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# Times

FOUNDER & PUBLISHER Kowie Geldenhuys EDITOR-IN-CHIEF Paulo Coutinho www.macaudailytimes.com.mo

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**A NEW PUBLIC TENDER FOR THE ACQUISITION OF TAXI OPERATION LICENSES WILL BE SOON LAUNCHED, THE TRANSPORT BUREAU ANNOUNCED**

P4

**MGTO PARTNERS WITH AIR MACAU TO ATTRACT MORE TOURISTS FROM JAPAN**

P3

**CHINA TO ADDRESS ECONOMIC DIFFICULTIES HEAD-ON: POLITBURO**

P6



AP PHOTO



**South Korea's** Constitutional Court yesterday overturned the impeachment of the public safety minister ousted over a Halloween crowd surge that killed nearly 160 people last October at a nightlife district in the capital, Seoul. The court's decision allows Lee Sang-min to return as the minister of the interior and safety. Vice Minister Han Chang-seob has served as acting minister since February when South Korea's opposition-controlled parliament voted to impeach Lee.

AP PHOTO



**Thailand** A vote expected in the Parliament later this week to select a new prime minister will be postponed, the house speaker said yesterday, adding to growing uncertainty over when a new government can take office, more than two months after the general election. House of Representatives Speaker Wan Muhamad Noor Matha told reporters the vote he had scheduled for Thursday would be postponed pending a decision from the Constitutional Court.

AP PHOTO



**Afghanistan** The Taliban announced yesterday that all beauty salons must now close as a one-month deadline ended, despite rare public opposition to the edict. Sadiq Akif Mahjer, spokesman for the Taliban-run Virtue and Vice Ministry, did not say whether it would use force against salons that do not comply. The ruling is the latest curb on the rights and freedoms of Afghan women and girls following edicts barring them from education, public spaces and most forms of employment.

More on backpage

# PEDESTRIAN STREET

Gov't considers making Rua da Felicidade pedestrian-only P2



GAMING

**CASINO OPS TO TRANSITION INTO VEGAS, SINGAPORE MODEL**

P3



COOL YEAR  
**FIREMAN CALLED LESS IN THE FIRST HALF OF 2023**

P4

### OUTER HARBOUR FERRY SERVICES TO BE HALTED AGAIN FOR FOURTH BRIDGE

To make way for the construction of the Fourth Macau-Taipa Bridge, ferry services at the Outer Harbour Ferry Terminal will be suspended from 1 am to 12 noon tomorrow and next Monday. The Marine and Water Bureau (DSAMA) suggests that the public confirm schedules for these days through various online channels prior to their departures. About 10 days ago, ferry services at the terminal were also halted for construction, but construction took longer than anticipated because the prefabricated sector of the bridge slid back to the ship.

### DUMPLING SHOP'S CONTAMINATED SOY MILK

A sample of the soy milk sold by an eatery located near San Ma Lo tested for bacillus cereus levels in excess of allowable limits, the Municipal Affairs Bureau (IAM) has announced. The bureau added that the shop had been ordered to suspend sales of the product and conduct thorough cleaning of its equipment to ensure food safety. The soy milk is homemade and sold only at the shop. The IAM emphasized that only after passing subsequent tests can the shop resume selling the product.

### MGTO TO START TAKING APPLICATIONS FOR SUBSIDIES FROM END-JULY

Macao Government Tourism Office (MGTO) will start accepting applications for its three subsidy schemes from July 31. The application period will run until Sep. 11. All applications will only be accepted through the government One Account app. The three schemes focus on community local tours, gastronomic tours and marine tours. Winning applications will need to be conducted within the next year. Details of the subsidy schemes and application requirements can be found at <https://www.gov.mo/pt/servicos/ps-1660/>



## IC CONSIDERS MAKING 'HAPPINESS STREET' PEDESTRIAN-ONLY

ANTHONY LAM

**T**he pedestrian-only San Ma Lo project may return with some changes as the government announced its plans yesterday to turn the famous "Happiness Street" into a pedestrian zone.

The news was announced by president Leong Wai Man of the Cultural Affairs Bureau (IC) at a press conference following a Cultural Development Committee plenary meeting.

Officially referred to as Rua da Felicidade and colloquially called 'Happiness Street' by English speakers due to its meaning in Portuguese, the street is popular among local residents and tourists for its number of renowned and historic eateries in the district. The street featured green doors and windows, according to the IC, which were later mistakenly painted red.

The entire proposal will concern work on "Happiness Street," Travessa do Mastro, Travessa do Aterro Novo, Rua do Matapau and Travessa de Ho Lo Quai. As part of a long-term project, the IC may initially trial the pedestrian-only zoning on weekends and gradually roll this out to all days. The plan is to block these streets and reserve them exclusively for pedestrians from morning to evening, and motor traffic will only be allowed partially during off-

-peak hours.

Given the strong connections between the project and the San Ma Lo pedestrian zoning done with the participation of casino operators early this year, the IC president was asked if a similar form of cooperation will be staged again. In response, Leong, said that the first phase will rely mostly on government efforts "to create conditions to revive the neighborhood." The government efforts that she referred to involve converting the streets to become pedestrian-only and the placement of art installations across the neighborhood.

Communications with neighborhood associations and business associations on this have been conducted, the IC president disclosed. "Many businesses have expressed their support for the project," Leong added, saying that opinions from individual residents are now being gathered.

Discussions with IC's government counterparts have also been undertaken, said Leong, with support for the project. These counterparts included the Transport Bureau (DSAT), the Municipal Affairs Bureau (IAM) and the Public Security Police Force (PSP), among other bureaus.

When questioned by the Times if the project will exert additional pressure on nearby roads, Leong

noted that the DSAT considered the project to be feasible from a transport perspective.

Many drivers do take the alleyways beside San Ma Lo when they need to travel between the east and the west coasts of Macau Peninsula, so as to avoid the traffic on San Ma Lo.

Last month, the DSAT announced the permanent closure of the opening from Avenida de Amizade to the Sewage Treatment Plant on Jun. 22, citing previous evaluations supporting the viability of such a change. However, the closure only lasted for 14 hours or so.

Leong insisted that the proposal was announced only following evaluations proving its feasibility. Admitting that closure to motor traffic will have downstream impacts, she emphasized that "Happiness Street" does not normally have heavy traffic, hinting that the closure would not significantly impact motor traffic on the street.

She was almost immediately questioned by another journalist about the necessity of barring motor traffic on these small streets when they do not "normally have heavy traffic."

The culture official defended that the closure will help with inaugurations of art installations and that pedestrians will not need to make way for motor traffic.

In response to concerns that

the area prone to traffic congestion after the commencement of the project might expand significantly, and thereby eventually discourage interested members of the public from visiting the district, Leong disagreed, saying that people who want to reach Largo do São Domingos cannot alight there, suggesting that people will be willing to walk to the pedestrian-only zone.

Leong was asked to elaborate on the necessity of the initiative to achieve revival of the neighborhood and increase tourism, given that similar districts in Hong Kong - Central and Sheung Wan, which also have small alleys and old buildings - have been active even without a pedestrian-only zone.

She said that each example is individual and unique. "Some places can be bustling even without pedestrian zones," she said. "We have been hearing neighborhood associations calling for the government to do something to energize the district."

Several businesses in the district, including several Cantonese restaurants, several Chinese dessert eateries, a Macanese restaurant and an Indonesian grill bistro, have always seen packed shops and long queues.

For the time being, the IC has no timeline for the establishment of the pedestrian zone.

