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AP PHOTO



Thailand The bitter battle to name the next prime minister took a major turn yesterday as Parliament voted to deny Pita Limjaroenrat, whose progressive Move Forward Party won a surprise victory in May's election, a second chance to be confirmed for the post. Pita had assembled a coalition of parties holding a majority in the House of Representatives. But his nomination for prime minister was defeated in a joint vote of the House and Senate last week, with conservative military-appointed senators mostly refusing their support.

AP PHOTO



India Rising water from the Yamuna river yesterday reached the outer boundary walls of the iconic Taj Mahal and submerged one of its adjacent gardens after record monsoon rains swelled rivers across northern India over the last three weeks. The flooding at the 17th-century white marble monument in Agra city came as heavy floods had killed at least 100 people in parts of north India, swept away houses and bridges and resulted in deadly landslides.

AP PHOTO



Israel Doctors held a two-hour strike yesterday to protest Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's plan to overhaul the country's judiciary. The doctors say the plan will endanger public health by granting Netanyahu and his allies greater control over the country's healthcare system.

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GRAND PRIX

GP TO CELEBRATE 70TH ANNIVERSARY WITH 11 RACING EVENTS, FOUR INTERNATIONAL ONES

RENATO MARQUES

The celebration of the 70th anniversary of the Macau Grand Prix this November will see some significant changes beyond what was already expected and previously announced. In a press conference organized by the GP organizing committee (MGPOC) held yesterday afternoon, the organizers noted several important changes, including the transformation of the most local of the Macau races (Macau Roadsport Challenge) into a "one make race" with all drivers having to use either the Toyota GR86 or the Subaru BRZ cars, which are virtually the same vehicle, just sold under two different brands.

The same cars are also expected to be racing in a second event taking place on the main weekend of the Grand Prix (Nov. 16 to 19), this time in a special event titled "Macau GP 70th anniversary Challenge."

As for the event headlines, few surprises, with the confirmation of the expected return of the FIA Formula 3 and Macau GT World Cups, already announced by the FIA in early June, which join the also expected and confirmed by the organizers, TCR World Tour that will have its Grand Finale in Macau this year, with rounds 19 and 20 taking place at the Guia Circuit.

Completing the event headlines will be the expected return



to the pre-pandemic level of the Macau Motorcycle GP which will have this year its 55th edition. The race should see the return of the most famous road racing names in the world. However local organizers have not yet divulged any names until the racers who have been invited have confirmed their participation, the coordinator of the MGPOC and president of the Sports Bureau, Pun Weng Kun said to the media.

The 11 racing events expected to take place starting Nov. 11 and continuing over six days will begin on the first weekend with the return of the Formula 4 single-seaters from the 2023 F4 Chinese

Championship, which is in its ninth season this year.

This championship will have its last two rounds (17 and 18) in Macau and will be also an opportunity for Macau people to get to know some new local racers who are participating in this year's championship including names like the current championship leader, Tiago Rodrigues, as well as Chui Ka Kam and Cheong Man Hei.

Included also in the first weekend will be the traditional GBA GT Cup for GT4 specifications cars and a TCR Asia Challenge race.

As for the fifth and last support race of the first weekend, the

MGPOC said that they are still finalizing the agreements for this event, which will be announced at a later stage.

BUDGET GROWS TO MOP260M, 'BIG SIX' CONTRIBUTE MOP120M

Growing from last year's 180 million patacas, the budget for this year's event is set at 260 million patacas, Pun said, when questioned by the media on the topic.

The major sponsors of the event will be the six gaming concessionaires (big six) that contrary to other years will all sponsor with an equal share of 20 million patacas each.

At yesterday's press conference, representatives from the six gaming operators presented the respective checks confirming their sponsorship of the event.

The total contribution from the same six companies for last year's GP budget was 28.5 million patacas, which means that the contribution for this year's event has grown by over 421%.

LI-NING AND MORE PARTNERSHIPS THIS YEAR

AT yesterday's press conference, the MGPOC presented a series of new partnerships that will be added to the main sponsors of the event. Among them for the first time is the Li Ning (China) Sports Goods Co. Ltd that will be supplying uniforms for all the GP staff. Another company – Macau Café – will join the list of sponsors via their products.

A partnership with MacauEC Limited will also include a series of collaborations with international artists to add their designs to GP marketed products, which fans will be able acquire as souvenirs. BE@RBRICK Macau will also partner with the event, placing some of their pieces in "strategic" locations in the city, and promoting the GP, organizers announced.

Grand Prix to expand facilities with temporary construction

RENATO MARQUES

GRAND Prix (GP) organizers are aiming to expand the current support facilities for the local event with the construction of a two-story temporary building across from the GP building to host, among others facilities, a new media center, the coordinator of the Macau Grand Prix Organizing Committee (MGPOC), Pun Weng Kun, told the media yesterday on the sidelines of the press conference

that announced further details on this year's celebratory edition of the GP.

"This year we will have a new initiative since the GP building has limited space which is not able to fit everything. We aim to allocate some space to the opposite side [of the GP building] where we usually build a temporary pit [to have this time] a larger, temporary building with another level. This new space also includes the relocation of the media center [into the new

area] to have more space and be able to accommodate all the media that have been showing interest in the event," Pun said.

He added this will not be a permanent building but a temporary prefabricated facility that will be used to try to understand requirements and to test the system and to promote improvements in the facilities.

It is not clear for the time being what this new facility will look like and what it will include. However, it certain

is that, if the media center relocates to such a facility, it will stop other facilities from facing the Guia Circuit.

At the same opportunity, Pun noted that not only will the GP this year include two weekends of racing, but that the whole month of November will be dedicated to the event with a "Fun Run" at Guia Circuit being prepared for the first weekend of the month as well as other promotional events, which complement the GP.



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Times

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China to strike harder on organized illegal border-crossing for gambling

ANTHONY LAM

IN full compliance with the central government's policy against cross-border gambling, border control will be tightened to curb organized illegal immigration for gambling, Zhang Ning, spokesperson of China's National Immigration Administration has been cited as saying.

According to China News, Zhang was asked at a recent press conference about the country's efforts in restraining people from leaving the country to conduct gambling activities.

The spokesperson admitted that foreign and domestic criminal syndicates had joined together to transport Chinese nationals out of the country for gambling or telecom fraud.

She said the administration will try to control the situation in three areas.

First, tighter border controls will be implemented to obstruct channels of illegal human and resource movements. Tactics



such as technologies, techniques and human experience will be employed to achieve results. Suspicious individuals will be arrested upon interception. Syndicate chiefs will be pursued.

Second, domestic education will be escalated to warn people against gambling and swindling, through means such as billboards, placards and videos at border checkpoints, direct text messages, as well as announce-

ment of typical cases.

Third, a peer-report mechanism will be established to encourage members of the public to report on suspicious activities, in the hopes of creating peer impacts on the prevention

of illegal gambling and other activities.

