED BY POLICE**

SYLVIE CORBET, PARIS

Even in normal times Emmanuel Macron needed allies' help governing France.

To get some things done he worked with the traditional right. The center-left helped the French president accomplish others. The challenge was bigger than any a French leader had faced in more than two decades: He had to convince politicians across the country's national assembly to support even a minor domestic project.

Now, governing his already-polarized country has gotten close to impossible for Macron because a suburban police officer stopped a yellow Class A Mercedes and fired one fatal shot into the 17-year-old driver's chest, setting off six days of tumult across the country.

Macron's centrist Renaissance party and its close allies had merely 251 seats out of 577 after Macron won his second five-year term last year with 58% of the votes in a runoff with far-right leader Marine Le Pen.

Macron dreamed big despite the close victory.

His first big goal was raising the retirement age from 62 to 64, which he had to force through parliament. He then hoped to re-industrialize France, improve working conditions and finalize a new immigration bill. Abroad, Macron championed European sovereignty and independence in fields ranging from the economy and energy to defense.

But all that has had to fall by the wayside.

Macron shortened a visit to a European summit in Brussels last week for a crisis meeting with his government. This week, he called a last-minute delay in a visit to Germany that had been meant to show the strength of the bilateral friendship despite disputes on energy, defense and the economy, among other issues.

The changes in his agenda echo another uncomfortable situation for the French leader three months ago, when the planned state visit of King Charles III to France was postponed due to violent protests against the pension changes.

German Chancellor Olaf Scholz said he was watching France's situa-

tion with concern.

"I hope very much, and I am convinced, that the French president will find ways for this situation to improve quickly," he told ARD television. "I don't expect France to become unstable, even if the pictures are of course very depressing."

The U.S., the UK and China were among those that called on citizens to exercise caution when travelling to France.

Last month, after a climate summit, Kenya's president William Ruto praised Macron's deep involvement. "You have run this like Kenyans do ... like a marathon," he told Macron.

The question now for Macron is whether he can marshal enough endurance to face the political situation at home.

"The problem is that he still has four more years ahead," said Luc Rouban, a senior researcher at the National Center for Scientific Research (CNRS).

He noted that Macron has faced a succession of protests and street unrest, starting with the yellow vest movement against social injustice that broke out in 2018. **MDT/AP**

AP PHOTO



Saudi Arabia and Russia are extending cuts to the amount of oil they pump to the world in a bid to prop up prices, showing how two of the world's largest oil producers are scrambling to boost income from the fossil fuel even as demand has weakened with the economy. The decision gave a slight boost to oil prices Monday and comes after the Saudis announced a large cut in output for July at the latest meeting of the OPEC+ coalition of oil producer.

AP PHOTO



European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen said Monday it was imperative for the European Union to address the issue of its enlargement as soon as possible to include countries such as Ukraine and Moldova to guarantee they do not fall under the influence of Russia or China. Speaking in Madrid, von der Leyen said the bloc must look forward four years and imagine what the union should be like.

AP PHOTO



Kenyan President William Ruto has lifted a six-year ban on logging over the concerns of environmentalists. The president said Sunday it was "foolish" to have mature trees rotting in forests while local industries lacked timber. "This is why we have decided to open up the forest and harvest timber so that we can create jobs for our youth," he said.