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DIRECTOR & EDITOR-IN-CHIEF\_Paulo Coutinho paulocoutinho@macaudailytimes.com  
ASSISTANT EDITOR\_Lynzy Valles  
CONTRIBUTING EDITORS\_Leanda Lee, Severo Portela, Sheyla Zandonai

NEWSROOM AND CONTRIBUTORS\_Alex Torrão, Albano Martins, Annabel Jackson, Anthony Lam, Emilie Tran, Grace Yu, Irene Sam, Ivo Carneiro de Sousa, Jacky I.F. Cheong, Jenny Lao-Phillips, João Palla Martins, Jorge Costa Oliveira, Joseph Cheung, Juliet Risdon, Linda Kennedy, Paulo Cordeiro de Sousa, Renato Marques, Richard Whitfield, Sérgio de Almeida Correia, Viviana Seguí DESIGNERS\_Miguel Bandeira, Rebeca Almeida | ASSOCIATE CONTRIBUTORS\_JML Property, MdME Lawyers, PokerStars, Ruan Du Toit Bester | NEWS AGENCIES\_Associated Press, MacauHub, MacaoNews, Xinhua SECRETARY\_Yang Dongxiao amy@macaudailytimes.com

SEND NEWSWORTHY INFORMATION AND PRESS RELEASES TO: NEWSROOM@MACAUDAILYTIMES.COM WEBSITE: WWW.MACAUDAILYTIMES.COM.MO

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ADMINISTRATOR & CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Kowie Geldenhuys kowie@macaudailytimes.com

OFFICE MANAGER Juliana Cheang juliana@macaudailytimes.com

ADDRESS Av. da Praia Grande, 599, Edif. Comercial Rodrigues, 12 Floor C, MACAU SAR Telephones: +853 287 160 81/2 Fax: +853 287 160 84

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**GAMING**

# Casino ops to transition into Vegas, Singapore model: Macquarie

**M**ACAU casino operators are slated to transition to a Las Vegas Strip or Singapore model, a transformation which will focus on switching Macau from being a gaming to a non-gaming destination, according to analysts from the Macquarie Equity Research.

Analysts Linda Huang and Chad Beynon said, "We expect Macau's gaming operators to transition to the Las Vegas Strip/Singapore model."

Amid the gaming law overhaul last year, six casino operators pledged to invest a total of MOP118.8 billion (\$15 billion) after being granted 10-year operating licenses, with the bulk of the money (up to 92%, according to the analysts) pledged to non-gaming projects.

Macau has been keen to diversify away from gambling and into tourism and leisure for some decades.

Fitch Ratings, earlier this year, forecast this transition to be a slow process, amid the operators' moves in launching non-gaming offerings, citing human capital constraints and skill gaps posing a key



challenge for Macau to substantially reduce its high dependence on the gaming industry.

In a report, analysts at Macquarie Equity Research stated "The operators are following the trend of Las Vegas and Singapore, where non-gaming revenue contributes to a significant portion of their overall revenue."

Macau's current non-gaming attractions have focused on retail

and dining, with some entertainment offerings such as nightclubs, cinema, and concert and exhibition arenas.

However, it pales in comparison to Las Vegas, which boasts daily entertainment and draws an international crowd.

Challenges remain for Macau as it still lacks connectivity with international markets, infrastructure and a shortage of skilled labour.

According to the analysts, Macau's gaming operators are expected to lower the percentage of their overall contribution derived from gaming from 83% in 2023 to approximately 40% and 68% of Las Vegas and Singapore, respectively.

Also, the analysts forecasted that the city's gross gaming revenue (GGR) will return to pre-Covid levels in the fourth quarter of 2023. LV

**TOURISM**

# MGTO partners Air Macau to attract more tourists from Japan

RENATO MARQUES

**T**o attract larger visitor numbers from Japan, the Macao Government Tourism Office (MGTO) and Air Macau jointly organized a familiarization trip dedicated to the tourism operators of Tokyo and Osaka, the office noted in a press statement.

The Japanese tourism industry operator representatives, comprising 14 people, have been in Macau from July 20 to 23 to experience new attractions and places first-hand.

The itinerary included a visit to the Macau Grand Prix Museum and the Lai Chi Vun Shipyards, as well as the Historic Centre attractions. Operators learned about new and upcoming hotel facilities and had the opportunity to taste various delicacies.



The purpose, according to MGTO, is to "inspire the design of more Macau tourism products targeting Japanese tourists."

The delegation also participated in a travel mart and exchange with the local tourism industry aiming to facilitate busi-

ness matching opportunities and promote the joint exploration of business opportunities.

According to MGTO, the travel mart has gathered over 60 participants including representatives from local travel agencies, hotels, airlines, vessel and

leisure companies, as well as representatives of travel agencies from the Japanese delegation.

In 2019, Macau received nearly 300,000 Japanese tourists, being the third-largest international tourist source market that year.

With the lifting of border restrictions at the beginning of 2023, the aviation industry has progressively resumed both arriving and departing international flight services with MGTO hoping that through these promotion activities, more visitors from this traditional source can return to an expanded portfolio of attractions in Macau.

According to official figures from the Statistics and Census Service, between January and May this year, only 17,123 visitors arrived from Japan. This figure pushed Japan back to the eighth ranking of the places bringing international tourists to Macau, placing below Singapore and just above India.

According to recent statements last weekend from MGTO's director, Maria Helena de Senna Fernandes, the office expects an increase in visitor numbers this month and in August, raising the expected daily visitor number to some 80,000 per day.



## LIU GUANGYUAN REMOVED FROM POST OF FOREIGN MINISTRY'S COMMISSIONER IN HK

China's central government has decided to remove Liu Guangyuan from the post of the Commissioner of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region. Liu is now the deputy director of its liaison office in Hong Kong, according to the office's official website. The appointment comes two years after Liu took up the role as head of the Chinese foreign ministry's office in Hong Kong.

## SSM TO START ISSUING E-MEDICAL CERTIFICATE FROM TODAY

The Health Bureau (SSM) announced that it will roll out digital medical certificates from today. Patients and their guardians may apply for and download the certificate on their accounts on the government One Account app. For the time being, only certificates issued by the government hospital and health centers will be available for application and download. Similar to other government e-documents, the e-medical certificates will come with a QR code for verification purposes.

## LAI CHI VUN SHIPYARDS TO HOST CONCERTS UNTIL NOVEMBER

The Cultural Affairs Bureau (IC) will hold evening concerts at Lai Chi Vun Shipyards - Plots X11-X15 in the second half of each month, between July and November. The concert, titled, 'Exchange between musicians from Hong Kong and Macau' will be held at 4 p.m. on Saturday. Hong Kong singer Judas Law, local guitarist Lon Wong, and singer-songwriter Vong Kai Hong were invited to perform together.

### IC CALLS FOR FOSHAN CRAFT MARKET PARTICIPANTS

The Cultural Affairs Bureau (IC) is calling for participants for the upcoming "Macao Craft Market @ Foshan Lingnan Tiandi" that will be held from September 22 to 24 at Lingnan Tiandi, Foshan City. Applicants can apply through the Craft Market Booth Operator Database until August 7. The Tap Siac Craft Market is a cultural and creative project developed under the Culture and Tourism Development Plan for the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area. To foster cultural and creative exchanges, IC is extending the Craft Market to Foshan to assist the city's cultural and creative practitioners in showcasing and selling their products.

### PJ ISSUES WARNING REGARDING FAKE SOCIAL MEDIA PAGES WITH SCAMS

The Judiciary Police (PJ) has discovered that scammers created social media pages in the name of a supermarket in Macau. According to the page, those who leave comments can claim a "unique gift" by clicking an unknown link and supplying their personal information and credit card details. Upon verification with the supermarket, it was proven that the social media page is fake. PJ once again warns the public to confirm promotion details with the supermarket.

### UM ORGANIZES SCIENCE POPULARIZATION ACTIVITY

The University of Macau (UM) Faculty of Health Sciences (FHS) organized the fifth and the sixth instalments of its science popularization activity "The Pursuit of Research," attracting over 70 students and teachers from 11 secondary schools in Macau. "The activity provided an opportunity for the participants to visit the core facilities of FHS and conduct a series of hands-on experiments," the university said in a statement. During the activity, students conducted a series of experiments related to the biomedical sciences, pharmaceutical sciences, and bioinformatics to learn about scientific theories and acquire experimental skills.