China's state-owned Xinhua News Agency reported that immigration departments nationwide have led the crackdown on crimes against national border (frontier) control and on cross-border criminal activities.

In the first six months of 2023, 16,000 cases of obstructing national border (frontier) control were handled by the authorities, with 32,000 suspects arrested. Another 547 suspects were detained in 375 drug-related cases, with over 5 tonnes of drugs seized.

Xinhua also cited data released by the administration as disclosing that around 80.3 million of the total entries and exits were made by mainland residents, and 74.9 million by residents from the two special administrative regions and Taiwan. The number of documents issued for travel between the mainland and Hong Kong, Macau and Taiwan jumped 15-fold year on year to 42.8 million, it added.

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活動詳情
Event Information
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Cotai Expo Halls A & B, The Venetian Macao

K-POP 流行舞大賽
K-POP Dance Competition

K歌之王 歌唱比賽
Karaoke King Singing Competition

小廚神工作坊
Little Master Chef Workshop

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入場 泊車 穿梭巴士
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穿梭巴士站點 (11:00-22:30 14:15-20:15) 每15-20分鐘一班
Shuttle Bus Station
1 南灣澳門國際銀行大廈
Nam Van Luso International Banking Ltd. Head Office
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UM OFFERS OVER 30 SUMMER PROGRAMS

The University of Macau (UM) is offering more than 30 summer programs and training courses this year, including the summer camps organised by two state key laboratories for the first time. The programs cover a range of fields, such as integrated circuits, smart cities, biomedical science and health sciences, and artificial intelligence and big data, among others. In addition, the Centre for Continuing Education has offered more than 20 courses to students and faculty members from over 20 mainland universities, the UM said in a statement.

MOU WITH GONGBEI UNDERWAY TO OPTIMIZE SUPERVISION OF AQUATIC PRODUCTS' SAFETY

The Municipal Affairs Bureau (IAM) plans to sign two memorandums of understanding (MoU) with the Gongbei Customs District on edible aquatic animals and chilled aquatic products to further optimise supervision of the food safety of aquatic products. The announcement was made at the "Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Sanitary Inspection, Animal and Plant Inspection and Food Safety Control Conference 2023" in Shenzhen, which the IAM attended. During the conference, representatives from the three regions had "in-depth exchanges and sharing of experiences [...], and established cooperative liaison mechanisms to further enhance existing exchanges and cooperation."

MAN ARRESTED FOR EXTORTION OVER PHONE

A local resident has been arrested on suspicion of extortion after finding a mobile phone and asking the owner to provide a "thank you fee" of MOP500. According to the Judiciary Police (PJ), a woman in her 20s lost her mobile phone in Taipa and used her friend's phone to search for it. The next day, the 20-year-old suspect asked for a fee after meeting up with her in Taipa. After she refused to give him money, the man tried to snatch back the phone. He admitted that he had committed the crime "out of greed."

PASSPORTS OF BOTH SARs SEE HIGHER RANKINGS IN GLOBAL INDEX

ANTHONY LAM

THE passports of both of China's Special Administrative Regions (SARs) have made progress in the past year on a global ranking.

International consultancy of residence and citizenship Henley & Partners issued their annual Henley Passport Index ranking yesterday.

The consultancy ranks passports of all jurisdictions according to the number of destinations their holders can access without a prior visa. It is based on data from the International Air Transport Association (IATA), the trade association for airlines in the world.

With no change in the number of visa-free destinations – 144 – the Macau passport is ranked 31, four places up from last year, on

the table. The Hong Kong passport, meanwhile, is a place up to 17 this year, with 170 visa-free destinations, dropping a destination.

The Portuguese passport is a place up from last year – with unchanged visa-free destinations at 187, it is ranked 5 on the table. The Chinese passport jumps six places up to 63 with 80 visa-free destinations. The Philippine passport jumped from 80th to 74th place even with a visa-free destination short from last year's 67 locations.

Singapore made it to the top of the table with the same number of visa-free destinations as in last year. Its ranking also rose up a place.

In addition, last year's top place – Japan – slid two places in the past year, with a loss of four visa-free destinations, from 193 to 189.



TOURISM

Visitor arrivals steady at 2.2 million in June

STAFF REPORTER

VISITOR arrivals totalled 2.2 million in June, recording a slight drop of 0.2% when compared to the month prior.

Macau has recorded the arrival of almost 12 million visitors during the first half of this year.

According to government records, some 11.65 million have entered Macau between January and June, a number that represents a daily average of over 64,000 visitors, according to provisional data from the tourism bureau.

Data from the Statistics and Census Service (DSEC)

shows that the June figure represents an upsurge of 480.5% year-on-year, albeit from a low base as another wave of Covid-19 outbreak occurred last year in June.

As regards the source of visitors, the number of visitors from mainland China jumped by 329.4% year-on-year to 1.44 million, with those travelling under the Individual Visit Scheme (793,614) surging by 487.9%.

The tourism bureau has attributed the good results to their "dedicated unreserved efforts in destination marketing" with a reliance on both online and offline promotional

measures that have been rolled out since borders reopened.

For the upcoming months, the Macao Government Tourism Office says it will continue its efforts on increasing international visitation after the promotions held in Lisbon, Portugal and Bangkok, Thailand, in April and June and most recently in Seoul, Korea.

In the first half of 2023, the number of visitor arrivals expanded by 236.1% year-on-year to 11,645,877; overnight visitors (6,067,823) and same-day visitors (5,578,054) jumped by 372.5% and 155.8% respectively.



CRIME

MAN APPREHENDED FOR ALLEGED THEFT ON RUA DO CAMPO

Aman has been apprehended on an allegation of theft in a footbridge elevator on Rua do Campo.

According to the reports, the Public Security Police Force (PSP) said it received a report from an older adult about the loss of property. The woman told the police she had lost her wallet near an elevator at the footbridge on Rua do Campo. She reported a loss of MOP1,900 in cash and her ID docu-

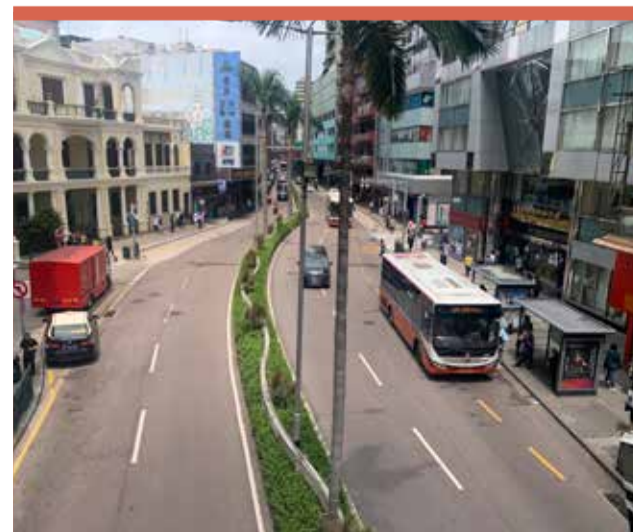
ments.

