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# Times

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**RAGING CONFLICT IN SUDAN DISPLACES OVER 3.1 MILLION PEOPLE, UN SAYS**

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AP PHOTO



**Palestinian**  
President Mahmoud Abbas visited the occupied West Bank's Jenin refugee camp yesterday in the wake of a devastating Israeli offensive last week, marking his first visit to the camp since 2005. The visit came at a time of seething discontentment among Palestinians in the West Bank for Abbas and the Palestinian Authority, the autonomous government which administers parts of the West Bank but whose forces have largely lost control over several militant strongholds in the region — including Jenin.

AP PHOTO



**NATO** leaders gathered yesterday to launch a highly symbolic new forum for ties with Ukraine, after committing to provide the country with more military assistance for fighting Russia but only vague assurances of future membership. U.S. President Joe Biden and his NATO counterparts will sit down with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy in the new NATO-Ukraine Council, a permanent body where the 31 allies and Ukraine can hold consultations and call for meetings in emergency situations.

AP PHOTO



**UN** Concerns are growing that Russia will not extend a United Nations-brokered deal that allows grain to flow from Ukraine to parts of the world struggling with hunger, with ships no longer heading to the war-torn country's Black Sea ports and food exports dwindling. Turkey and the U.N. negotiated the breakthrough accord last summer to ease a global food crisis, along with a separate agreement with Russia to facilitate shipments of its food and fertilizer. Moscow insists it's still facing hurdles, though data shows it has been exporting record amounts of wheat.

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# LOCAL TALE

**City logs 3,000 sessions of cultural and tourism events in first half of the year; IC calls on industry to 'dig deep' to showcase Macau's cultural image** P3

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CRIME

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**CREDIT SUISSE EXPECTS GGR TO BE UP TO USD30B THIS YEAR**

Credit Suisse managing director Kenneth Fong said that he would not be bearish on the Macau market, and that the Chinese government's supportive attitude towards Macau was the most crucial, with the visa policy being an important factor, as cited in a report by AASocks Financial News. Speaking at the Asian IR Expo, he predicted Macau's gross gaming revenues to be USD25-30 billion this year, and is expected to double to USD60-70 billion in the next 10 years. However, this will depend on policies from the mainland, whether Macau can make up for the shortfall in non-gaming activities, and how will Hengqin complement the development of Macau.

**TRAFFIC RESTRICTIONS NEAR CEM HEADQUARTERS FOR 1.5 MONTHS**

To facilitate underground pipeline refurbishment works, several roads near the headquarters of CEM will see restricted traffic from today until the end of August, the Transport Bureau has announced. Motor traffic toward Montanha Russa Park in front of the CEM building should turn either left or right at the intersection with the park. With that said, motor traffic along the overpass next to the Macao Daily News building will have to converge and turn right upon reaching the park. Bus routes 2, 2A, 6A, 18, 18A, 18B and H2 will see detours.

# MELCO OPENS EUROPE'S LARGEST CASINO RESORT IN CYPRUS AS TOURISM REBOUNDS

A new casino resort touted as the largest of its kind in Europe has opened its doors in Cyprus, aiming to transform the east Mediterranean island nation into a year-round destination for luxury tourism, officials said Tuesday.

The 600 million euro (\$659 million) City of Dreams Mediterranean is one of the largest development projects ever undertaken in the eastern Mediterranean island nation. The resort boasts a 14-story, 500-room hotel replete with a casino, sporting facilities, a family adventure park, the island's largest pool complex, an outdoor amphitheater, eight restaurants and bars, and a conference center.

Lawrence Ho, chief executive of Hong Kong-based Melco Resorts and Entertainment, told reporters the resort "allows Cyprus to unlock new markets in the region and beyond."

Cypriot officials have said that the resort located on the outskirts of the southern coastal town of Limassol would create 6,500 jobs, attract some 300,000 additional visitors to Cyprus each year and pour hundreds of millions of euros into the local economy annually.

As other tourism-reliant coun-

AP PHOTO



tries, Cyprus is rebounding from the pandemic that had dried up tourist arrivals. Official statistics report that total tourist arrivals between January and May of this year are up 36.2% from last year over the same period, and up nearly 4% from record-setting 2019 when Cyprus saw 3.9 million visitors.

This comes even as Cyprus registers a loss of around 900,000

annual tourist arrivals from Russia due to sanctions imposed following Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

Officials said the City of Dreams Mediterranean is the first development in the nation to achieve a top rating for its sustainability strategy.

Resort Property Manager Grant Johnson said Melco's brand and its experience in en-

tertainment and gaming will combine with Cypriot culture and hospitality to offer a potent mix for visitors.

"Cyprus is now ready to compete across Europe and the Middle East in luxury tourism and large-scale conferences," Johnson said.

The 7,500 square meter casino contains 100 tables and 1,000 slot machines. **MDT/AP**

# Chlorine from clogged pipe poisons three workers

**RENATO MARQUES**

THREE workers from a bakery shop at the San Hong Building at the Rua da Alfândega in Macau were reportedly poisoned due to chlorine inhalation, the Health Bureau (SSM) has said in a statement.

The three employees, all locals with ages ranging between 31 and 58 years, were allegedly attempting to unclog a sewage pipe using two bottles of a chemical substance for the purpose.

The incident occurred

Saturday (July 8) when, after one of the employees poured the liquid into the pipe, all three immediately felt an irritating smell, manifesting symptoms such as headaches, dizziness and shortness of breath.

Called by a neighbor, the Fire Services Bureau (CB) took the victims to the Conde de São Januário Hospital Center for treatment.

According to information from SSM, after receiving treatment the three were discharged from the hospital.

The CB's further analysis of the venue detected a high concentration of chlorine. The Labour Affairs Bureau has also been notified to follow up on the case since it was a work-related incident.

According to the SSM, exposure to chlorine at low concentrations can irritate the nose, throat and eyes, and inhalation of chlorine at high concentrations can lead to the appearance of serious symptoms, such as dyspnea, cyanosis and heart failure. The SSM also warned that inhalation of

the product can cause death due to paralysis of the respiratory system.

The bureau calls on all people to bear in mind that, when dealing with chemical substances such as chlorine, hydrogen sulfide and methane, it is necessary to ensure adequate ventilation and the use of adequate protective equipment.

Where the release of toxic gases in a closed venue is suspected, leave the premises immediately, evacuate all people from the area and call the CB.



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EVENTS

# Art business forum opens as IR expo kicks off

ANTHONY LAM

A returning one-day forum that discusses the art business opened yesterday as part of the Asian IR Expo.

Officially referred to as ArtBiz

Asia, the forum's inaugural edition was in 2019.

Enjoying resonance with G2E Asia, the world's leading gambling and entertainment expo, ArtBiz Asia encourages exchanges of views from the industry professionals and decision makers of Asian

integrated resorts (IRs), to bring new life to art and entertainment in the IRs.

The forum covered diverse topics focusing on the trends that bring together art tourism, technology art, public art, and art and entertainment, among other po-

pular topics.

Leong Wai Man, president of the Cultural Affairs Bureau (IC), gave a keynote speech at the forum.

She began by praising art-related figures to highlight the efforts Macau has invested in boosting arts and culture. For example, she said that when people stroll along the streets of Macau, they will be greeted with art and cultural venues, as well as shows and events.