## FIREMAN CALLED LESS IN THE FIRST HALF OF 2023

RENATO MARQUES

**T**HE local Fire Services Bureau (CB) has reported a general drop in requests for their services in the first half (1H) of this year, the bureau reported in its half-year report.

According to the report, in the first six months of 2023, the CB was called to intervene in 24,551 cases, 1,921 fewer than 2022

(-7.26% year-on-year).

Although all types of services from the CB reported drops year-on-year during the first half of this year, the most significant drop was seen in the Special Services, which registered a drop of 26.03% when compared to the same period last year. This is largely attributable to the reduction in ambulance deployments related to Covid-19 cases, which were

overloading the CB over the past year.

Between January and June 2023, the number of cases of ambulance deployment totaled 20,913, a reduction of 4.55% (almost 1,000 fewer deployments) when compared to 2022.

On those, most of the calls involved general first aid cases such as patients presenting with breathing difficulties, dizziness, abdo-

minal pain, fever, and palpitations. These cases, which are considered low severity and potentially do not require the deployment of an ambulance, represented 12,002 cases, or 57.39% of the total number of ambulance deployments. The numbers demonstrate that excessive calls for ambulance services are an ongoing problem, as reported on other occasions.

The CB also said that with the easing of the procedures regarding positive cases of Covid-19, the number of ambulance deployments has generally returned to pre-pandemic levels. Nonetheless, the CB has called on the population to save limited health care resources and reserve ambulance deployments to those in real need.

Fewer cases of fires were also reported in the first six months (-4.42%) but the CB said it continued to be concerned regarding fires caused by people forgetting to turn off stoves and cooking appliances as well as electrical short circuits and fires caused by burning incense and candles/votive papers. These types of fires represented 55% of the total cases, amounting to 226 cases.

Cigarette butts being left unattended have also been reported as the cause of most of the cases of criminal fire (arson) in the first six months of the year.

In a final request to the population, the CB also noted the added difficulties for emergency services to attend to some accidents and urgent cases due to the incivility of many drivers who refuse to give way to ambulances and fire vehicles on the roads.

### TRANSPORTATION

## DSAT soon to launch a new tender for taxi licenses

RENATO MARQUES

**A** new public tender for the acquisition of taxi operation licenses will be soon launched, the Transport Bureau (DSAT) announced. The announcement follows calls from both users and industry in light of the lack of vehicles currently in operation and a significant number of licenses due to expire within a short period.

This will be the first tender for taxi licenses held by the government since 2018.

While preparing for the new licensing tenders, the same bureau yesterday launched applications for four training courses for taxi drivers, to take place in August.

There will be a total of 160 available places for

the courses open to all residents of Macau over 18 years of age who possess a driving license. The duration of the DSAT taxi driver's course is two days.

According to official statistics, there are currently over 1,600 taxis operating in Macau, of which 300 are the so-called Radio Taxis (operating on call).

Industry data shows that before the pandemic, over 1,800 taxis were operating in Macau, but the market has since shrunk by about 30%. Officials from the taxi drivers' associations claim that no more than 1,400 taxis are currently operating, some of which will soon be forced to stop due to the expiration of their licenses.

According to Tony Kuok, president of the Taxi Drivers Mutual Associa-



tion, about 100 licenses are due to expire early next year.

Kuok was one of the

first to publicly call for changes to the sector to attract more drivers, right after the reopening of the

borders and the return of a large number of visitors who, like locals, often require taxi services.

# China removes its foreign minister, no reason given: CCTV

**C**HINA removed outspoken Foreign Minister Qin Gang from office yesterday and replaced him with his predecessor, Wang Yi, in a move that has already fueled rumors over political rivalries of China's Communist Party elite.

In its announcement on the national evening news, state broadcaster CCTV gave no reason for Qin's removal. He had dropped out of sight almost a month ago and the Foreign Ministry has provided no information about his status.

The ministry made no comment at its daily briefing yesterday. The move comes amid a foreign backlash against China's increasingly aggressive foreign policy, of which Qin was a chief proponent.

Adding to the mystery around Qin's removal, it was approved at an unusually scheduled meeting of the Standing Committee of China's legislature, the National People's Congress, which normally gathers at the end of the month.

Qin last appeared on camera at a meeting with Sri Lanka's foreign minister in Beijing on June 25. The Foreign Ministry at one point put his absence down to bad health, but swiftly scrubbed the reference from its official news conference transcript and has since said only that it had no information to report.

Wang had previously served as China's top diplomat in his capacity as head of the party's office of foreign affairs. Without other strong contenders, it appeared likely he would retain that position, at least in the short term.

The shakeup in China's diplomatic lineup does not immediately indicate a change in foreign policy, including continued support for Russia's war against Ukraine. However, it follows U.S. Secretary of State Antony

AP PHOTO



Qin Gang

Blinken's trip to Beijing — as well as trips by other top serving and retired officials — in a bid to revive a relationship that's deeply riven over trade, human rights, technology, Taiwan and China's territorial claims in the South China Sea.

Earlier in his career, Qin had served as ministry spokesperson, during which he gained a reputation for criticism of the West and rejection of all accusations against China. That came to be known as "wolf warrior" diplomacy, after the name of a nationalistic movie franchise.

He later headed the ministry's protocol department, during

which he reportedly came to the attention of head of state and Communist Party chief Xi Jinping. He was next appointed ambassador to Washington from July 2021 to this January, a relatively short term but which presaged his rise to the head of the Chinese diplomatic service.

Qin's previous tenure in the United States and his unexpected departure from the minister's office throws additional glare on the troubled relationship between Washington and Beijing.

The U.S. has launched a flurry of diplomacy with China over recent weeks in hopes of reviving

relations that have sunk to a historic low. Whether it will move the dial on ties between the world's two largest economies and chief rivals for global influence remains an open question.

Climate envoy John Kerry met with officials, including Premier Li Qiang last week, following up on visits by Blinken and Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen. Centenarian former top diplomat Henry Kissinger, revered in China for helping break the ice in relations in the early 1970s, also made the trip and was granted a sit-down with Xi.

"We are working to put some stability into the relationship ... to make sure that the competition that we're in doesn't veer into conflict," Blinken said in an interview with CNN broadcast on Sunday. "We will continue to do and say things that China will not like just as they're going to continue to do and say things we won't like."

With its highly opaque political system abetted by strict controls over the media and civil society, it is difficult to gauge how Xi and other Chinese leaders see the relationship at this point.

Xi is the most nationalistic party head in decades and has taken a hard line on claims to sovereignty over the South China Sea and threats to attack the self-governing island democracy of Taiwan, while sternly rejecting foreign criticism of China's crackdown on political and cultural expression against Muslim and Buddhist minorities and in Hong Kong.

During his time as spokesper-

son and minister, Qin defended those positions in terms that sometimes verged on the strident, saying in March that, "If the United States does not hit the brake, but continues to speed down the wrong path, no amount of guardrails can prevent derailing and there surely will be conflict and confrontation."

"Such competition is a reckless gamble, with the stakes being the fundamental interests of the two peoples and even the future of humanity," Qin said.

However, a window of opportunity remains open, particularly if Xi makes a state visit to the U.S. later this year, when he is expected to attend the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation forum summit in San Francisco, said Wang Yiwei, Director of the Institute of International Affairs at Beijing's Renmin University.

"If the window of opportunity could be grasped to pull China-U.S. relations back on track, the relations might not spin out of control next year," when the U.S. will mainly focus on the election season, Wang said.

Conflicts have sometimes overshadowed the massive economic and trade relationship, but the sides can still work together on relatively politically neutral issues such as climate change, Wang said.

Both countries are seeking for a way to manage "the most important and complicated bilateral relations in the world," said Zhu Feng, dean of the School of International Studies at prestigious Nanjing University in eastern China. **MDT/AP**

## CORPORATE BITS

### MGM garners Grand Award in 'Employee Experience Awards 2023'



Casino operator MGM received four Gold and four Silver awards in the "Employee Experience Awards 2023", organized by the regionally renowned HR media and event brand in Asia Pacific - Human Resources Online.