Upon receiving the report, the police commenced an investigation with the help of the public surveillance camera system. Surveillance footage showed a man, 40, who also holds a mainland travel endorsement, wandering around the footbridge and the elevator, looking at pedestrians' personal belongings.

The police also discovered that in the elevator, the man had stolen the

woman's property with his own backpack, worn in front, to cover his activities.

The day following the report, the police intercepted the man at the same location. The man, who is alleged to be unemployed, declined to make any disclosure or confession. However, the police managed to discover that the man had converted MOP1,900 into RMB1,705 at a currency exchange shop. **AL**



Secretary Cheong suggests 'unfamiliarity' is the reason for complaints on removal of Catholic statues

ANTHONY LAM

IT was the public's "unfamiliarity" with the Coloane Catholic statues project that generated complaints, Secretary for Administration and Justice André Cheong told a press conference Tuesday.

He was asked by the Times if his arms of the government would enhance future communications with the public, following three consecutive post-commencement project announcements.

The public expressed their dissatisfaction with the Municipal Affairs Bureau's (IAM) handling of the three occasions, saying that these matters, which are of public interest, were not announced before they commenced.

On Monday, a social media page revealed that a set of Catholic statues at the Coloane end of the Estrada do Istmo had been removed. Social media users de-



manded an explanation from the IAM.

Cheong said that the IAM had always wanted to restore the sta-

tures. Communications have long been underway with the Diocese of Macau. He then questioned the necessity of public consultations

for every job the IAM undertakes in the future, hinting that governance will not be able to progress efficiently.

"I think this incident was caused by people [being] unfamiliar with the matter thinking the IAM destroying the statues after seeing a single photo," Cheong said. "The work of the government is very transparent. There's no way to cover them."

He added that when a bidding process concludes, all data is available on the IAM website.

After the abrupt elimination of 18 trees in the Fai Chi Kei district, members of the public questioned why the IAM did not make any pre-commencement announcements on the project to assuage public worries.

On Monday evening, the IAM assured in a statement that the statues were relocated to a factory for restoration "after seeing damage from previous typhoons." The IAM assured that the statues will be reinstalled in the same locations under the instructions of the Diocese of Macau.

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AP PHOTO



Chinese livestreamers set their sights on TikTok sales to shoppers in the US and Europe

ZEN SOO, HONG KONG

CHINESE livestreamers have set their sights on TikTok shoppers in the U.S. and Europe, hawking everything from bags and apparel to crystals with their eyes on a potentially lucrative market, despite uncertainties over the platform's future in the U.S. and elsewhere.

In China, where livestreaming e-commerce is forecast to reach 4.9 trillion yuan (\$676 billion) by the year's end, popular hosts like "Lipstick King" Austin Li rack up tens of millions of dollars in sales during a single livestream. Many brands, including L'Oreal, Nike and Louis Vuitton, have begun using livestreaming to reach more shoppers.

But the highly-competitive livestreaming market in China has led some hosts to look to Western markets to carve out niches for themselves.

Oreo Deng, a former English tutor, sells jewelry to U.S. customers by livestreaming on TikTok, delivering her sales pitches in English for about four to six hours a day.

"I wanted to try livestreaming on TikTok because it aligned with my experiences as an English tutor and my past jobs working in cross-border e-commerce," Deng said.

Since 2019, western e-commerce platforms like Amazon and Facebook have experimented with livestreaming e-commerce after seeing the success of Chinese platforms like Alibaba's Tmall and Taobao, and Douyin, TikTok's Chinese counterpart in China.

TikTok started testing its live shopping feature last year. Registered merchants from the U.S., Indonesia, Vietnam and Singapore, among other countries, can now sell via livestreams online.

But livestreaming e-commerce has yet to take off in the U.S. The livestreaming e-commerce market in the U.S. — the world's biggest consumer market — is expected to grow to \$68 billion by 2026, according to research and advisory firm Coresight Research.

The relatively lukewarm reception led Facebook to shut down its live shopping feature last year. As for TikTok, the platform has the added risk of potentially facing U.S. restrictions due to tensions between Beijing and Washington.

TikTok, whose parent company is Chinese technology firm ByteDance, has been criticized for its Chinese ties and accused of being a national security risk due to the data it collects.

TikTok did not provide comment for this story.

Despite the scrutiny faced by TikTok, many Chinese hosts view the U.S. as a vast ocean of opportunity, an emerging market that has yet to be saturated with livestreaming hosts.

"There's more opportunity for growth to target America because the competition is so fierce in China," said Shaun Rein, founder and managing director of China Market Research Group in Shanghai. "Livestreaming in the U.S.

is at a beginning starting point. There's more opportunity to grab market share."

Rein also said that Chinese merchants can often price items higher in the U.S., where customers are accustomed to paying higher prices compared to in China, where product margins are often razor-thin.

"The format is going to work, because it's been proven," said Jacob Cooke, CEO of e-commerce consultancy WPIC.

Smaller companies, including those in China that are attempting to sell on TikTok, might lack enough data on what customers want in markets like the U.S, he said. "Once they do get that figured out, they'll start to have very good success," Cooke said.

For some U.S. shoppers, the livestream format is a fascinating form of entertainment.

Freisa Weaver, a 36-year-old who lives in Florida, stumbled on

"There's more opportunity for growth to target America because the competition is so fierce in China

SHAUN REIN
FOUNDER AND MANAGING DIRECTOR
CHINA MARKET RESEARCH GROUP, SHANGHAI

a TikTok livestream selling crystals 10 months ago. It employed a popular tactic called a "lucky scoop" where buyers pay a set price to receive several random items scooped from a large container of crystals. TikTok earlier this year banned this practice from livestreams to comply with gambling laws, although some sellers still offer grab bags of goodies which appear to be scooped off-camera.

"I came across it scrolling

through TikTok and at first I was entertained by the lucky scoops," Weaver said, describing livestreaming shopping as an addictive hobby. "Now I'm a regular buyer in some of the live feeds on TikTok."

"I personally enjoy the interactions with the host and the possibility of finding something special and unique just for me," she said

Her favorite channel is Meow Crystals, an account operated by Chinese streaming hosts that often does flash sales selling crystals for as little as \$2, and grab bags of crystals from \$10. TikTok has yet to roll out its in-built shopping feature on a wide scale, so many streamers, including those from Meow Crystals, often redirect viewers to place orders on an external website.

"The host is willing to go to the warehouse for you and get special items, or they remember what you like and offer it to you as soon as you are online," Weaver said.

Chinese livestreaming hosts try various tactics to stand out and build a loyal customer base. For some, it's personalized customer service, while others use quirky catchphrases and concoct flamboyant online personalities to keep their customers entertained.

"Every host is always experimenting and develops their own tactics," Deng, the livestream host said, declining to share the secrets of her own approach.