"Only counting the first half of the year, the IC has organized over 3,000 sessions of cultural and tourism events," Leong said. She also cited government statistics about the number of cultural entities in Macau rising from 1,708 in 2015 to

2,764 in 2021.

After suggesting the industry in Macau contemplate how to develop further, the official proposed the Greater Bay Area development plan as the solution. The plan positions Macau as an exchange and cooperation base for multiculturalism under the mainstream Chinese culture.

Leong called for the industry to "dig deep" into the history and culture of Macau and tell the "Chinese story" well. They should showcase the city's cultural image.

The official also said the industry should not fear collaborating with other industries so as to enrich the scene and create synergies.

ArtBiz Asia founder, Patricia Cheong, also spoke at the forum.

"Macau is a city with a rich history and artistic heritage under the influence of eastern and western cultures. Our topics this year will start with the inclusive development of eastern and western art cultures, and the discussions will cover hotels and art spaces, experiences and art tourism, cities and art destinations, technology and pop art, etc," said Cheong, who is also president of Macao International Cultural and Sports Association.

"The closing session will be focusing on the future of art and entertainment, hoping to vigorously promote the exchanges of art and business in the integrated resort industry, which is also the vision of Artbiz."

CRIME

# TUI sentences croupier to 51 months jail for causing over HKD2m damage to casino

RENATO MARQUES

A local croupier has been sentenced by the Court of Final Appeal (TUI) to four years and three months in jail for participating with five players in a fraudulent scheme that caused damage valued at HKD2.18 million to the casino at which he was working, the office of the president of the TUI has revealed.

According to the final sentence, the six people agreed to the unlawful scheme and shared tasks and profits from the scam that would deliver unlawful payouts to players for bets that were never placed.

The TUI also said that it was proved in the courts that the defendants had created a group chat on WeChat to coordinate the illegal activities and give instructions to the different members of the group on when to act.

In the first trial, at the Court of First Instance (TJB), the judges sentenced five of the six



defendants to six crimes of embezzlement with sentences that ranged from three to four and half years of imprisonment. It sentenced the last member to

9 months imprisonment for a single count of the same crime and required the last member to pay compensation to the casino owner.

The first two defendants in the case, one of the players and the croupier, appealed the sentence to the Court of Second Instance (TSI) which partially agreed with the claims but also judged that the acts performed by the defendants were more related to the crime of aggravated fraud, and not to embezzlement. The TSI sentenced the defendants to only slightly shorter terms (less three months).

But the Public Prosecutions Office disagreed with the change of the crime typology and appealed to the TUI.

After examining the facts and the claims, the TUI decided the defendants' actions did constitute aggravated fraud rather than embezzlement. The TUI decided to keep the sentences, but noted aggravated fraud has a harsher penal framework than the previous one. The court took into account the court practice of not amending a prison sentence to a harsher one after a reduction, and kept the sentences decided by the TSI.

## MAINLAND, SARs TO JOINTLY TACKLE CULTURAL RELIC SMUGGLING

CHINESE mainland authorities will work with cultural relic protection and law-enforcement agencies in Hong Kong and Macau to step up the crackdown on cultural relic smuggling, according to the National Cultural Heritage Administration (NCHA) yesterday.

A training program jointly hosted by the NCHA and Hong Kong's customs on enhancing the capabilities of preventing crimes related to cultural relic smuggling was launched recently in Xi'an, a historic and cultural city in northwestern China.

During the five-day program, which is the first of its kind, 60 trainees will learn about China's cultural relic resources, as well as the laws and regulations on protecting the relics, according to the NCHA.

They will also learn about experiences and practices relating to repatriating lost relics, preventing and combating smuggling, and the authentication of cultural relics, said the NCHA. **MDT/XINHUA**

STATS

## MORTGAGE LOANS RISE IN MAY, RESIDENTIAL HIKES 69.2%

RENATO MARQUES

**N**EW mortgage loans approved in May this year rose exponentially compared month-on-month with April, a statistics release from the Monetary Authority of Macao (AMCM) has shown.

The same release shows new approvals of residential mortgage loans (RMLs) and commercial real estate loans (CRELs) both increased month-on-month in May with the first registering a hike of 69.2% to MOP2.63 billion.

Following the same trend, the number of new CRELs increased 59% month-on-month to MOP3.76 billion.

In the last three months of record (March to May) the monthly average of new RMLs approved reached MOP2.03 billion, an increase of 30% (in terms of value) when compared with the previous three-month period (February to April 2023).

Scoring an even higher increase was the monthly average of new CRELs approved, which between March and May 2023 was MOP2.88

billion. This amount represents an increase of 34.2% when compared with the previous period.

Most of the loans approved were related to residents of Macau which represented 99.1% of all RMLs and 90.8% of all CRELs approved.

Concerning outstanding balances at the end of May 2023, the outstanding value of RMLs dropped 0.6% month-on-month or 3.1% year-on-year to MOP233.9 billion. AMCM attributed this drop to the repayment of loans with large denominations.

When compared with the previous month, outstanding RMLs to residents and non-residents fell 0.5% and 2.3% respectively.

Concurrently, the outstanding value of CRELs was MOP161.6 billion, which remained virtually unchanged from the preceding month but rose 0.4% from a year ago.

When compared with the previous month, outstanding CRELs to residents remained unchanged whereas those to non-residents fell 0.7%.



## CPTTM ORGANIZES STUDENTS TO COMPETE IN MS-OFFICE, ADOBE APPS IN THE US

ANTHONY LAM

**T**HE Macau Productivity and Technology Transfer Center (CPTTM) will organize nine students to compete in MS-Office and Adobe apps operations in the US at end-July, the center announced yesterday.

Before the group's departure, they gathered at the Office of the Secretary for Economy and Finance, where Secretary Lei Wai Nong conferred upon them the flag of Macau, signalling their official representation.

Among the nine students, six will compete in the 2023 Certiport Worldwide Competition on Microsoft Office and the remaining three in the 2023 Certiport Worldwide Competition on Adobe apps.

Both competitions are officially

accredited by the two brands in computer production apps. Certiport Inc, meanwhile, is an authoritative certification entity around the globe.

This year's competitions will be held between July 30 and Aug. 2 in Orlando, Florida.

Last year, the two competitions attracted over a million participants aged from 13 to 22 years from around the world to strive for the championships.

From 2009, the CPTTM started organizing a citywide student competition on MS-Office techniques. Excellent students started going to the world competition on recommendations and sponsorship by the CPTTM from 2012. In previous competitions, local contestants have garnered nine gold, eight silver and two

bronze medals.

Meanwhile, the CPTTM has also recently organized a group of 30 people from 20 local enterprises to go to Hong Kong to learn about food technologies.

Led by CPTTM director-general Victoria Kuan, the delegation made its first stop at the Hong Kong Productivity Council, where it was shown industrialization trends, industrial metaverse technologies, food technologies and green living laboratories.

The delegation's second stop was the Hong Kong Science Park, where they were presented with artificial intelligence and robotic technologies, highly technological factories, as well as nano and cutting-edge materials, which can be widely used for food packaging.



## Financial Intelligence Office meets global counterparts

**R**EPRESENTATIVES of the Financial Intelligence Office (GIF) attended the 29th Egmont Group Plenary from July 3 to 7 in the UAE, collecting and sharing experiences with global counterparts.