These results have also crowned MGM the Grand Winner prize for this competition.

Wendy Yu, executive vice president of Human Resources of MGM, said, "MGM always adheres human-

-oriented principles in implementing HR strategies. As we value the overall development and experience of our team members, we strive to provide comprehensive HR services and support in all aspects."

The "Employee Experience Awards" recognizes enterprises that have demonstrated excellence in 21 categories of various HR services, such as employee supports, workplace experience and talent development.

The casino operator took home four Gold Awards in "Best Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Strategy", "Best Management Training Programme", "Best Virtual Learning Initiative" and "Best Learning and Development Programme."

### Sands China to present three exhibitions in Art Macao



Sands China Ltd. is presenting an array of exhibitions and artworks from August to October in support of the upcoming Art Macao: Macao International Art Biennale 2023.

The exhibitions include: "Meet the Magic: In celebration of Disney 100 by Philip Colbert & Jason Naylor"; "Behind the Forms: Aesthetics of Contemporary Art

- Trio Exhibition by Lei Ieng Wai, Leong Chi Mou and Lai Sio Kit"; "The Genesis of Rationality, featuring Ung Vai Meng."

The "Meet the Magic: In celebration of Disney 100

by Philip Colbert & Jason Naylor" will present the artists' unique artistic interpretations of Mickey Mouse, in celebration of Disney's 100th anniversary. The second exhibition, demonstrates three local young artists' own understanding of various topics around the "development of the city's diversification - spectrum, data texture, belief and value."

Sands China has also commissioned local artist Ung Vai Meng to create "The Genesis of Rationality," a mixed-media installation with screens and antique wood he collected specifically for the exhibit, with reference to ancient Greek mythology.

# China to address economic difficulties head-on: Politburo

**T**HE Political Bureau of the Communist Party of China (CPC) Central Committee, also known as the Politburo, convened a meeting this week to scrutinize the prevailing economic situation and devise strategies to address the economic challenges in the second half of the year (H2). The meeting, presided over by Xi Jinping, the general secretary of the CPC Central Committee, emphasized the significance of tackling the growing economic difficulties in China.

The current economic difficulties stem from various factors, including insufficient domestic demand, operational hurdles faced by certain enterprises, risks, and latent dangers in key sectors, as well as a complex and grim external environment.

To combat these challenges, the meeting called for precise and forceful macroeconomic regulation, bolstering counter-cyclical measures, and offering a wider array of policy options, the Politburo said, according to a Xinhua dispatch.

Maintaining a proactive fiscal policy and a prudent monetary policy was deemed essential, along with extending, optimizing, improving, and ensuring the effective implementation of tax and fee reductions.

The meeting also emphasized the importance of leveraging quantitative and structural monetary tools to stimulate economic growth.

To further support the economy, special attention will be given to scientific and technological innovation, bolstering the real economy, and fostering the development of micro, small, and me-



dium-sized enterprises.

Efforts to stabilize the RMB exchange rate at an appropriate and balanced level were underscored, alongside invigorating the capital market and enhancing investor confidence.

Additionally, the Politburo urged active expansion of domestic demand, particularly by encouraging consumption of major items like automobiles, electronic products, and household goods. Spending on services such as sports, leisure, culture, and tourism should also be promoted to drive economic growth.

The meeting recognized the vital role of government investment in driving overall investment, and stressed the importance of expediting the issuance and utilization of local government special-purpose bonds.

Furthermore, to boost the economy, more policies should be formulated to encourage private investment, while maintaining stability in foreign trade and investment through various measures.

The meeting called for an in-

crease in international flights and ensured the smooth operation of China-Europe freight train services.

Emphasizing the significance of strategic emerging industries, the meeting called for their fostering and expansion, along with promoting the integration of the digital economy with advanced manufacturing and modern services.

improve regular communication and exchange mechanisms with enterprises. This will enable active exploration of new markets and investments.

The meeting highlighted the importance of "supporting pilot free trade zones and free trade ports, aligning them with high-standard international economic and

## The current economic difficulties stem from various factors, including insufficient domestic demand [...] as well as a complex and grim external environment

Safeguarding the secure and steady development of artificial intelligence was also deemed crucial.

According to Xinhua, platform enterprises were encouraged to develop in a well-regulated, healthy, and sustained manner. To foster entrepreneurship and risk-taking, authorities should establish and

trade rules, and implementing reforms and opening-up measures." Additionally, meticulous efforts should be made to host the third Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation successfully.

In response to the changing dynamics in China's real estate market, the Politburo urged con-

crete efforts to prevent and mitigate risks in key areas. Policies related to real estate should be promptly adjusted and optimized.

City-specific measures should be implemented to meet residents' essential housing needs and promote the stable and sound development of the real estate market. The supply of government-subsidized housing "should also be expanded to address local government debt risks and strengthen financial regulation." The Politburo added that high-risk small and medium-sized financial institutions should defuse risks through reforms.

Stabilizing employment was emphasized as a strategic and comprehensive consideration, so "efforts should be directed towards expanding the middle-income group," the report said.

The meeting also underscored the importance of preventing major accidents and ensuring a stable power supply during the summer season.

"By addressing economic difficulties head-on, China aims to navigate through these challenges and sustain its economic growth and development," the report concludes.

Global stock markets and Wall Street futures were mixed yesterday after China's Communist Party promised to shore up its sagging economy ahead of a Federal Reserve meeting traders hope will announce this interest rate cycle's final increase, the Associated Press reported.

Although Chinese leaders have promised measures to boost sluggish economic growth by supporting real estate sales and other struggling sectors, they "gave no details and didn't mention possible stimulus spending."

Any stimulus is "unlikely to be significant" while Beijing takes a "gradual and targeted approach," Andrew McCaffery of Fidelity International said in a report. **MDT/AGENCIES**

**P**ROSECUTORS in northeastern China are pursuing criminal charges against the managers of a construction firm blamed for the collapse of the roof of a middle school gymnasium, leading to 11 deaths.

State media yesterday gave few details about the case and the victims, but said 19 people were inside the facility when the concrete roof came down, among them two coaches and 17 players.

Fifteen were trapped in the rubble after the Sunday afternoon collapse at the No. 34 Middle School, with the last victim only being recovered on Monday morning.

An initial investigation

QIQIHAR

## Victims in deadly collapse middle school gym roof largely members of girl's volleyball team

said a construction crew working on a new administrative building next to the gym had stored bags of perlite used in plastering and internal finishing work on the roof that had grown heavy by absorbing water from the recent heavy rains striking much of the country, particularly the northwest.

Following the incident, social media and the Baidu news website carried foo-

rage of angry parents complaining about what they said was a slow response and lack of communication from authorities. Yesterday, Baidu ran photos and video testimonials to the players under the masthead "I've lost my very best friends."

An official investigation into the cause of the disaster has begun. School design and construction have been questioned in the past, from the mass collapse of

classrooms leading to thousands of deaths in the 2008 Sichuan earthquake to the provision of running tracks to Beijing schools that emitted toxic gases.

Those problems are especially acute in cities such as Qiqihar, which lies in the Chinese rustbelt province of Heilongjiang bordering Russia that apparently has seen large-scale economic decline and outward migration in recent years. **MDT/AP**



Rescuers conducting search and rescue operation at the site of a roof collapsed middle school gymnasium in Qiqihar, in Heilongjiang Province, Monday

NORTH KOREA

# Kim fires two short-range ballistic missiles after US submarine arrives in South

KIM TONG-HYUNG, SEOUL

**N**ORTH Korea fired two short-range ballistic missiles into its eastern sea, South Korea's military said yesterday, adding to a recent streak in weapons testing that is apparently in protest of the U.S. sending major naval assets to South Korea in a show of force.

In its third round of launches since last week, North Korea fired the missiles just before midnight from an area near its capital, Pyongyang, South Korea's Joint Chiefs of Staff said. It said both missiles traveled around 400 kilometers before landing in waters off the Korean Peninsula's eastern coast.