Boot camps to teach Chinese livestreamers how to increase their sales have sprung up, including a popular one hosted by Yan Guanghua, one of TikTok's earliest livestreamers in China.

Like Deng, Yan is a former English tutor who turned to TikTok livestreaming after a government crackdown on the private education industry.

Yan started out hawking yoga clothes, electronics and apparel online. Finding she had a knack for selling to customers via livestreaming, she at times has racked up sales of 5,000 pounds (\$6,510) per stream selling to customers in Britain.

Now she charges about \$1,000 for two-day boot camps she holds two or three times a month, teaching people how to sell more on livestreams.

Yan says she has trained more than 600 people, mostly from China but also from the U.S. and Africa.

Like many other TikTok livestreaming hosts, she hopes the overseas livestreaming e-commerce market will take off like it has in China.

"It's hard to say what the future of this industry is. It's difficult to predict," Yan said. "But what we know is that TikTok is the most popular platform right now and there is still opportunity here."

MDT/AP

AP PHOTO



Visitors pass by a wire fence decorated with ribbons written with messages wishing for the reunification of the two Koreas at the Imjingak Pavilion in Paju, South Korea, near the border with North Korea, yesterday

North Korea silent about its apparent detention of the US soldier who bolted across the border

HYUNG-JIN KIM,
KIM TONG-HYUNG,
TARA COPP & LOLITA C.
BALDOR, SEOUL

NORTH Korea was silent about the highly unusual entry of an American soldier across the Koreas' heavily fortified border although it test-fired short-range missiles Wednesday in its latest weapons display.

Nearly a day after the soldier bolted into North Korea during a tour in the border village of Panmunjom, there was no word on the fate of Private 2nd Class Travis King, the first known American detained in the North in nearly five years. The North's missile launched yesterday morning were seen as a protest of the deployment of a U.S. nuclear-armed submarine in South Korea the previous day and weren't likely related to King's border crossing.

"It's likely that North Korea will use the soldier for propaganda purposes in the short term and then as a bargaining chip in the mid-to-long term," said Yang Moo-jin, president of the University of North Korean Studies in South Korea.

King, 23, was a cavalry

scout with the 1st Armored Division who had served nearly two months in a South Korean prison for assault. He was released on July 10 and was being sent home Monday to Fort Bliss, Texas, where he could have faced additional military discipline and discharge from the service.

He was escorted as far as customs but left the airport before boarding his plane. It wasn't clear how he spent the hours until joining the Panmunjom tour and running across the border Tuesday afternoon. The Army released his name and limited information after King's family was notified. But a number of U.S. officials provided additional details on condition of anonymity because of the sensitivity of the matter.

King's mother told ABC News she was shocked when she heard her son had crossed into North Korea.

"I can't see Travis doing anything like that," Claudine Gates, of Racine, Wisconsin, said.

Gates said the Army told her on Tuesday morning of his son's entrance to North Korea. She said she last heard from her son "a few days ago," when he told her he would return

soon to Fort Bliss. She added she just wants "him to come home."

White House press secretary Karine Jean-Pierre said that the U.S. government was working with North Korean counterparts to "resolve this incident." The American-led U.N. Command said Tuesday the U.S. soldier was believed to be in North Korean custody.

"We're closely monitoring and investigating the situation," U.S. Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin told a Pentagon news conference, noting he was foremost concerned about the troop's well-being. "This will develop in the next several days and hours, and we'll keep you posted."

It wasn't known whether and how the U.S. and North Korea, which have no diplomatic relations, would hold talks. In the past, Sweden, which has an embassy in Pyongyang, provided consular services for other Americans detained in North Korea. But its embassy's Swedish diplomatic staff reportedly haven't returned to North Korea since the country imposed a COVID-19 lockdown in early 2020 and ordered out all foreigners.

Some observers say North Korea and the U.S.

could still communicate via Panmunjom or the North Korean mission at the U.N. in New York.

Cases of Americans or South Koreans defecting to North Korea are rare, though more than 30,000 North Koreans have fled to South Korea to avoid political oppression and economic difficulties since the end of the 1950-53 Korean War.

Tae Yongho, a former minister at the North Korean Embassy in London, said North Korea is likely pleased to have "an opportunity to get the U.S. to lose its face" because King's crossing happened on the same day a U.S. submarine arrived in South Korea. Tae, now a South Korean lawmaker, said North Korea won't likely return King because he is a soldier from a nation technically at war with North Korea who voluntarily surrendered to the North.

Panmunjom, located inside the 248-kilometer-long Demilitarized Zone, has been jointly overseen by the U.N. Command and North Korea since its creation at the close of the Korean War. Bloodshed has occasionally occurred there, but it has also been a venue for diplomacy and tourism. **MDT/AP**

ADVERTORIAL

GREAT TIMES

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RELIVE the charm of traditional Cantonese delicacies with a modern interpretation. With over 30 years of culinary experience, Chef Tam Yim Chan, Executive Sous Chef of MGM COTAI who helming *Chún* restaurant is renowned for his traditional and innovative Cantonese creations. As part of the recent Star Chefs Discovery Journey gastronomic event, Chef Tam is bringing two handcrafted nostalgic flavors with a creative twist exclusively to *Chún* at MGM COTAI for a limited time.

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The *Steamed Mud Crab with Huadiao Wine* features the finest seasonal mud crab from the Pearl River Delta Region. Chef Tam handpicks the crab meat and extracts the roe, steamed with 20-year-aged 'Nu Er Hong' rice wine to elevate and accentuate the natural sweetness and umami flavors. The homemade glass noodles infused with red dragon fruit juice absorb all of the rice wine crab broth, making it a subtle and unforgettable delicacy.



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PUTIN'S WAR

Russia launches intense nighttime attacks across Ukraine, targeting the southern port city of Odesa

HANNA ARHIROVA,
KYIV, UKRAINE

MISSILES and drones launched by Russia in an intense series of nation-wide nighttime air attacks have damaged critical port infrastructure in southern Ukraine, including grain and oil terminals, and wounded at least 12 people, Ukrainian officials said yesterday.

The air raid targeted the southern port city of Odesa for a second night in a row, days after Russian President Vladimir Putin said that Moscow would halt its participation in the Black Sea Grain Initiative, which enabled crucial grain exports to reach the world, including many countries facing the threat of hunger.