The plenary promoted the exchange of financial intelligence and cooperation among financial intelligence units in each member region, and strengthened the ability to detect and analyze emerging financial crimes.

GIF representatives participated in many sessions, such as the Egmont Group

working group meetings, regional group meetings, training workshops and the Plenary.

A number of anti-money laundering (AML) and counter financing terrorism (CFT) topics were discussed in the meetings. Topics included the abuse of non-profit organizations for terrorist financing purposes, methods of identifying cyber-enabled fraud and tracing virtual assets as well as money laundering linked to modern slavery. In addition, technical assistance and solutions were provided to members

experiencing difficulties in collecting or sharing intelligence.

The GIF stated that by participating in these meetings and training sessions, its representatives deepened their understanding and appreciation of the latest information and international trends in current financial crimes, which play an important role in the effective prevention and suppression of ML/TF.

GIF representatives also negotiated bilateral intelligence exchanges with a number of financial intelligence units.

The Egmont Group is committed to facilitating exchanges between various financial intelligence units and law enforcement agencies and to providing a secure platform for the exchange of expertise and financial intelligence to assist in the fight against ML/TF and related crimes.

Currently, financial intelligence units from more than 160 jurisdictions are members of the Egmont Group. With the expectation of achieving effective detection, prevention and interception of serious financial crime and money



laundering activities, GIF has been actively participating in international conferences and sharing the

latest updates and international trends with domestic sectors, regulators and law enforcement agencies. **AL**

AP PHOTO



ELECTRONICS

# Chip maker Foxconn exits a semiconductor joint venture with Indian mining company Vedanta

ASHOK SHARMA, NEW DELHI

**E**LECTRONICS giant Foxconn backed out of a \$19.5 billion semiconductor joint venture with Indian mining conglomerate Vedanta Ltd. due to "external issues unrelated to the project."

Hon Hai Technology, known internationally as Foxconn, and Vedanta Limited announced their joint venture to manufacture chips and display panels in

India in February 2022. On Monday, Foxconn announced it mutually agreed to part ways with Vedanta Limited.

"This is not a negative. There was recognition from both sides that the project was not moving fast enough, there were challenging gaps we were not able to smoothly overcome, as well as external issues unrelated to the project," read a statement released Tuesday from the Taiwan-based company.

Vedanta said it has lined up other partners to set up India's first semiconductor foundry to create the chips that are used in mobile phones, refrigerators and cars.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi's government gave top priority to chipmaking as part of the country's self-reliance policy by offering financial incentives of up to 50% of project costs under a \$10 billion plan for semiconductor and display manufactu-

ring projects as India vies to become a key player in the global supply chain.

India's government leaders say they aren't too worried about the impact.

Minister of Electronics and Information Technology Ashwini Vaishnaw said both companies are committed to India's semiconductor mission, part of the country's Make in India program to foster domestic development.

Rajeev Chandrasekhar, junior minister for Electronics and Information Technology, said Tuesday that Foxconn's decision will have no impact on India's goals for semiconductor fabrication. "Both Foxconn and Vedanta have significant investments in India and are valued investors who are creating jobs and growth," he said in a tweet.

Foxconn manufactures Apple iPhones in India and plans to expand production in the country, but it takes time to establish semiconductor operations, the company said.

"Foxconn first entered India in 2006 and we are still here. The group looks forward to growing alongside India's nascent semiconductor industry," it said in a statement Tuesday. The Taiwan-based company said it's working toward applying to the government's Modified Programme for Semiconductors and Display Fab Ecosystem and looking for other partners and stakeholders both within India and abroad.

Several major investments by U.S.-based companies in India were announced during Modi's visit to Washington in June, which included meeting with top American and Indian executives as the United States tries to foster cooperation with India on artificial intelligence, semiconductor production and space.

Micron Technology agreed to build a \$2.75-billion semiconductor assembly and test facility in India, with the American chip company spending some \$800 million and India financing the rest. U.S.-based Applied Materials will launch a new semiconductor center for commercialization and innovation in India, and Lam Research, another semiconductor manufacturing equipment company, will start a training program for 60,000 Indian engineers. **MDT/AP**

## CORPORATE BITS

### NIKI to bring Nicole World Tour to Macau



Indonesian born singer-songwriter Nicole "NIKI" Zefanya is bringing her Nicole World Tour to Macau. The tour will see her perform her sophomore album "Nicole" across the globe. NIKI is appearing at The

Venetian Macao's Cotai Arena on September 30.

Tickets to the public will go on-sale from 12 p.m. on July 27.

Since her breakthrough with the EP Zephyr in 2018,

NIKI has made a powerful imprint on the pop scene, amassing a devoted fanbase and making history as the first Indonesian artist ever to perform at Coachella. After delivering her debut album MOONCHILD, the Los Angeles-based singer-songwriter "felt compelled to completely reexamine her artistic process."

"With this record I wasn't trying to emulate a certain aesthetic or vibe; I wasn't trying to be anything but myself. I learned to trust my gut and have real confidence in myself as a songwriter and producer, and it was so freeing and so much more fun," she said.

### TheArsenale pop-up Flagship Store back at City of Dreams



TheArsenale pop-up Flagship Store is back with 'We Have Seen the Future' series, featuring over 20 futuristic collectibles for "thrill-seekers looking to conquer the land, sea and sky with cutting-edge technology in ultra-luxurious style, immersing into the intersection of

speed aesthetics and excitement."

Clarence Chung, board director of Melco Resorts & Entertainment said: City of Dreams is once again pushing beyond limitation and imagination to present the new 5th season of TheArsenale Flagship Store,

bringing another level of excitement to all our valuable guests."

TheArsenale, launched the first exhibition in Macau in 2019 with nearly 500,000 visitations, is returning to this city with the theme "We Have Seen the Future", highlighting the desire of TheArsenale to innovate and create new types of mobility in all the sectors, including sea, land and air, with sustainability in mind.

The displayed items include concepts of mobilities with the latest technology complementing TheArsenale's goal to "produce less, consume less" are showcased in this exhibition.

US-CHINA

# Kerry to visit Beijing for climate talks amid efforts to revive relations

**U**.S. Special Presidential Envoy for Climate John Kerry will travel to Beijing next week to discuss strategies for limiting global warming, amid a push by the world's two largest economies to reengage on multiple issues following a sharp decline in contacts.

Kerry's office said he will arrive Sunday and depart July 19. He is due to meet with his counterpart Xie Zhenhua, with whom he has established a strong working relationship.

"During meetings with PRC officials, Secretary Kerry aims to engage with the PRC on addressing the climate crisis, including with respect to increasing implementation and ambition and promoting a successful COP28," Kerry's office said in a press release, referring to China's formal title, the People's Republic of China, and the UN Climate Change Conference scheduled to be held in the United Arab Emirates in November and December.

Kerry's visit comes on the heels of one by Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen, who appealed to China on Saturday for cooperation on climate change and other global challenges and not to let disagreements about trade and other irritants derail relations.

AP PHOTO



In a meeting with her Chinese counterpart, Vice Premier He Lifeng, Yellen defended U.S. restrictions on technology exports that rankle Beijing. She said the two governments shouldn't let such disagreements disrupt thriving economic and financial relations.