Its statement called North Korea's missile launches a "grave provocation" that threatens regional peace and stability. Japan's Prime Minister Fumio Kishida said his government lodged a protest to North Korea over the launches, which is usually conveyed through its embassy in Beijing. He said Tokyo was doing its utmost for surveillance while stepping up trilateral security cooperation with Washington and Seoul. No damage has been reported related to the missiles, which, according to Japan's Defense Ministry, fell outside the country's exclusive economic zone.

The launches came hours after South Korea's navy said a nuclear-propelled U.S. submarine — the USS Annapolis — arrived at a port on Jeju Island. That underscored the allies' efforts to boost the visibility of U.S. strategic assets in the region to intimidate the North.

Last week, the USS Kentucky became the first U.S. nuclear-armed submarine to come to South Korea since the 1980s. North Korea reacted to its arrival by test-firing ballistic and cruise missiles last week in apparent demonstrations that it could make nuclear strikes on South Korea and deployed U.S. naval vessels.

Yesterday [Macau time], the American-led U.N. Command said it has started "a conversation" with North Korea about a U.S. soldier who ran into the North last week across one of the world's most heavily fortified borders.

Andrew Harrison, a British lieutenant general who is deputy commander at the U.N. Command, which oversees implementation of the 1953 armistice that ended fighting in the Korean War, declined to comment about the state of the inquiry to North Korea or say what the command

AP PHOTO



knows about Pvt. Travis King's condition.

"I am in life an optimist, and I remain optimistic," Harrison said during a news conference in Seoul.

In Washington, State Department spokesman Matthew Miller said North Korea had only "acknowledged" receiving the U.N. message last week and had not provided any information or commented further since then.

"There have been no new contacts since last week," Miller said, adding that North Korea also had not responded to messages sent by U.S. civilian or military officials.

North Korea has remained publicly silent about King, who crossed the border during a tour of Panmunjom while he was supposed to be heading to Fort Bliss, Texas, following his release from prison in South Korea on an assault conviction.

The U.S. still has not been able to ascertain King's condition, a senior administration official said in Washington. Asked if U.S. officials had a better understanding of whether King intended to defect, the official said they still had "no indication about what was going on in his mind that day." The of-

ficial was not authorized to comment publicly and spoke on the condition of anonymity.

Analysts say North Korea may wait weeks or even months to provide meaningful information about King to maximize leverage and add urgency to U.S. efforts to secure his release. Some say North Korea may try to wrest concessions from Washington, such as tying his release to the United States cutting back its military activities with South Korea.

King's crossing came at a time of high tensions in the Korean Peninsula, where the pace of both North Korea's weapons demonstrations and the United States' combined military exercises have intensified in a tit-for-tat cycle.

In between the ballistic and cruise missile launches last week, North Korea's defense minister also issued a veiled threat, saying the Kentucky's docking in South Korea could be grounds for the North to use a nuclear weapon against it. North Korea has used similar rhetoric before, but the statement underscored how strained relations are now. Farhan Haq, U.N.'s deputy spokesperson, said the U.N. is concerned about the rising tensions on the Korean Peninsula. "The DPRK's continued

launches of missiles using ballistic missile technology are clear violations of relevant Security Council resolutions, and, of course, we reiterate the call for de-escalation and for full implementation of the relevant Security Council resolutions," he said, invoking the North's formal name, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

The United States and South Korea have expanded their combined military exercises and increased regional deployments of U.S. aircraft and ships, including bombers, aircraft carriers and submarines to counter the nuclear threats posed by North Korea, which has test-fired around 100 missiles since the start of 2022.

The Annapolis, whose main mission is destroying enemy ships and submarines, is powered by a nuclear reactor but is armed with conventional weapons. The sub mainly docked at Jeju to load supplies, but Jang Do Young, a spokesperson for South Korea's navy, said the U.S. and South Korean militaries were discussing whether to arrange training involving the vessel.

The Koreans are still technically at war since a peace treaty was never signed.

Their armistice becomes 70 years old Thursday, an anniversary South Korea will mark with solemn ceremonies honoring the dead that will involve invited foreign war veterans.

North Korea, which celebrates the date as victory day for the "great Fatherland Liberation War," plans huge festivities that will likely include a military parade in the capital, Pyongyang, where leader Kim Jong Un may showcase his nuclear-capable missiles designed to target regional rivals and the United States.

North Korea's state-run Korean Central News Agency said Monday that a Chinese delegation led by Li Hongzhong, vice chairman of the standing committee of the country's National People's Congress, would attend the celebrations.

Visits by foreign guests to North Korea have been extremely rare since the start of the pandemic, which prompted the North to seal its borders to protect its poor healthcare system. North Korea since last year has been gradually reopening trade with China in an apparent effort to salvage a crippled economy damaged further by the pandemic-related border controls. MDT/AP

CLIMATE CHANGE

# Study finds fingerprints on July heat waves in Europe, China and America

SETH BORENSTEIN

**T**HE fingerprints of climate change are all over the intense heat waves gripping the globe this month, a new study finds. Researchers say the deadly hot spells in the American Southwest and Southern Europe could not have happened without the continuing buildup of warming gases in the air.

These unusually strong heat waves are becoming more common, yesterday's study said. The same research found the increase in heat-trapping gases, largely from the burning of coal, oil and natural gas has made another heat wave — the one in China — 50 times more likely with the potential to occur every five years or so.

A stagnant atmosphere, warmed by carbon dioxide and other gases, also made the European heat wave 4.5 degrees Fahrenheit (2.5 degrees Celsius) hotter, the one in the United States and Mexico 3.6 degrees Fahrenheit (2 degrees Celsius) warmer and the one in China one 1.8 degrees Fahrenheit (1 degree Celsius) toastier, the study found.

Several climate scientists, using tree rings and other stand-ins for temperature records, say this month's heat is likely the hottest Earth has been in about 120,000 years, easily the hottest of human civilization.

"Had there been no climate change, such an event would almost never have occurred," said study lead author Mariam Zachariah, a climate scientist at Imperial College of London. She called heat waves in Europe and North America "virtually impossible" without the increase in heat from the mid 1800s. Statistically, the one in China could have happened without global warming.

Since the advent of industrial-scale burning, the world has warmed 2.2 degrees Fahrenheit (1.2 degrees Celsius), so "they are not rare



in today's climate and the role of climate change is absolutely overwhelming," said Imperial College climate scientist Friederike Otto, who leads the team of volunteer international scientists at World Weather Attribution who do these studies.

The particularly intense heat waves that Texas, California, Arizona, New Mexico, Nevada, Baja California, Sonora, Chihuahua and Coahuila are now roasting through are likely to happen about once every 15 years in the current climate, the study said.

But the climate is not stabilized, even at this level. If it warms a few more tenths of a degree, this month's heat will become even more common, Otto said. Phoenix has had a record-shattering 25 straight days of temperatures at or above 110 degrees Fahrenheit (43.3 degrees Celsius) and more than a week when the nighttime temperature never dropped below 90 degrees Fahrenheit

(32.2 Celsius)

The heat in Spain, Italy, Greece and some Balkan states is likely to reoccur every decade in the current climate, the study said.

Because the weather attribution researchers started their analysis of three simultaneous heat waves on July 17, the results are not yet peer reviewed, which is the gold standard for science. But it used scientifically valid techniques, the team's research regularly gets published and several outside experts told The Associated Press it makes sense.

**This month's heat is likely the hottest Earth has been in about 120,000 years, easily the hottest of human civilization**

The way scientists do these rapid analyses is by comparing observations of current weather in the three regions to repeated computer simulations of "a world that might have been without climate change," said study co-author Izidine Pinto, a climate scientist at the Royal

Netherlands Meteorological Institute.

In Europe and North America, the study doesn't claim human-caused climate change is the sole cause of the heat waves, but it is a necessary ingredient because natural causes and random chance couldn't produce this alone.