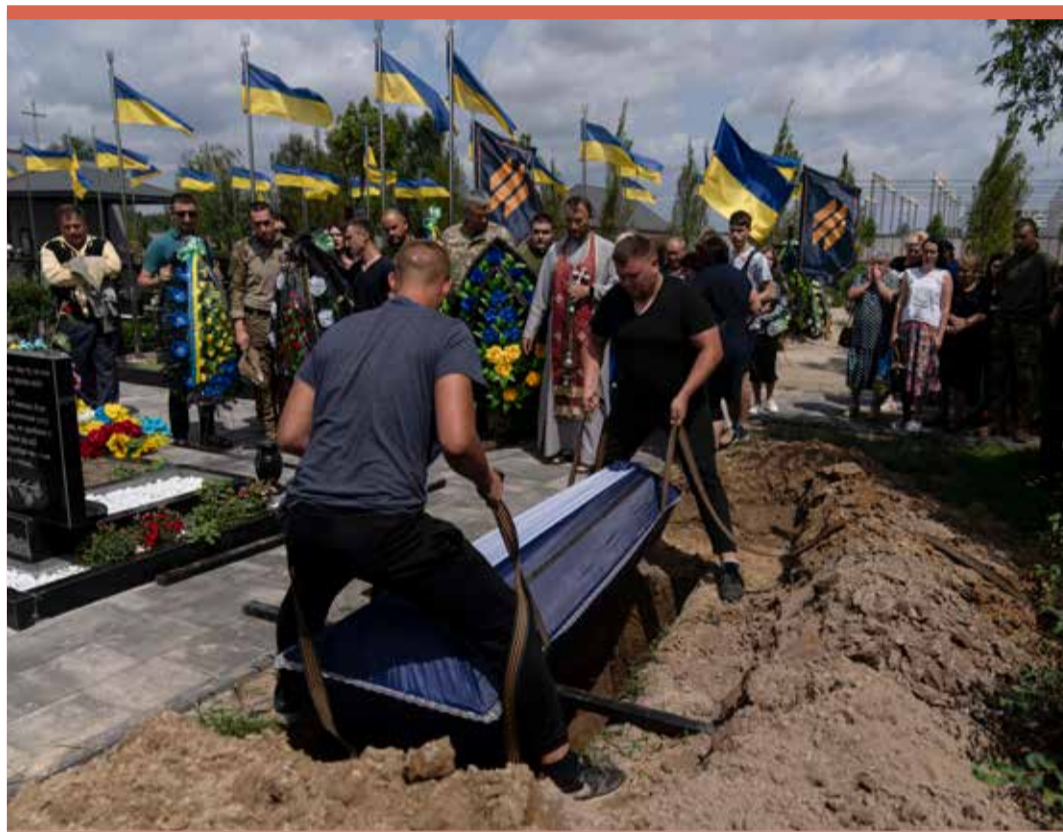
Meanwhile, Russian emergency officials in Crimea said that more than 2,200 people were evacuated from four villages because of a fire at a military facility. The fire also caused the closure of an important highway, according to Sergey Aksyonov, the Russia-appointed head of the peninsula, which was annexed in 2014.

He didn't specify a cause for the fire at the facility in Kirovsky district, which came two days after an attack on a bridge linking Russia to Crimea that the Kremlin has blamed on Ukraine.

"A difficult night of air attacks for all of Ukraine," Serhii Popko, head of the Kyiv City Military Administration, said in a statement on Telegram. Ukrainian authorities reported more drones and missiles sent against more parts of Ukraine than in recent days.

Popko said the attacks were especially fierce in Odesa for a second consecutive night. The Ukrainian army's Operational Command South reported that at least 12 civilians sustained injuries in the attack on the Odesa region.

Odesa's regional Gov. Oleh Kiper said the attack



AP PHOTO

included "dozens of missiles and strike drones" aimed at the port and infrastructure facilities. Debris from missiles and drones that were shot down fell on apartment buildings, seaside resorts and warehouses, sparking fires and injuring several people.

Russia targeted the port and key infrastructure with Oniks and Kh-22 missiles, Kiper said. Grain and oil terminals were hit, damaging storage tanks, loading equipment and causing a fire. Emergency service workers were deployed.

Wheat prices rose more than 2.5% on Tuesday and over 3% on Wednesday amid the Russian attacks in Odesa, which is a key hub for exporting grain to the world, illustrating jitters in global markets just days after Moscow pulled out of the grain deal, which allowed Ukraine to ship grain to parts of the globe where people are going hungry.

However, Wednesday's trading price of \$6.91 a bushel was still more than 85% below last year's peak.

At least six residents of Odesa, including a 9-year-old boy, have sought me-

dical assistance, because of injuries caused by shattered glass and other objects.

The remnants of a downed Kh-59 missile created a large crater in another part of the city, leaving three civilians injured and several buildings damaged.

Eight Shahed drones were also shot down in the wider Odesa region, where two warehouses containing tobacco and fireworks were reported damaged.

Russia also attacked Kyiv with Iranian-made Shahed drones but with "no result," said Popko. Ukrainian air defense intercepted all the drones aimed at the capital and a preliminary investigation showed there were no casualties.

The attack in Odesa was accompanied by other strikes across Ukraine. In the past 24 hours, at least one person was killed and 21 other people were wounded in Russian attacks. One person died in the northeastern Kharkiv region, near the volatile Kupyansk area. In Donetsk, 10 people were injured in the shelling of seven cities, including Avdiivka, Mariinka and Chasiv Yar.

Two people were woun-

ded in shelling in the Mykolaiv region and one person was injured in the Kherson region.

In Ukraine's Zhytomyr region, Russian drone attacks damaged some infrastructure and private homes, according to regional Gov. Vitalii Bunechko. No casualties were reported.

Officials in the Ukrainian regions of Poltava and Kirovohrad also reported attacks.

The latest barrage came one day after Russia carried out what Moscow's Defense Ministry described as a "strike of retribution" on Ukrainian military facilities near Odesa and the coastal city of Mykolaiv, using sea-launched precision weapons.

Russia blames Ukraine for a July 17 strike on the Kerch Bridge, which links Russia with the Crimea, and is a key artery for military and civilian supplies.

Ukraine's top security agency appeared to tacitly admit to a role in the July 17 attack, but stopped short of directly claiming responsibility, echoing their responses after previous similar attacks on the Kerch Bridge. **MDT/AP**

this day in history

1944 HITLER SURVIVES ASSASSINATION ATTEMPT



Adolf Hitler has escaped death after a bomb exploded at 1242 local time at his headquarters in Rastenberg, East Prussia.

The German News Agency broke the news from Hitler's headquarters, known as the "wolf's lair", his command post for the Eastern Front.

A senior officer, Colonel Claus Schenk von Stauffenberg, has been blamed for planting the bomb at a meeting at which Hitler and other senior members of the General Staff were present.

Hitler has sustained minor burns and concussion but, according to the news agency, managed to keep his appointment with Italian leader Benito Mussolini.

Hermann Goering, Commander-in-Chief of the Luftwaffe and Hitler's designated successor, went to see Hitler when he heard about the attack.

The German News Agency said the German people were deeply grateful that no serious harm had come to their leader and that fate had allowed him to "accomplish his great task".

"The attempt which has failed must be a warning to every German to redouble his war effort," said the newsreader.

And the deputy head of the press, Helmut Suendermann, stated: "The German people must consider the failure of the attempt on Hitler's life as a sign that Hitler will complete his tasks under the protection of a divine power."