During a visit last month, U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken met with Chinese President Xi Jinping and said they agreed to

"stabilize" badly deteriorated U.S.-China ties, but America's top diplomat left Beijing with his biggest ask rebuffed: better communications between their militaries.

After meeting Xi, Blinken said China is not ready to resume military-to-military contacts, something the U.S. considers crucial to avoid miscalculation and conflict, particularly over Taiwan.

The visits by U.S. officials are part of efforts to revive relations

that are at their lowest level in decades due to disputes over trade, technology and regional security.

Beijing broke off climate discussions with Washington last August in retaliation for a visit by then-Speaker Nancy Pelosi of the House of Representatives to Taiwan.

Kerry has said China needs to step up its carbon reduction targets that now have it hitting peak output in 2030 and beco-

ming carbon neutral in 2060. The country is currently the top emitter of fossil fuels, owing partly to its continued operation and building of coal-fired power plants.

Xi's government has resisted pressure to rapidly phase out coal plants, arguing that China is still a developing nation and should not be held to the same climate standards as the U.S. and other big Western economies. **MDT/AP**

HUIZHONG WU,  
TAIPEI, TAIWAN

**C**HINA sent navy ships and a large group of warplanes, including fighter jets and bombers, toward Taiwan over two days, the island's defense ministry said yesterday, before its annual military exercises aimed at defending itself against a possible invasion.

The Chinese People's Liberation Army sent 38 warplanes and 9 navy vessels around Taiwan, between 6 a.m. Tuesday to 6 a.m. yesterday. From yesterday morning until noon time, the military flew another 30 planes, among which included J-10 and J-16 fighters.

Of these, 32 crossed the midline of the Taiwan Strait, an unofficial boundary that had been considered a buffer between the island and mainland. Later on Wednesday, another 23

planes crossed the midline.

Taiwan is scheduled to hold the annual Han Guang exercise later this month, in which its military will hold combat readiness drills against preventing an invasion. It will also conduct the annual Wan'an exercises aimed at preparing civilians for natural disasters and practicing evacuations in case of an air raid.

China claims self-ruled Taiwan as its own territory and in recent years has shown displeasure at political activities in Taiwan by stepping up the number of military planes sent toward Taiwan. In the past year, it has also started sending its navy vessels, as well as drones to circle the waters near the island.

In Tuesday and Wednesday's maneuvers, the PLA flew H-6 bombers in a large loop to the south of Taiwan, traveling past the island before looping back towards China's southern coast.

## China sends group of warplanes, navy ships towards Taiwan

AP PHOTO



Its largest military drills in recent years were in response to former U.S. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi's visit to Taiwan last August.

It fired missiles over the island in a significant escalation and the military exercises disrupted trade lanes in the Taiwan Strait and

forced airplanes to reroute their flights.

In April, the PLA held large-scale combat readiness drills in the air and waters

around Taiwan in response to the island's leader Tsai Ing-wen meeting with the current U.S. House Speaker Kevin McCarthy. **MDT/AP**

AP PHOTO



# North Korea fires its first ICBM in 3 months after making threat over alleged US spy flights

HYUNG-JIN KIM & MARI YAMAGUCHI, SEOUL

**N**ORTH Korea fired its first intercontinental ballistic missile in three months yesterday, days after it threatened “shocking” consequences to protest what it called provocative United States reconnaissance activity near its territory.

Some experts say North Korea likely launched its developmental, road-mobile Hwasong-18 ICBM, a type of solid-fuel weapon that is harder to detect and intercept than its liquid-fuel ICBMs. North Korean leader Kim Jong Un previously called the Hwasong-18 his most powerful nuclear weapon.

The missile, fired from North Korea’s capital region around 10 a.m., flew about 1,000 kilometers at a maximum altitude of 6,000 kilometers before landing in waters between the Korean Peninsula and Japan, according to South Korean and Japanese assessments. They said the missile was launched at a high angle in an apparent attempt to avoid neighboring countries.

Japanese Chief Cabinet Secre-

tary Hirokazu Matsuno said the missile flew for 74 minutes — the longest flight time recorded by any weapon launched by North Korea. The previous record of 71 minutes was registered during the test flight of the liquid-fuel Hwasong-17 ICBM last year.

South Korea’s military called the launch “a grave provocation” and urged North Korea to refrain from additional launches. Matsuno denounced North Korea’s repeated missile launches as “threats to the peace and safety of Japan, the region and international society.”

In a trilateral phone call, the chief nuclear envoys of South Korea, Japan and the U.S. agreed to sternly deal with North Korean provocations and boost their coordination to promote a stronger international response to the North’s nuclear and missile programs, according to Seoul’s Foreign Ministry.

The launch came while South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol and Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida were attending the NATO summit in Vilnius, Lithuania. In an emergency meeting of South Korea’s security council

convened by video in Lithuania, Yoon warned North Korea would face more powerful international sanctions due to its illicit weapons programs.

North Korea’s ICBM program targets the mainland U.S., while its shorter-range missiles are designed to hit South Korea and Japan, both key American allies in northeast Asia.

Since 2017, North Korea has performed a slew of ICBM tests, but some experts say the North still has some technologies to master to possess functioning nuclear-armed missiles capable of reaching major U.S. cities.

The North’s ICBM test in April was the first launch of the Hwasong-18. After that launch, Kim said the missile would enhance the North’s counterattack capabilities and ordered the expansion of his country’s nuclear arsenal to “constantly strike extreme uneasiness and horror” in its rivals.

Missiles with built-in solid propellants would be easier to move and hide, making it difficult for opponents to detect their launches in advance. All of North Korea’s previous ICBM tests used liquid fuel.

Kim Dong-yub, a professor at the University of North Korean Studies in Seoul, said Wednesday’s launch appeared to be the North’s second flight-test of the Hwasong-18.

Earlier this week, North Korea released a series of statements accusing the U.S. of flying a military spy plane close to its soil.

In a statement Monday night, Kim’s sister and top adviser, Kim Yo Jong, warned the United States of “a shocking incident” as she claimed that the U.S. spy plane flew over the North’s eastern exclusive economic zone eight times earlier in the day. She claimed the North scrambled warplanes to chase away the U.S. plane.

The U.S. and South Korea dismissed the North’s accusations and urged it to refrain from any acts or rhetoric that raised animosities.

“I would just say that we continue to urge (North Korea) to refrain from escalatory actions,” Matthew Miller, a spokesperson for the U.S. State Department, said Tuesday. “As a matter of international law, (North Korea’s) recent statements that U.S. flights

above its claimed exclusive economic zone are unlawful are unfounded, as high seas freedoms of navigation and overflight apply in such areas.”

North Korea has made numerous similar accusations over U.S. reconnaissance activities, but its latest statements came amid heightened animosities over North Korea’s torrid run of weapons tests since the start of last year. Some observers say the North wants to use an expanded weapons arsenal to wrest greater concessions in eventual diplomacy with its rivals.

“Kim Yo Jong’s bellicose statement against U.S. surveillance aircraft is part of a North Korean pattern of inflating external threats to rally domestic support and justify weapons tests,” said Leif-Eric Easley, a professor at Ewha University in Seoul. “Pyongyang also times its shows of force to disrupt what it perceives as diplomatic coordination against it — in this case, South Korea and Japan’s leaders meeting during the NATO summit.”