Texas state climatologist John Nielsen-Gammon said the study was reasonable, but looks at a broad area of the U.S. Southwest, so it may not be applicable to every single place in the area.

"In the United States, it's clear that the entire southern tier is going to see the worst of the ever-worsening heat and this summer should be considered a serious wake-up call," said University of Michigan environment dean Jonathan Overpeck.

With heat waves, "the most important thing is that they kill people and they particularly kill and hurt and destroy lives and livelihoods of those most vulnerable," Otto said. **MDT/AP**

## this day in history

### 1956 EGYPT SEIZES SUEZ CANAL



Egypt's president, Colonel Gamal Abdel Nasser, has announced the nationalisation of the Suez Canal Company to provide funding for the construction of the Aswan High Dam.

The British Government and French stockholders who own shares in the Suez Canal Company have reacted with shock to the news.

In a two-and-a-half hour speech delivered to a mass gathering in Alexandria, President Nasser said the Nationalisation Law had already been published in the official gazette.

He said all company assets in Egypt had been frozen and stockholders would be paid the price of their shares according to today's closing prices on the Paris Stock Exchange.

Twelve Egyptians have been appointed members of a special board which will manage the newly-nationalised company.

The Suez Canal is a key waterway for world trade and an important source of revenue for Britain.

The Suez Canal Company, which manages the waterway, is legally Egyptian but, in 1869 was granted a 99 years' concession.

It was not due to revert to the Egyptian Government until November 16, 1968.

President Nasser, who took control of Egypt following a Coup d'Etat four years ago, has been implementing a nationalisation programme in the country, and was vehement in his criticism of the West.

He said 120,000 Egyptians had died building the canal but Egypt was receiving just a tiny proportion of the company's £35m annual earnings.

President Nasser's decision to nationalise the Suez Canal company comes following Britain and America's withdrawal of financial assistance towards the Aswan Dam.

It is understood the USSR agreed last month to provide an unconditional loan towards the project.

Courtesy BBC News

## IN CONTEXT

As well as nationalising the Suez Canal Company, Nasser also blockaded the Straits of Tiran - Israel's only outlet to the Red Sea. Britain and France joined forces with Israel, although this alliance was denied for years afterwards. On 29 October, 1956, Israeli troops invaded Egypt's Sinai Peninsula. Two days later, British and French military forces attacked and invaded Egypt's canal zone after President Nasser had refused their offer of creating a buffer zone between Israel and Egypt. The Soviet Union threatened to intervene on Egypt's behalf. President Eisenhower of the United States and the UN, fearing the USSR would use the crisis as a way of gaining power in the Middle East, pressured Britain, France and Israel into agreeing to a cease-fire and eventual withdrawal from Egypt in November 1956.



MACAU'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

## YOUR STARS

**ARIES**  
Mar. 21-Apr. 19  
Try not to get backed into corners. Your ability to organize and get everyone together will enhance your popularity and bring interest from potential mates.

**TAURUS**  
Apr. 20-May. 20  
Expect some flak. Your hard work and dedication will payoff, so stick to your guns and do your job well. Problems with in-laws may cause friction in your personal relationship.

**GEMINI**  
May. 21-Jun. 21  
You will be subject to pushy individuals if you get involved in uncertain organizations. Make money using your ingenuity and creative talent.

**CANCER**  
Jun. 22-Jul. 22  
Let others know what your intentions are and be honest in your approach. Don't turn down an invitation or a challenge that could enhance your chances of meeting someone special.

**LEO**  
Jul. 23-Aug. 22  
Visit friends or relatives you rarely see. Opportunities to get ahead will be evident. You can bet that you'll draw attention to yourself.

**VIRGO**  
Aug. 23-Sep. 22  
You may want to get involved in some kind of creative group. Take a close look at contracts and agreements that have been offered to you.

**LIBRA**  
Sep. 23-Oct. 22  
Your charm will attract members of the opposite sex. You will back yourself into a corner if you are baited and your stubbornness will only make matters worse.

**SCORPIO**  
Oct. 23-Nov. 21  
Don't let your partner get away with spending too much of your money. You will have to help family members sort out unfortunate difficulties.

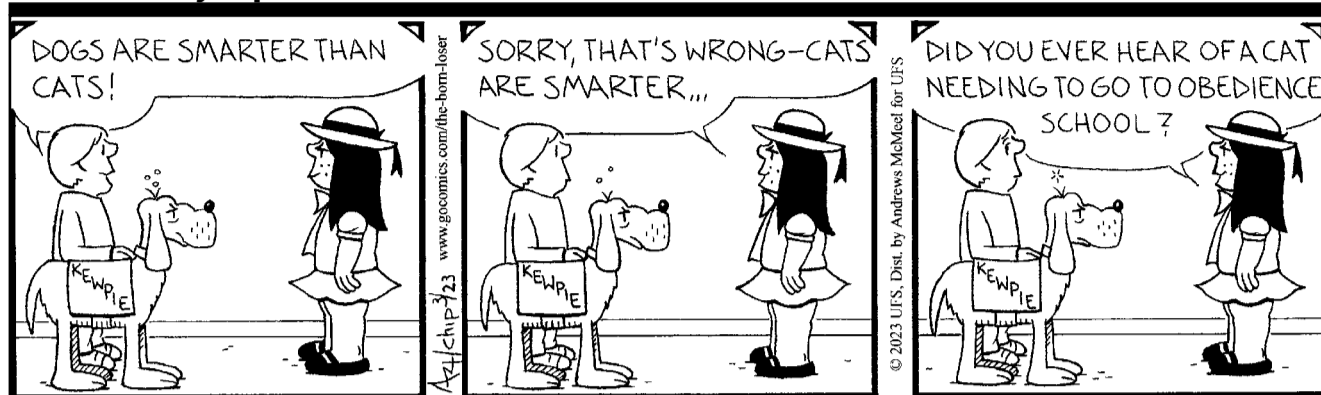
**SAGITTARIUS**  
Nov. 22-Dec. 21  
Take time to relax. Stress and pressure at home may have worn you ragged. Invite people home to discuss your plans for group fundraising events and outings.

**CAPRICORN**  
Dec. 22-Jan. 19  
You need some help today. Investments will not be as they appear today. Visit friends or relatives who have been confirmed.

**AQUARIUS**  
Jan. 20-Feb. 18  
Your lover may feel rejected. Romance and social activity will be a promising combination. You may find acquaintances being deceptive.

**PISCES**  
Feb. 19-Mar. 20  
Travel will be most enticing. Consider a cruise. You may have taken on a little too much, but you will enjoy every minute of it.

## The Born Loser by Chip Sansom



## SUDOKU

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

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

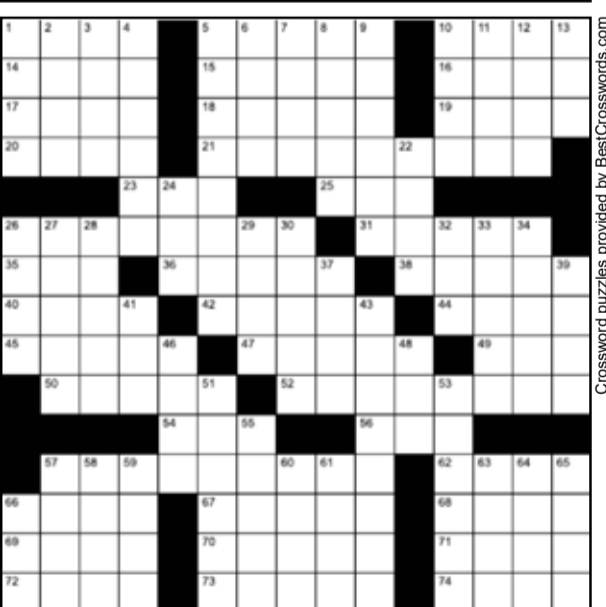
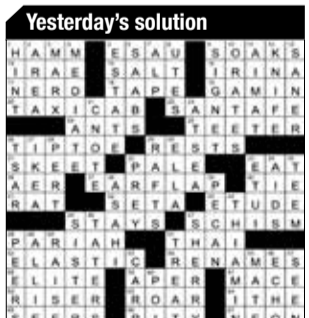
## WEATHER