This is the third attempt on Hitler's life and underlines the tension in Germany now faced with a two-front war as the allies take northern France and the Red Army close in on the Reich.

This week has seen the heaviest American bombing of Germany since they entered the war.

The 8th Air Force from Britain and the 15th Air Force from Italy sent about 5,500 heavy bombers and some 4,000 fighter planes to attack oil and aircraft stores in Germany and Austria.

The Soviet Army has made major advances on the front line between Brest-Litovsk and Lvov - a strategic city that is the key to capturing southern Poland.

Courtesy BBC News

IN CONTEXT

The following day Adolf Hitler made a radio broadcast to the German nation detailing the failed assassination and thanked fate for allowing him to continue his "work".

The planned coup, known as the July plot, was led by senior military leaders like Field Marshal Erwin von Witzleben and General Ludwig Beck.

After Claus von Stauffenberg had placed the briefcase under the table next to Hitler, he left the building, heard the bomb explode and assumed Hitler was dead.

He flew to Berlin to join Von Witzleben and Beck and take over using the German Home Army. But through a series of lucky circumstances Hitler was only slightly injured, though three other people were killed.

Von Stauffenberg was arrested the same day and shot. The rest of the conspirators were tried and hanged or offered the chance to commit suicide. Eight of those executed were hanged with piano wire from meat-hooks and their executions filmed and shown to senior members of the Nazi Party and the armed forces.

MACAU'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

YOUR STARS

ARIES
Mar. 21-Apr. 19
You should be able to get a lot done. Exercise is always a good way to relieve stress. Update and review your personal investments. Be careful while traveling.

TAURUS
Apr. 20-May. 20
You can expect to experience delays or additional red tape if you deal with institutions. Try to enlist the support of your coworkers first. You need a change of pace.

GEMINI
May. 21-Jun. 21
Don't ignore any emotional issues that could be causing problems. Property deals will pay big dividends. Your generous nature could be taken advantage of.

CANCER
Jun. 22-Jul. 22
Someone you care about may let you down or criticize your methods. A trip to visit relatives should be rewarding. Try to slow down, and take another look.

LEO
Jul. 23-Aug. 22
Find out what they're up to, and see if you can pick up where you left off. You will be able to pick up on future trends if you keep your eyes peeled for unique ideas.

VIRGO
Aug. 23-Sep. 22
Make the necessary changes that will enable you to advance financially. You will learn a great deal about yourself if you go somewhere secluded.

LIBRA
Sep. 23-Oct. 22
You can expect to have a problem with your lover. Don't put off the things that they have asked you to do. Don't let someone try to bully you into doing things their way.

SCORPIO
Oct. 23-Nov. 21
Opportunities to upgrade your living standards will come through your lover or through joint financial investments. Be careful while traveling.

SAGITTARIUS
Nov. 22-Dec. 21
Try to spend time with those having similar interests. Delays are evident. Investments that deal with property will pay off but could cause conflict with some family members.

CAPRICORN
Dec. 22-Jan. 19
Lending and borrowing may be a problem. You may as well work on projects that will allow you to make progress. You can help them more than they can help you.

AQUARIUS
Jan. 20-Feb. 18
You may want to clear the air where older relatives are concerned. You may have problems with those you live with. Try to keep an open mind.

PISCES
Feb. 19-Mar. 20
It's time to make professional changes. Make changes regarding your status in society. You may want to take a look at your direction in life.

The Born Loser by Chip Sanson



SUDOKU

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

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

WEATHER

	MIN	MAX	CONDITION
CHINA			
Beijing	25	35	cloudy
Changchun	22	31	cloudy
Chengdu	22	33	cloudy
Chongqing	24	32	rain
Fuzhou	27	36	rain
Guangzhou	25	33	thunderstorms
Guiyang	20	28	cloudy
Haikou	27	33	thunderstorms
Hangzhou	26	34	rain
Harbin	20	30	thunderstorms
Hefei	24	29	thunderstorms
Nanjing	26	28	rain
Shanghai	27	31	rain
Taipei	26	31	rain
Wuhan	26	31	showers
Hong Kong	28	32	thunderstorms
WORLD			
Moscow	12	21	overcast
Frankfurt	14	26	overcast
Paris	14	26	overcast
London	12	23	overcast
New York	23	30	overcast

CROSSWORDS

ACROSS 1- Judges' garments; 6- Lots of lots; 11- Deface; 14- Atremble; 15- Unfettered; 16- ___ see it...; 17- Memento; 18- Abandoned village; 20- Battleship letters; 21- Gusto; 23- Gogol's "___ Bulba"; 24- Dike, Eunomia and Irene; 26- Direct route; 28- Vigor; 30- Wretched hut; 31- Itty-bitty; 32- Worries; 33- Paris possessive; 36- It smells; 37- Type of sanctum; 38- Island dance; 39- Tree used to make baseball bats; 40- Elevator stop; 41- Sri ___; 42- Part of Hispaniola; 43- More nasty; 44- Afternoon performance; 47- Pet term for man's best friend; 48- Sash; 49- Mongolian desert; 50- Mayday; 53- Cowardly; 56- Salt water; 58- Bauxite, e.g.; 59- Of the kidneys; 60- Weighted down; 61- Sun, talk; 62- Elude; 63- Discharge;

DOWN 1- Queue after Q; 2- Cries of discovery; 3- Gratuity; 4- Just manage, with "out"; 5- Combined action; 6- Aquarium buildup; 7- Mindy of "The Facts of Life"; 8- Aussie hopper; 9- Curvy letter; 10- Lounges; 11- New Zealand aboriginal; 12- Dam extending across the Nile; 13- Washer cycle; 19- Like some orders; 22- Put Down; 25- Writer Sarah ___ Jewett; 26- Tree insect; 27- At any time; 28- Sicilian smoker; 29- Revivalists; 30- Capital on the Red River; 32- Benjamin; 33- Pleasant aspect; 34- Actress Sommer; 35- Coal-rich region; 37- Netman Nastase; 38- Dutch name of The Hague; 40- Trumpet flourish; 41- Readable; 42- "Java" trumpeter; 43- Crowd; 44- Windows predecessor; 45- Without ___ in the world; 46- Stun gun; 47- Holmes's creator; 49- Delighted; 51- Singles; 52- Mailed; 54- Increase, with "up"; 55- Kind of fingerprint; 57- Piece of cloth, tabloid newspaper;



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- 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
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- Electricity - Report 28 339 922
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MAMMALS MAY HAVE HUNTED DOWN DINOSAURS FOR DINNER, RARE FOSSIL SUGGESTS

MADDIE BURAKOFF,
NEW YORK

AP PHOTO

AN unusual find in China suggests some early mammals may have hunted dinosaur for dinner.

The fossil shows a badgerlike creature chomping down on a small, beaked dinosaur, their skeletons intertwined. The find comes from a site known as “China’s Pompeii,” where mud and debris from long-ago volcanoes buried creatures in their tracks.