Kim Dong-yub, the professor, said Wednesday’s launch was likely made under the North’s previously scheduled weapons build-up programs to hone Hwasong-18 technologies, rather than a direct response to the NATO gathering or the alleged U.S. spy plane flight.

The Hwasong-18 is among an array of high-tech weapons that Kim Jong Un has vowed to introduce to deal with what he called escalating U.S. military threats. Other weapons on his wish-list are an ICBM with multi-warheads, a spy satellite and a nuclear-powered submarine. In late May, North Korea’s launch of its first spy satellite ended in failure, with a rocket carrying it plunging to the ocean soon after liftoff.

Some experts say North Korea might ramp up weapons tests around July 27, the date for the 70th anniversary of the signing of an armistice that ended the 1950-53 Korean War. North Korea calls the date “the V-Day” or “the War Victory Day.”

“Pyongyang might be manufacturing tensions ahead of its Victory Day to further strengthen solidarity domestically after having failed its first spy satellite launch in May, and then justifying future provocations by first unleashing a stream of threats and harsh rhetoric about U.S. spy planes,” said Duyeon Kim, an adjunct Senior Fellow with the Center for a New American Security.

U.N. Security Council resolutions ban North Korea from engaging in any launches using ballistic technologies. But China and Russia, both permanent members of the council, blocked the U.S. and others’ attempts to toughen U.N. sanctions on North Korea over its recent ballistic missile tests. **MDT/AP**

# Raging conflict in Sudan displaces over 3.1 million people, UN says

SAMY MAGDY, CAIRO

**A** raging conflict in Sudan has driven more than 3.1 million people from their homes, including over 700,000 who fled to neighboring countries, the United Nations said yesterday, amid growing concerns that the country is sliding into a "full-scale civil war."

Sudan has plunged into chaos since mid-April when monthslong tensions between the military and its rival, the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces, exploded into open fighting in the capital, Khartoum, and elsewhere across the northeastern African nation.

The conflict derailed Sudanese hopes of restoring the country's fragile transition to democracy, which had begun after a popular uprising forced the military's removal of longtime dictator Omar al-Bashir in April 2019. A coup, led by the military and RSE, disrupted the democratic transition in October 2021.

More than 2.4 million people have fled their homes to safer areas inside the country, according to the International Organization for Migration. Around 738,000 others crossed into neighboring countries, the agency said.

Egypt is hosting the largest number of those who fled — more than 255,500 people — followed by Chad with over 238,000 and South Sudan with around 160,800, the IOM said. More than 62,000 people fled to Ethiopia, more than 16,700 to the Central African Republic and around 3,000 to Libya, it added.

More than 72% of those displaced were from Khartoum and around 9% from West Darfur province, both places where the clashes have largely centered, the IOM said.

The IOM said 65% of those who fled into neighboring countries were Sudanese nationals and the rest were foreigners and refugees who were forced to return to their home countries.

The conflict has turned Khartoum and other urban areas into battlefields. Members of the paramilitary force have occupied people's



AP PHOTO

houses and other civilian properties since the conflict broke out, according to residents and activists. There have also been reports of widespread destruction and looting across Khartoum and Omdurman.

The clashes have killed more than 3,000 people and wounded over 6,000 others, Health Minister Haitham Mohammed Ibrahim said in televised comments last month. The casualty tally is likely much higher, according to doctors and activists.

International and regional efforts have so far failed to establish a negotiated ceasefire and allow humanitarian agencies to provide support to civilians still trapped in the conflict. U.N. Secretary-General Antonio Guterres warned over the weekend that the country was on the brink of a "full-scale civil war."

Earlier this week, a regional meeting floated the idea of deploying troops to Sudan to protect civilians. The Quartet Group, which met Monday in the Ethiopian capital, Addis Ababa, called for a summit of the Eastern Africa Standby Force, a 10-member regional bloc, to consider the proposal.

The Quartet Group is a sub-committee of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development, an eight-member East African bloc. It is headed by Kenya's President William Ruto, who called for an unconditional ceasefire in Sudan and the establishment of a humanitarian zone to help deliver humanitarian aid.

Sudan's military delegate, who was in Addis Ababa, didn't attend Monday's meeting, accusing Ruto of "impartiality." The Sudanese government has accused the Kenyan government of siding with the paramilitary force in the conflict.

## Egypt is hosting the largest number of those who fled, followed by Chad

Sudan's government, which is controlled by the military, denounced the proposal to deploy troops. It said in a statement Tuesday that any foreign forces in Sudanese territory would be considered as "aggressors."

The statement also decried comments by Ethiopia's prime minister who called for imposing a no-fly zone over Sudan.

Egypt, meanwhile, is hos-

ting a meeting today with Sudan's neighbors aimed at establishing "effective mechanisms" to help find a peaceful settlement to the conflict, according to the Egyptian presidency.

The regional diplomacy comes as talks between warring factions in the Saudi Arabian coastal city of Jeddah repeatedly failed to stop the fighting. The Jeddah talks were brokered by Saudi Arabia and the United States.

The U.K. government meanwhile imposed sanctions on six firms with links with the military and the RSE, as part of international pressure on the warring factions to stop fighting. The sanctions announced Wednesday are nearly identical to that imposed by the U.S. on both sides last

month.

The British Foreign Office said that the sanctioned firms include Al Junaid, a lucrative gold mining company, owned by the family of the paramilitary force commander Gen. Mohamed Hamdan Dagalo. Also sanctioned are GSK Advance Ltd and Tradive General Trading L.L.C., alleged front companies controlled by the Dagalo family. **MDT/AP**

## this day in history

### 1993 GREEN LIGHT FOR MANCHESTER OLYMPICS



Officials in Manchester bidding to hold the 2000 Olympic Games have been told their chances are "very, very high".

The President of the International Olympic Committee, Juan Antonio Samaranch, was speaking after a series of presentations in the city's Town Hall.

He has been touring the north-west on the day after the IOC published its report on the technical suitability of the cities competing to host the 2000 Games.

The report puts Sydney as clear favourite, but gives credit to the British bid and raises doubts over Beijing. Brasilia fell well below the standard and many expect it to be dismissed from the contest.

Chairman of the Manchester 2000 Olympic team Bob Scott said: "We've been striving for technical excellence and the report shows this has been delivered. The report shows that Manchester has a very strong bid."

Mr Samaranch and his entourage were shown the new facilities built and construction underway since their visit three years ago when Manchester was trying for the 1996 Games.

They travelled on the Metrolink tram system, went by helicopter to the equestrian centre at Haydock Park and saw the north Manchester velodrome, due for completion next year.

Earlier in the day the IOC visitors soaked up the community support at Sandilands Infant School in Sale and the Captain of Manchester United, Steve Bruce, showed off the club's silverware to remind them of the city's rich sporting traditions.

Even the rain did not dampen Mr Samaranch's familiar diplomacy: "When I find rain in a country I think always that is a very lucky country," he said.

The President and his team meet the British Prime Minister tomorrow.

The final decision about who will host the millennium Olympic Games will be made by the 90 members of the IOC in Monte Carlo on 23 September.