	MIN	MAX	CONDITION
<b>CHINA</b>			
Beijing	24	32	cloudy
Changchun	20	30	fine
Chengdu	23	28	showers
Chongqing	25	32	rain
Fuzhou	27	32	rain
Guangzhou	26	37	fine
Guiyang	22	29	showers
Haikou	26	33	cloudy
Hangzhou	25	33	thunderstorms
Harbin	20	30	thunderstorms
Hefei	25	33	thunderstorms
Nanjing	26	33	thunderstorms
Shanghai	27	33	rain
Taipei	27	29	rain
Wuhan	25	34	showers
Hong Kong	31	36	thunderstorms
<b>WORLD</b>			
Moscow	17	24	thunderstorms
Frankfurt	11	20	rain
Paris	18	14	overcast
London	16	23	overcast
New York	24	32	overcast

## CROSSWORDS

ACROSS 1- Thin stratum; 5- Upper crust; 10- It is in Spain; 14- Church recess; 15- Biblical brother; 16- Pleased; 17- Church court; 18- Pen's inferior, they say; 19- Full of energy; 20- The doctor \_\_\_; 21- Becomes larger; 23- Author Fleming; 25- Polish off; 26- Young hares; 31- Chopper top; 35- Paranormalist Geller; 36- Sacred song; 38- Walked back and forth; 40- Tabula \_\_\_; 42- At quite an incline; 44- Final Four org.; 45- Politico Kefauver; 47- Bristlelike parts; 49- Einstein's birthplace; 50- Having auricular protuberances; 52- Acts; 54- Minuscule; 56- Turkish title; 57- Limp; 62- Speedy; 66- \_\_\_-do-well; 67- Paris "thanks"; 68- Caucus state; 69- Sicilian resort; 70- Conclude by; 71- Barbershop sound; 72- Says further; 73- "Cheers" waitress; 74- Does some tailoring;

DOWN 1- Delhi wrap; 2- Epic narrative poem; 3- Italian wine city; 4- Bully; 5- Facility; 6- Mown grass; 7- Camaro model; 8- Baseball manager Joe; 9- Make beloved; 10- Ova; 11- Blackthorn fruit; 12- License plates; 13- Without further \_\_\_; 22- At the apex of; 24- Dadaist Jean; 26- Decoy; 27- Clear the boards; 28- Prospect; 29- Makes lace; 30- Bed down; 32- Shade at the beach?; 33- Come about; 34- Kingdom; 37- Allot; 39- Beaver creations; 41- \_\_\_Lingus; 43- Sponger; 46- Stitched; 48- Alphabetical trio; 51- Judged; 53- Uncouth; 55- 1985 Kate Nelligan film; 57- Mail out; 58- Remain undecided; 59- Nest eggs, briefly; 60- Mother of the Valkyries; 61- Scrutinize; 63- Super; 64- Do the crawl; 65- Knocks lightly; 66- PBS benefactor;



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
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AD

WOMEN'S FOOTBALL

# PHILIPPINES SHOCKS CO-HOST NEW ZEALAND 1-0 FOR ITS FIRST WIN

NEW ZEALAND 0, PHILIPPINES 1

AP PHOTO



Philippines' Sarina Bolden reacts after scoring her team's goal

WITH its first goal at its first Women's World Cup the unfavored Philippines achieved its first win yesterday, shocking co-host New Zealand 1-0 in a Group A match made contentious when a potential equalizer was disallowed.

New Zealand achieved its first World Cup win when it upset Norway in the tournament's opening match five days ago. And so for the first time in six World Cups, the Football Ferns entered a match as favorite, almost certain with another win to become the first team to reach the round of 16.

But Sarina Bolden scored the Philippines' historic match-winner from its first shot on goal in the 24th minute, flipping the script and silencing a packed stadium of 33,000 mostly newly-minted Kiwi soccer fans.

New Zealand had been ascendant in the first 20 minutes, playing with a confidence which reflected its expectation that this would be its best shot at winning again in the group stage. It had

80% of possession, 74 completed passes to 11, five early shots on goal and it seemed inevitable the goals would come that would carry them into the next round for the first time.

It ended with 67% possession and nine shots on goal to three but it wasn't enough. California-born goalkeeper Olivia McDaniel was magnificent for the Philippi-

nes, called on to make athletic saves including two in second-half stoppage time.

"I've got everyone else's tears all over my eyes, it's so emotional," Philippines coach Alen Stajic said. "You saw how long New Zealand had to wait for its first win — six World Cups — and (for Philippines) to get it today was incredible.

"We made our own luck but we also had a lot of luck. New Zealand were on the front foot the whole game and deserved something. But football is cruel sometimes."

New Zealand keeper Vic Esson had nothing to do until the 20th minute when she had to come forward to punch away a threatening free kick. Suddenly there was disarray in New Zealand's defense.

Four minutes later and from another free kick which caused chaos in the New Zealand goalmouth, the clearance was ineffective and Sara Eggesvik sent the ball back in for Bolden, who leapt high to head the ball home.

There was a moment of stunned silence and suddenly the Philippines supporters found full voice.

New Zealand threw everything at Philippines in the second half but to no avail. The moment of contention came in the 68th when Jacqui Hand, who hit the post four minutes earlier, headed home what seemed to be the equalizing goal from Hannah Wilkinson's cross.

The New Zealanders were in full celebration until the referee ruled that Wilkinson had been offside. The decision was close: Wilkinson's arm and part of her shoulder were offside, but that was enough.

Wilkinson had chances in the first half and another in the second when she headed over the bar. But she wasn't able to recapture the form she showed as New Zealand's scorer against Norway.

After the elation of the Norway, yesterday's loss was a bitter blow, not only for the Ferns but for the legion of fans they won with their opening win. Now they have to regroup and find the strength to go again, hoping their fans will keep the faith. **MDT/AP**

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WOMEN'S FOOTBALL

# Australians confident in squad depth despite Sam Kerr's injury at World Cup

LUKE WINSTEL, BRISBANE

Thursday, 18:00  
Australia v Nigeria  
H 1.44, D 4.6, A 8.75

ODDSCHECKER.COM

**H**AVING the Women's World Cup on home soil has given Australia's team the confidence it can contend for the title even without star striker Sam Kerr on the field.

The Chelsea forward and Australian captain missed the Matildas' opening game last week because of a calf muscle injury that will also keep her sidelined for tomorrow's Group B game against Nigeria. And perhaps longer than that.

The Matildas are pitching it as a chance to show the depth of their squad.

"I think we could play any one of us right now in the starting 11 and it would be the same as what we do on the training pitch," mi-

dfelder Tameka Yallop said from Australia's team camp in Brisbane. "So I think everyone has that ability and capability to step up and be a star at any point."

Steph Catley, wearing the captain's armband in place of Kerr, converted a penalty kick for co-host Australia's 1-0 opening win over Ireland. Despite the win, the Matildas' offense struggled to create scoring opportunities, with only two shots on target.

Against a Nigeria team that held Canada to a scoreless draw in its Group B opener, Australia will need to prove that it has players throughout the team that can be difference-makers in Kerr's absence.

"I think we've got the best squad that we've had," Yallop said.

Building depth has been a priority for Tony Gustavsson throughout his first three years in charge of the Matildas. Shortly after he was hired, a December 2020 performance report relea-

sed by Football Australia showed the program had the least overall depth of the 12 leading nations analyzed.

The Matildas' struggles to replace injured defender Clare Polkinghorne during the 2019 Women's World Cup contributed to their exit in the round of 16, their worst finish since 2003.

To prepare for the 2023 Women's World Cup, the Matildas emphasized the development of young players. Gustavsson's team has come a long way, and the growth of Cortnee Vine, Mary Fowler, Clare Hunt, Mackenzie Arnold, Charlotte Grant and Kyra Cooney-Cross into starting 11-caliber talents gives the team confidence moving forward.