“It does seem like this is a prehistoric hunt, captured in stone, like a freeze frame,” University of Edinburgh paleontologist Steve Brusatte, who was not involved with the study, said in an email.

The fossil, described Tuesday in the journal *Scientific Reports*, shows two creatures from around 125 million years ago, during the Cretaceous period.

Even though the mammal is much smaller, researchers think it was attacking the dinosaur when they both got caught in the volcanic flow, said study author Jordan Mallon, a paleobiologist at the Canadian Museum of Nature. The mammal is perched on the dinosaur, its paws gripping the reptile’s jaw and a hind limb while its teeth plunge into the ribcage.

“I’ve never seen a fossil like this

before,” Mallon said.

That mammals ate dinosaur meat had been proposed before: another fossil showed a mammal died with dinosaur remains in its gut. But the new find also suggests that mammals may have actually preyed on dinosaurs several times their size, and didn’t just scavenge ones that were already dead, Mallon said.

“This turns the old story on its

head,” Brusatte said. “We’re used to thinking of the Age of Dinosaurs as a time when dinosaurs ruled the world, and the tiny mammals cowered in the shadows.”

The study authors acknowledged that there have been some fossil forgeries known from this part of the world, which Mallon said was a concern when they started their research. But after doing their own preparations of

the skeletons and analyzing the rock samples, he said they were confident that the fossil — which was found by a farmer in 2012 — was genuine, and would welcome other scientists to study the fossil as well.

The mammal in the fossil duo is the meat-eating *Repenomamus robustus*, about the size of a house cat, Mallon said. The dinosaur — *Psittacosaurus lujiatunensis* —

was about as big as a medium-sized dog with a parrotlike beak.

This species was a plant eater, but other dinosaurs were meat eaters or ate both. In the end, dinosaurs were probably still eating mammals more often than the other way around, Mallon said.

“And yet we now know that the mammals were able to fight back, at least at times,” he said. **MDT/AP**



Archaeologists in Louisiana save artifacts 12,000 years old from natural disasters and looters

STEPHEN SMITH &
KEVIN MCGILL,
VERNON

AP PHOTO

LONG buried under the woods of west central Louisiana, stone tools, spearpoints and other evidence of people living in the area as long as 12,000 years ago have become more exposed and vulnerable, due to hurricanes, flooding and looters.

This summer, archaeologists have been gingerly digging up the ground at the Vernon Parish site in the Kisatchie National Forest. They have been sifting through dirt to unearth and preserve the evidence of prehistoric occupation of the area.

“The site appears to have been continuously occupied throughout prehistory, as evidenced



Gray Tarry, bottom left, an archeological field technician for the University of Louisiana at Lafayette, digs on an archeological excavation site in Kisatchie National Forest, La.

by a wide range of stone tools and pottery dating to each Native American

cultural era up to European contact,” the U.S. Forest Service said in an

news release.

The site was found by surveyors in 2003, according

to the Forest Service. After hurricanes Laura and Delta uprooted trees, disturbing and exposing some of the artifacts, Kisatchie National Forest officials used hurricane relief money to begin salvage excavations to learn more about the site, and to preserve it.

“Between the looting and the hurricane damage we were really in danger of losing this site over time,” Forest Service archaeologist Matthew Helmer said during a media tour of the site in June.

Helmer, walked amid areas already excavated, pointing to changes in soil color and texture that, like the crude artifacts being excavated, can give clues as researchers work to determine facts about the people who occupied

the area at different times over the millennia.

“We’re really writing the history of these peoples that lived prior to 1492, all the way back 10,000-plus years,” said Helmer.

It’s a welcome opportunity for Mark Rees, a professor of archaeology at the University of Louisiana at Lafayette and director of the Louisiana Public Archaeology Lab.

Still, Rees laments that the work is hampered by people who have made unauthorized digs and made off with material from the site.

“It’s like walking into the archive and finding a book that’s so rare it’s one of a kind and it predates writing itself, it’s like tearing a page out of that book and walking off with it,” said Rees.

The salvaged artifacts will be sorted, catalogued and examined as researchers at the archaeology lab seek to make determinations about past cultures at the site. **MDT/AP**

MACAU'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

Women's World Cup player payments will be distributed by federations

ANNE M. PETERSON

FIFA President Gianni Infantino could make no guarantee yesterday that the member federations will distribute the \$30,000 payments promised to every player at the Women's World Cup.

He said at a news conference ahead of the tournament opener that he's engaging with member federations on the issue. The payments are made the national federations, which are expected to pay the players.

But there is no mechanism to directly pay the players the money, which could be life-changing for some.

"We are moving of course in the right direction, we have been consulting with associations, with players, to try to go in the right path," Infantino said. "We have issued these recommendations, but we have an association of associations. So whatever payments we do, we will go through the associations and then the associations will, of course, make

AP PHOTO



the relevant payments to their own players. We are in touch with all the associations."

FIFA had previously confirmed that the 732 players participating in the World Cup will be paid at least \$30,000 each. The paycheck rises if teams do well, with each player for the winning

team earning \$270,000.

Infantino said there are complications including residency and taxation that are best handled by federations.

The payment is significant for many players: the average annual salary worldwide for women who play professionally is \$14,000.

FIFA's agreement means that half of the total World Cup prize money fund of \$110 million will be paid to the players in the 32 teams. The prize pool is more than three times the \$30 million prize fund FIFA paid out at the 2019 Women's World Cup in France.

The global players' union, known as FIFPRO, helped push FIFA to dedicate a percentage of the prize money to the players themselves. The union sent a letter to FIFA in October on behalf of players from 25 national teams calling for more equitable conditions and prize money.

However, the prize money fund is still far below the \$440 million paid to the men who played in the World Cup last year in Qatar. Infantino said the goal is to equalize the prize money by the 2026 men's World Cup and the 2027 women's edition.

Infantino said the Women's World Cup is expected to generate a half-billion dollars in revenue and the organization will break even. For the first time, the commercial rights for the Women's World Cup were sold separately from the men's tournament.

The tournament opens Thursday with both co-hosts involved. New Zealand will play Norway in Auckland, and Australia will take on Ireland in Sydney. **MDT/AP**

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OPINION

China Daily
Editorial, China Daily

CRITICAL STAGE FOR BUILDING A BEAUTIFUL CHINA CALLS FOR COUNTRY'S FIRM RESOLVE

While some foreigners might regard China's insistence on the construction of an "ecological civilization" as merely paying lip service to environmental and ecological protection, the remarkable changes that the country has made in that regard over the past decade prove otherwise. Such obvious changes as the disappearing of the smog and polluted waters that previously plagued the country represent only the most visible aspects of the country's efforts to build a beautiful China for future generations and bring tangible benefits to the Chinese people today.