Courtesy BBC News

## IN CONTEXT

Manchester failed to win the competition in September and the Games went to Sydney. In 1998 there were reports that IOC members were bribed to elect Sydney as hosts, but an investigation found the Sydney bid team were guilty of "breaking the rules" rather than corruption.

The Sydney Olympics was the biggest games to date with 10,651 athletes competing in 300 events.

The games were held in Athens in 2004 and will be staged in Beijing in 2008.

On 6 July 2005 London was named as the host nation for the 2012 Olympic games after beating off tough competition from Paris.



MACAU'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

## YOUR STARS



### ARIES

Mar. 21-Apr. 19

You can expect changes at your work place. Confronting a situation will only result in indignation and misunderstandings. Talk to someone you trust if you need advice about broaching the subject.



### TAURUS

Apr. 20-May. 20

It's time to make professional changes. Some of your new friends may not be that trustworthy. Take a break; you can finally mend any disputes on the home front.



### GEMINI

May. 21-Jun. 21

Be careful how you deal with colleagues. You need to get out and be an observer. You may find that your boss is not delighted with your work lately.



### CANCER

Jun. 22-Jul. 22

Visit friends who have not been well. You need to challenge yourself. People who try to persuade you to do things their way will annoy you.



### LEO

Jul. 23-Aug. 22

Don't divulge secret information. Your added discipline will help you complete the impossible at work. Watch for empty promises that may give you false hope.



### VIRGO

Aug. 23-Sep. 22

Don't be angry, but be on your guard. Take care of any pressing medical problems that you or one of your parents may be suffering from.



### LIBRA

Sep. 23-Oct. 22

Avoid any petty ego confrontations; they could lead to estrangement if you aren't careful. Be careful signing important contracts today.



### SCORPIO

Oct. 23-Nov. 21

Your ability to deal with others will help you in getting the support you need. Your diplomatic nature will help you in straightening out unsavory situations.



### SAGITTARIUS

Nov. 22-Dec. 21

Put your energy into behind the scenes activities. If you can include them in your plans, do so. Your ideas will be well received. Take time to deal with the concerns of children.



### CAPRICORN

Dec. 22-Jan. 19

You will have a tendency to put on pounds. Discover opportunities based on the individuals you mingle with today. Get some sound advice and help setting up a workable budget.



### AQUARIUS

Jan. 20-Feb. 18

You can make a big difference to children if you are understanding of the difficulties they are experiencing. You should get out and meet new people today.



### PISCES

Feb. 19-Mar. 20

Your ability to deal with others will help you in getting the support you need. You can pick up wonderful buys if you really look hard today.

## The Born Loser by Chip Sanson



## SUDOKU

### EASY

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

### EASY+

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

### MEDIUM

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

### HARD

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

## WEATHER

	MIN	MAX	CONDITION
<b>CHINA</b>			
Beijing	21	31	rain
Changchun	20	29	thunderstorms
Chengdu	23	24	showers
Chongqing	30	37	cloudy
Fuzhou	27	38	cloudy
Guangzhou	27	36	fine
Guiyang	23	31	cloudy
Haikou	26	36	cloudy
Hangzhou	28	36	fine
Harbin	20	30	cloudy
Hefei	27	36	overcast
Nanjing	28	34	cloudy
Shanghai	28	36	overcast
Taipei	25	32	cloudy
Wuhan	30	36	fine
Hong Kong	29	32	cloudy
<b>WORLD</b>			
Moscow	13	17	rain
Frankfurt	13	27	cloudy
Paris	15	27	cloudy
London	14	23	cloudy
New York	24	32	cloudy

## CROSSWORDS

ACROSS 1- Stub; 6- No \_\_\_; 10- Cumberbund; 14- Threepio's buddy; 15- Yours and mine; 16- Pop singer Brickell; 17- Minor, in law; 18- Actress Olin; 19- Annoyed; 20- Catch on; 21- Digression; 23- Ventured; 24- Rate; 26- Measured with a watch; 27- Loud uproar; 29- El Greco's birthplace; 31- Filmmaker Riefenstahl; 32- Vigilant; 33- CIO's partner; 36- Informally; 40- Language ending; 41- Give it \_\_\_; 42- Hwys.; 43- Suppose; 44- Evening party; 46- Easy \_\_\_; 48- Trunk; 49- Chipped in; 50- Analyze a sentence; 52- Open mesh fabric; 55- Haunted house sound; 56- Honolulu's island; 57- Buy alternative; 59- End in \_\_\_ (draw); 60- Up and \_\_\_; 61- Immerse; 62- German Mister; 63- Office fill-in; 64- Politico Kefauver;

DOWN 1- Enervates; 2- Corner; 3- Vocal expression; 4- Paris pronoun; 5- Edible tuber; 6- Salk's conquest; 7- Regretted; 8- Caen's river; 9- Youth org.; 10- Opening word; 11- Idolize; 12- Brought into being; 13- Attention; 22- Round Table title; 23- Same here; 25- French friend; 26- Actress Hatcher; 27- Hint; 28- Contact, e.g.; 29- Shut; 30- 1996 Tony-winning musical; 32- Solemn assent; 33- Person engaged in spaceflight; 34- Run away; 35- Dissolve, as cells; 37- Fleet; 38- Cleveland's lake; 39- "Trinity" author; 43- Kitchen utensil; 44- Mayday!; 45- Ultimatum words; 46- Make \_\_\_ of (write down); 47- Flight segment; 48- Outdo; 49- Eastern nanny; 50- Cracker topper; 51- Attention getter; 53- Being, to Brutus; 54- Driving aids; 56- Muesli bit; 58- Greek goddess of the dawn;

### Yesterday's solution



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

# FOSSILIZED SKELETONS OF AERIAL AND AQUATIC PREDATORS TO BE AUCTIONED BY SOTHEBY'S

KAREN MATTHEWS, NEW YORK

AP PHOTO

**T**he fossilized skeletons of an aerial predator with a 20-foot wingspan and an aquatic reptile with a snake-like neck will be auctioned in New York this month, Sotheby's announced yesterday (Macau time).

The two creatures, both tens of millions of years old, will be sold July 26 in the latest sale of prehistoric fossils from the auction house that launched a new era of fossil auctions by selling a Tyrannosaurus rex named Sue in 1997.

"More than 25 years since the groundbreaking sale of Sue the T. rex at Sotheby's, we are very excited to now turn our attention to its predatory peers of the sky and the sea," Cassandra Hatton, Sotheby's head of science and popular culture, said.

The mounted skeletons that will be auctioned this month are a pteranodon, a huge bird-like animal that lived about 85 million years ago, and a plesiosaur, an 11-foot marine reptile of the type that is thought to have inspired the legend of the Loch Ness monster.



The pteranodon specimen, nicknamed Horus after the falcon-headed Egyptian god, was discovered in 2002 in Kansas in what was once an inland sea that divided the continent of North America during the Cretaceous Period, Sotheby's said.

One of the largest winged creatures that ever lived, the pteranodon flew over water and used its

long beak to fish for prey.

Almost all of the specimen's original fossil bones have been preserved, Sotheby's said.

"To get something of this size with the level of preservation is incredibly rare," Hatton said. "Generally, if you go to a museum and you find a specimen that's super well preserved, it's going to be something on the

smaller side."