The team knew it had the depth necessary to contend on the world stage in April when it beat European champion England 2-0 in a friendly.

"That's the game where we all felt like it really clicked," Grant said. "It's amazing that we've built



Australia's Sam Kerr (right) gets the ball past France's Selma Bacha

so much depth over the past one to two years."

Australia's win over England featured a goal from 21-year-old Grant and saw Australia use nine players who did not play in the 2019 Women's World Cup. Gustavsson's willingness to give young players minutes in big games fueled the team's belief in the ability of each member of the squad.

Fowler and Vine are among the players being thrust into key roles

in attack. The return of Yallop and Grant from injury and illness for the Nigeria game provides a boost against an opponent that frustrated Olympic champion Canada.

During the Cup of Nations in February, seven different Australian players scored in three games.

"I think that's why we're so dangerous," midfielder Katrina Gorry said. "You never know where the goals are going to come from." MDT/AP

AD

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OPINION

China Daily  
 Editorial, China Daily

'CHIP WAR' SPURS TELLING CRY OF ALARM

Intel CEO Pat Gelsinger's warning that projects such as Intel's planned factory complex in Ohio will be much less necessary if the Joe Biden administration doesn't "pause" before implementing new restrictions on exports of chips to China is a telling cry of alarm.

Although US National Security Advisor Jake Sullivan said on Friday that the measures were targeted and "the vast majority of sales of chips designed by the United States to China has continued unabated", Gelsinger and the CEOs of Nvidia and Qualcomm have urged the administration to study the impact of restrictions as they are harming the US industry.

The Biden administration considers itself to be like a dragon guarding its treasure, with Sullivan claiming that the administration is "going to continue to look at very targeted, very specific restrictions on technology with national security and military applications and make judgments rigorously, carefully, methodically".

Yet during their discussions with Sullivan, Secretary of State Antony Blinken and other US officials last week, the CEOs of the US' three largest chip companies said that the restrictions had not achieved the intended outcome of slowing China's development of artificial intelligence. They pointed out that the availability and quality of the software China is using more than compensates for the hardware restrictions. Instead, the restrictions are hitting the bottom line of the US industry and putting its tech leadership at risk.

Sales in China account for one-fifth of the total worldwide sales of Intel, more than 60 percent of Qualcomm's global sales and 22 percent of Nvidia's, with the revenue helping to fund the companies' R&D efforts.

Senior US officials have repeatedly stated that the US does not seek "decoupling", but focuses on so-called de-risking — Sullivan said that the aim is to build a small yard with a high fence. Yet in practice what the administration is doing is building an ad hoc fence around as big a yard as it can in a bid to de-sinicize key industry and supply chains, partly in the belief that this will bring "lost jobs" back to the US.

But as then Apple CEO Steve Jobs famously told US President Barack Obama a decade ago: "The jobs aren't coming back."

Asia Times published an article on July 12 that reinforced that point, stressing that "the globalization of production capacity and new technology development is accelerating away from the US".

Rather than being a vigilant hoarder of treasure, the Biden administration is staking a claim to fool's gold, as its actions targeting Chinese tech companies and promises that it will bring the chip industry back home have only served to make the US companies that are the industry leaders collateral damage and spurred the globalization of chip production.

A third successive heat wave in Greece pushed temperatures back above 40 C across parts of the country yesterday following more nighttime evacuations from fires that have raged out of control for days.

The latest evacuations orders were issued on the islands of Corfu and Evia, while a blaze on the island of Rhodes continued to move inland, torching mountainous forest areas, including part of a nature reserve.

Desperate residents, many with wet towels around their necks to stave off the scorching heat, used shovels to beat back flames approach-

ing their homes, while firefighting planes and helicopters resumed water drops at first light.

Authorities said that more than 20,000 people has been involved in successive evacuations on the island, mostly tourists over the weekend, when fire swept through two coastal areas on the southeast of Rhodes.

The European Union has sent 500 firefighters, 100 vehicles and seven planes from 10 member states, while Turkey, Israel, Egypt and other countries have also sent help.



Stranded passengers stay at a passenger terminal after sea travel was suspended due to Typhoon Doksuri in Manila, yesterday

STRONG TYPHOON BLOWS CLOSER TO NORTHERN PHILIPPINES, FORCING EVACUATIONS AND HALTING SEA TRAVEL

A powerful typhoon blew closer to the northern Philippines on Tuesday, forcing thousands of evacuations and a halt to sea travel ahead of torrential rains and tidal surges up to 3 meters (nearly 10 feet).

The strongest winds at the storm's center are expected to remain offshore as Typhoon Doksuri barrels northwest off Cagayan and Batanes provinces, but they may hit outlying islands in the archipelago. The typhoon's 680-kilometer-(420-mile-) wide rainband could cause flash floods and set off landslides in northern provinces, the country's weather bureau said.

Doksuri was last tracked 310 kilometers east of Tuguegarao city in Cagayan province with sustained winds of 185 kilometers per hour and gusts of up to 230 kph (143 mph), government forecasters said.

The typhoon would also enhance seasonal monsoon rains in central and northern provinces. It was forecast to continue moving

northwest on a track south of Taiwan that would make landfall in China later this week.

Cagayan Gov. Manuel Mamba said he suspended work in his province to allow people to prepare for the onslaught and ordered the evacuation of thousands of people in 11 coastal towns as a precaution.

"This is a supertyphoon and we're carrying out pre-emptive evacuations in all coastal villages because we're afraid of storm surges," Mamba told The Associated Press by telephone, adding weather forecasters warned that tidal surges could reach a height of up to 3 meters (nearly 10 feet).

Aside from work, Mamba said classes in colleges were also suspended from yesterday and today. Grade and high school students were on vacation, he said.

Tuguegarao City Mayor Maila Ting-Que urged the public to be vigilant and imposed a liquor ban, warning violators of arrests. Fishermen were barred from ven-

turing in the increasingly rough seas.

Nearly 10,000 inter-island ferry passengers and cargo truck drivers, along with 100 passenger and cargo vessels and motor bancas, were stranded in several ports where a no-sail order was imposed due to the typhoon and enhanced monsoon rains, the Philippine coast guard said.

In Taiwan, part of the annual Han Kuang military exercises were canceled yesterday.

An exercise meant to simulate the use of a civilian airport in case of bombed-out military runways was cancelled as it was located on the southeastern coast of Taiwan, where waves are already rising.

At Taiwan's southernmost point, waves had already risen to as much as 2.5 meters tall, according to Taiwan's Central Weather Bureau.

Land-based exercises for the Han Kuang drills are still ongoing in other parts of Taiwan. MDT/AP



**Ukraine** The U.N. atomic watchdog says its staff at Ukraine's Russian-occupied Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant report seeing anti-personnel mines around the site as Kyiv pursues a counteroffensive against the Kremlin's entrenched forces after 17 months of war. "Having such explosives on the site is inconsistent with the IAEA safety standards and nuclear security guidance and creates additional psychological pressure on plant staff," International Atomic Energy Agency Director-General Rafael Mariano Grossi said in a statement.



**US** first lady Jill Biden visited Paris yesterday to attend a flag-raising ceremony at UNESCO, marking Washington's official reentry into the U.N. agency after a five-year hiatus. Before the Stars and Stripes is hoisted up outside UNESCO's headquarters, Biden will make remarks about the importance of American leadership in preserving cultural heritage and empowering education and science across the globe. The U.S. had announced its intention to rejoin UNESCO in June, and the organization's 193 member states earlier this month voted to approve the U.S. reentry.



**Algeria** Wildfires have killed 25 people, including 10 soldiers trying to get the flames under control in the face of high winds and scorching summer temperatures. At least 1,500 people were evacuated, the Interior Ministry said, without providing details. The Interior Ministry announced 15 deaths and 24 injuries. In addition, the Defense Ministry later announced 10 soldiers were killed and 25 injured as they fought fires in the resort area of Beni Ksila east of the capital Algiers.