Those endeavors have entailed a paradigm shift in the country's development model. The shift that prioritizes the three defensive battles for a blue sky, clear water and clean land is a painful and ongoing process. But the gains are worth the pain. The former extensive type of development would have become increasingly unviable as the environmental costs it was incurring outweighed the economic benefits. In 2012, China's energy consumption per unit of gross domestic product was 2.5 times the world average. In other words, as a global manufacturing center, China was sacrificing its future for short-term growth.

It became increasingly clear that the country needed to get out of what was a deceptive "comfort zone" before it became a frog-boiling-in-a-pot scenario. The consensus that it was time for a change provided the country's leadership with strong national support to introduce a series of laws, policies and practices to transform that desire into concrete actions.

It is the efficiency of the nation's governance system as well as the leadership's ability to view the bigger picture, and plan and coordinate actions accordingly that have ensured the best solutions are in place for the ecological protection and restoration from mountain tops to the seas, desertification is being checked and national parks are being established to protect and boost the nation's rich biodiversity.

With ecological and environmental indicators being included into the criteria for evaluating the performance of local governments, and relevant laws and regulations revised, the pursuit of green development has become a measurable task, and one for which the persons in charge can be held accountable for grave mistakes, prevarication or any other form of malpractice. Thanks to such initiatives, the country has also made remarkable progress in reducing its energy consumption, promoting clean technology and applying green technology.

However, as President Xi Jinping pointed out in a meeting of the central authorities on ecological civilization held in Beijing on Tuesday, the structural, root and trend pressures on ecological and environmental protection have still not been fundamentally relieved. The construction of an ecological civilization is still in a critical period. But Xi stressed that the country never compromise its green development because of the downward pressure on its economy. Building a beautiful China is integral to the goal of becoming a modern socialist country.

Therefore, the country must double down on the fast development of the green economy, finance, technology and industries, and foster the prosperity of such service sectors as tourism and green consumption, turning them into major growth drivers.

CHINA'S LEADER SAYS THE COUNTRY WILL WORK WITH US ON CLIMATE IF POLITICAL CONDITIONS ARE MET

THE BUZZ

China is willing to work with Washington on reducing global warming as long as its political demands are met, the country's vice president told U.S. climate envoy John Kerry yesterday.

The official Xinhua News Agency quoted Vice President Han Zheng as telling Kerry that addressing climate change was "an important aspect of China-U.S. cooperation," but was predicated on mutual respect. He said it must proceed "on the basis of U.S. attendance to core issues that concern both parties,

fully engaging and exchanging ideas."

During this week's visit, Kerry has told China's top diplomat Wang Yi that President Joe Biden's administration is "very committed" to stabilizing relations between the world's two biggest economies as they seek to restart high-level contacts.

Ties between the countries have hit a historic low amid disputes over tariffs, access to technology, human rights, China's territorial claims in the South China Sea and threats against self-governing Taiwan.

AP PHOTO



Richard Moore, the Chief of Britain's Secret Intelligence Service, also known as MI6

BRITAIN'S MI6 CHIEF SAYS HIS SPIES ARE USING AI TO DISRUPT FLOW OF WEAPONS TO RUSSIA

JILL LAWLESS, PRAGUE

BRITISH spies are already using artificial intelligence to hamper the supply of weapons to Russia, the head of Britain's MI6 agency said yesterday, predicting that Western spies will increasingly have to focus on tracking the malign use of AI by hostile states.

In a speech that depicted machine learning as both a huge potential asset and a major threat, Richard Moore said his staff at Britain's foreign intelligence agency "are combining their skills with AI and bulk data to identify and disrupt the flow of weapons to Russia for use against Ukraine."

Calling China the "single most important strategic focus" for his agency, Moore said, "we will increasingly be tasked with obtaining intelligence on how hostile states are using AI in damaging, reckless and unethical ways."

Moore, who has previously warned that the West was falling behind rivals in the AI race, said his service "together with our allies, intends to win the race to master the ethical and safe use of AI."

But he said AI would not replace the need for human spies, arguing that the "human factor" will remain crucial in an era of rapidly evolving machine learning.

"As AI trawls the ocean of open source, there will be

even greater value in landing, with a well-cast fly, the secrets that lie beyond the reach of its nets," he said.

He argued that "the unique characteristics of human agents in the right places will become still more significant," highlighting spies' ability to "influence decisions inside a government or terrorist group."

Moore also told an audience at the British ambassador's residence in Prague that Russia's military campaign in Ukraine had run out of steam and "there appears to be little prospect of the Russian forces regaining momentum."

He said Ukraine's counteroffensive was proving "a hard grind," but he was optimistic it would succeed.

Moore said the government of President Vladimir Putin was beset by "venality, infighting and callous incompetence" and the mutiny by Wagner Group mercenary leader Yevgeny Prigozhin had "exposed the inexorable decay of the unstable autocracy over which Putin presides."

He accused Russia of using Wagner as a tool of imperialism in Africa, offering leaders in the Central African Republic, Mali and other countries a "Faustian pact" of protection in return for handing over mineral wealth to Russia.

Moore also called out Iran for fueling further conflict in

Ukraine by supplying Russia with drones and other weapons — a policy he said "has provoked internal quarrels at the highest level of the regime in Tehran."

Speaking publicly about spycraft is still something of a novelty for Britain's intelligence services. The government refused even to confirm the existence of MI6 until 1992, and public speeches by its leaders are infrequent.

Moore chose to give yesterday's address in the Czech capital, home of the 1968 "Prague Spring" freedom movement that was crushed by Soviet tanks.

Moore's only other public speech since becoming head of the Secret Intelligence Service, or MI6, almost three years ago also touched on the power and threat posed by AI. In the November 2021 address, he accused the West of being slow to reckon with AI's disruptive impact and of lagging behind adversaries who are "pouring money and ambition" into AI and other cutting-edge technologies.

In that speech, he said China was the agency's "single greatest priority" and said Britain and its allies "must stand up to and deter Russian activity which contravenes the international rules-based system."

Three months later, Russia invaded Ukraine. MDT/AP

AP PHOTO



Russia The upper house of parliament yesterday unanimously approved a bill outlawing gender-affirming procedures, sending the measure to President Vladimir Putin to be signed into law. The bill, which already was approved in the lower house, bans any "medical interventions aimed at changing the sex of a person," as well as changing one's gender in official documents and public records.

AP PHOTO



British Prime Minister Rishi Sunak apologized yesterday for the treatment of gay veterans, saying a previous ban on LGBTQ+ people serving in the U.K. military was "an appalling failure of the British state." The apology came after an independent review published yesterday estimated that hundreds of veterans were dismissed or suffered under an official ban on homosexuality in the British armed forces that was enforced until 2000.

AP PHOTO



South Africa Vladimir Putin has agreed not to attend an economic summit in Johannesburg next month after being asked to stay away by host country South Africa, which was facing a major legal quandary over whether to arrest the Russian president on an International Criminal Court warrant. The August summit brings together Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa — a bloc of developing economies known as BRICS. Officials have said that Putin wants to attend the gathering but have been trying to persuade him to stay away to avoid the legal and diplomatic fallout.