Sotheby's is estimating that the pteranodon will sell for \$4 million to \$6 million.

The 11-foot-long plesiosaur was discovered in the 1990s in Gloucestershire, England and is believed to have lived about 190 million years ago.

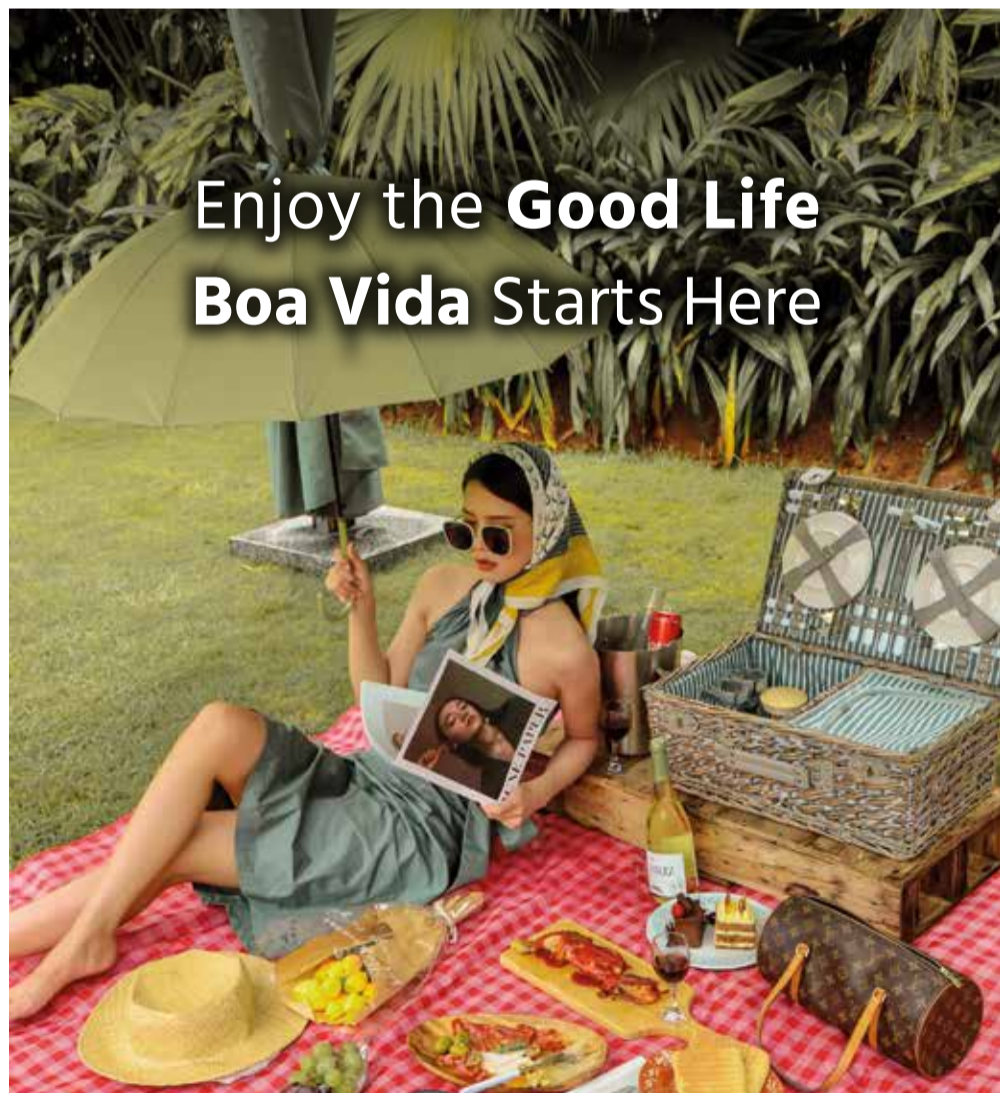
According to Sotheby's, many have drawn comparisons be-

tween plesiosaurs and the Loch Ness monster of Scottish folklore, as the plesiosaur's long neck, small head and flippers mirror recorded descriptions of the fabled monster.

Sotheby's is calling its specimen Nessie. The estimated auction price is \$600,000 to \$800,000.

Sotheby's has not identified the seller of either fossil. **MDT/AP**

AD



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MACAU'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

WIMBLEDON 2023

# Carlos Alcaraz faces old pal Holger Rune for a spot in the semifinals

**C**ARLOS Alcaraz needs to beat old pal Holger Rune to stay on course for a potential Wimbledon showdown with Novak Djokovic.

No. 1 Alcaraz and No. 6 Rune squares off today (Macau time) on Centre Court for a spot in the semifinals.

They go way back — OK, not that far back, they're both just 20, after all. Rune is six days older than the Spaniard. It's the first time since 2004 that more than one player under 21 has reached the quarterfinals at the All England Club.

Rune, who is from Denmark, lost in the first round last year in his Wimbledon debut. He's been a two-time quarterfinalist at the French Open.

They are 1-1 head to head. Rune acknowledged that he peeked ahead to this matchup when the draw came out. He recalled a time playing doubles with Alcaraz as kids.

"It's funny ... because obviously we're two singles players, I would call us," Rune said. "When a singles player plays doubles, they want to cover the court by themselves. We both try and did that a little bit, which is fun. Again, it was good, because he's amazing."

"Hopefully we can do it again, but now we're going to battle against each other."

No. 3 Daniil Medvedev says he

AP PHOTO



Spain's Carlos Alcaraz

loves playing on Court No. 1 — and that's where he'll face Chris Eubanks, a big-serving American making his Wimbledon debut at age 27, in the other men's quarterfinal.

First up on Centre Court will be defending champion Elena

Rybakina and No. 6 Ons Jabeur in the quarterfinals. It's a rematch of last year's final, which Rybakina won in three sets for her first and — so far — only Grand Slam title.

No. 2 Aryna Sabalenka will face No. 25 Madison Keys in the day's other women's quarterfinal.

### WHAT WERE TUESDAY'S OTHER RESULTS?

Seven-time champion Novak Djokovic reached his 46th Grand Slam semifinal — tying Roger Federer's men's record — with a 4-6, 6-1, 6-4, 6-3 victory over Andrey Rublev. Eighth-seeded Jannik

Sinner beat Roman Safiullin 6-4, 3-6, 6-2, 6-2 in the quarterfinals. Wild-card entry Elina Svitolina reached the semifinals by beating No. 1 Iga Swiatek 7-5, 6-7 (5), 6-2. Marketa Vondrousova defeated fourth-seeded Jessica Pegula 6-4, 2-6, 6-4. **MDT/AP**

AD

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**OPINION**

**China Daily**  
 Editorial, China Daily

**SOLOMON ISLANDS  
 RESISTS WEST'S  
 ARM-TWISTING**

Since establishing diplomatic ties with Beijing in 2019, the Solomon Islands has been under constant pressure from the “charm offensives” of some Western countries, particularly the United States and Australia, which are trying to disrupt relations between the Pacific islands country and Beijing. These disruptive efforts have intensified since Honiara signed a security pact with Beijing in April last year.

As President Xi Jinping pointed out in his meeting with visiting Solomon Islands Prime Minister Manasseh Sogavare on Monday, the friendly ties between the two countries have become a pacesetter for relations between China and other countries in the region despite the relatively late start.

Sogavare, who opened his country's embassy in Beijing on Tuesday and will visit the provincial economic powerhouses of Jiangsu and Guangdong during the rest of his seven-day trip, has shown both determination and courage to stand up to the West's arm-twisting. He signed a new deal with Beijing on deepening police cooperation, as one of the nine documents signed on Monday in Beijing's Great Hall of the People, following talks with Premier Li Qiang.

That came despite Australia trying to reinforce its position as the Solomon Islands' main security partner. Last week, Australian Deputy Prime Minister and Defense Minister Richard Marles confirmed that Australia is pushing to keep a security presence in the Solomon Islands beyond the 2023 deadline agreed by both countries last year and announced a \$25 million assistance package for the Solomon Islands' elections next year. The United States, on its part, concerned about Beijing's growing influence and presence in the region, reopened its embassy in the Solomon Islands after mothballing it for 30 years. US Secretary of State Antony Blinken hailed the move as “underlining the strength of our commitment to our bilateral relations, the people of the Solomon Islands, and our partnerships in the Indo-Pacific region”. It has promised finance to help the Solomon Islands create jobs and boost its resilience against climate change.

Nonetheless, China and the Solomon Islands agreed on Monday to establish a comprehensive strategic partnership of mutual respect and common development. Cooperation between China and the Solomon Islands has taken big strides over the past years, and it is set to further advance as Beijing has pledged to align the Belt and Road Initiative with the Solomon Islands' National Development Strategy 2016-35 and boost pragmatic cooperation in all fields. The Solomon Islands, like the other Pacific island countries, which are among the world's least developed countries, is facing a lot of challenges. And like other countries in the region, it is also vulnerable to climate change.

Beijing has repeatedly said the Pacific Ocean is big enough for cooperation between China and the US. High-ranking US officials have also said the world is big enough for both the US and China. The US and its allies should view China's cooperation with Pacific island countries through an objective, unbiased lens, rather than turning the region into a venue for major-country competition. That will only trap the Solomon Islands and the other Pacific island countries in a living nightmare.

**OAK TRUSSES RAISED TO ROOF OF  
 FIRE-RAVAGED NOTRE DAME CATHEDRAL**

THE  
**BUZZ**

A crane hoisted massive oak trusses from a barge and onto Notre Dame Cathedral in a spectacular operation to rebuild the fire-ravaged monument and bring it back to life by December 2024.

“I think it's a magical moment for a lot of Parisians this morning,” said Transport Minister Clement Beaune, noting that the Seine will be at the center of the Paris Olympics in 2024.

Gen. Jean-Louis Georgelin, appointed by French President Emmanuel Macron to oversee Notre Dame's reconstruction, said that even the heavy traffic expected during the summer Games won't stop work on the world-renowned cathedral.

Notre Dame, which overlooks the historic core of Paris from an island on the Seine, was consumed by flames in 2019. It was decided to rebuild the monument using methods of yore.

Expert carpenters used medieval techniques to construct the trusses, which measure 14 to 16 meters wide and 12 to 13 meters high.

Guided by ropes, the trusses were placed on the roof around the area of the iconic spire and the two arms of the transept, the wooden skeleton of Notre Dame. A statement said the cathedral's silhouette, now enmeshed in scaffolding, should emerge on the skyline as work advances.

AP PHOTO



Thailand's Foreign Minister Don Pramudwinai

**THAI DIPLOMAT  
 MEETS WITH SUU KYI  
 IN DETENTION, SAYS  
 SHE WANTS TO JOIN  
 TALKS ON CRISIS**

**JIM GOMEZ & EDNA  
 TARIGAN, JAKARTA**

THAILAND'S top diplomat said yesterday that he met with ousted Myanmar leader Aung San Suu Kyi in detention over the weekend and she conveyed her openness to engage in talks to resolve the crisis gripping her strife-torn nation.

Thai Foreign Minister Don Pramudwinai is the only government official outside of Myanmar known so far to have met with Suu Kyi since she was detained with other officials when the army seized power from her elected government on Feb. 1, 2021.

He told his counterparts in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, who are meeting in Indonesia's capital, that Suu Kyi was in good health when he met with her for more than an hour on Sunday.

“She encourages dialogue,” Don told reporters in Jakarta when asked what message Suu Kyi conveyed to him. “Obviously we're trying to find a way to settle with Myanmar.”

The military takeover and the crackdown on the armed resistance to it

plunged the country into deadly chaos. Western and European governments, including the United States, have imposed sanctions on Myanmar's military government and demanded the immediate release of Suu Kyi and other political detainees.

Nay Phone Latt, a spokesperson for the National Unity Government — Myanmar's main opposition organization, which views itself as the country's legitimate government — told The Associated Press that the information about the meeting between the Thai foreign minister and Suu Kyi raised questions, and Myanmar's people are uncertain that it actually took place.

He added that the military junta's attempt to try to use the influence of Suu Kyi at this time is indirectly admitting that they are no longer in a good situation concerning the country's political crisis.

Suu Kyi, 78, is serving a total of 33 years imprisonment after being convicted on a raft of charges that her supporters and rights groups say were politically motivated in an attempt to discredit her and legitimiz-

the military's takeover while preventing her from returning to politics.

A legal official from Myanmar who insisted on anonymity for fear of being punished by the authorities because he is not authorized to release information about Suu Kyi's legal proceedings told the AP that Suu Kyi's lawyers on Wednesday submitted appeal arguments to the Supreme Court on her behalf for the five corruption cases where she was found guilty.

The Myanmar crisis is at the top of the agenda of the ministerial meetings of ASEAN, a 10-nation bloc that includes Myanmar and Indonesia, which is the group's chairman this year.

ASEAN has been under international pressure to address the crisis, and it again banned Myanmar's generals from attending ASEAN foreign ministerial meetings in Jakarta after the military government largely ignored an emergency plan to take steps to end the crisis.

The generals responded by accusing ASEAN of violating the bloc's bedrock principles of nonintervention in each other's domestic affairs. **MDT/AP**

AP PHOTO



**Baltic Sea** Investigators found traces of subsea explosives in samples taken from a yacht that has been one aspect of a probe into the sabotage of the Nord Stream gas pipelines under the Baltic Sea last year, European diplomats have told the United Nations Security Council. They say that the investigation hasn't yet established who the perpetrators were and whether a state was involved. Denmark, Sweden and Germany have been investigating the Sept. 26 attack.

AP PHOTO



**France** Widespread riots sparked by the police killing of a teenager with North African roots have revealed the depth of discontent roiling poor neighborhoods — and given a new platform to the increasingly emboldened far right. The far right's anti-immigration mantra is seeping through a once ironclad political divide between it and mainstream politics. More voices are now embracing a hard line against immigration for France's social problems.

AP PHOTO



**Serbia's** president said yesterday the real reason why the country's intelligence chief is facing U.S. sanctions is his position toward Russia and not corruption allegations. The U.S. on Tuesday imposed sanctions on Aleksandar Vulin, accusing him of involvement in illegal arms shipments, drug trafficking and misuse of public office. The Treasury's Office of Foreign Assets Control said Vulin used his public authority to help U.S.-sanctioned Serbian arms dealer Slobodan Tesic move illegal arms shipments across Serbia's borders.