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# Times

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**THE COOPERATION ZONE IN HENGQIN WILL HOLD A SERIES OF CULTURAL AND TOURISM ACTIVITIES IN 2H IN BID TO BOOST TOURIST ARRIVALS**

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**MACAU RECORDING HIGH TEMPERATURES UNDER TYPHOON DOKSURI'S INFLUENCE**

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**TYPHOON BLOWS OFF ROOFS, FLOODS VILLAGES AND DISPLACES THOUSANDS**

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AP PHOTO



**Japan's** population declined in all of its 47 prefectures for the first time in a record drop, while its number of foreign residents hit a new high, reaching almost 3 million people, according to government data released yesterday, highlighting the increasing role that non-Japanese people play in the shrinking and aging country. The population of Japanese nationals fell by about 800,000 people, or 0.65%, to 122.4 million in 2022 from the previous year, falling for a 14th straight year.

AP PHOTO



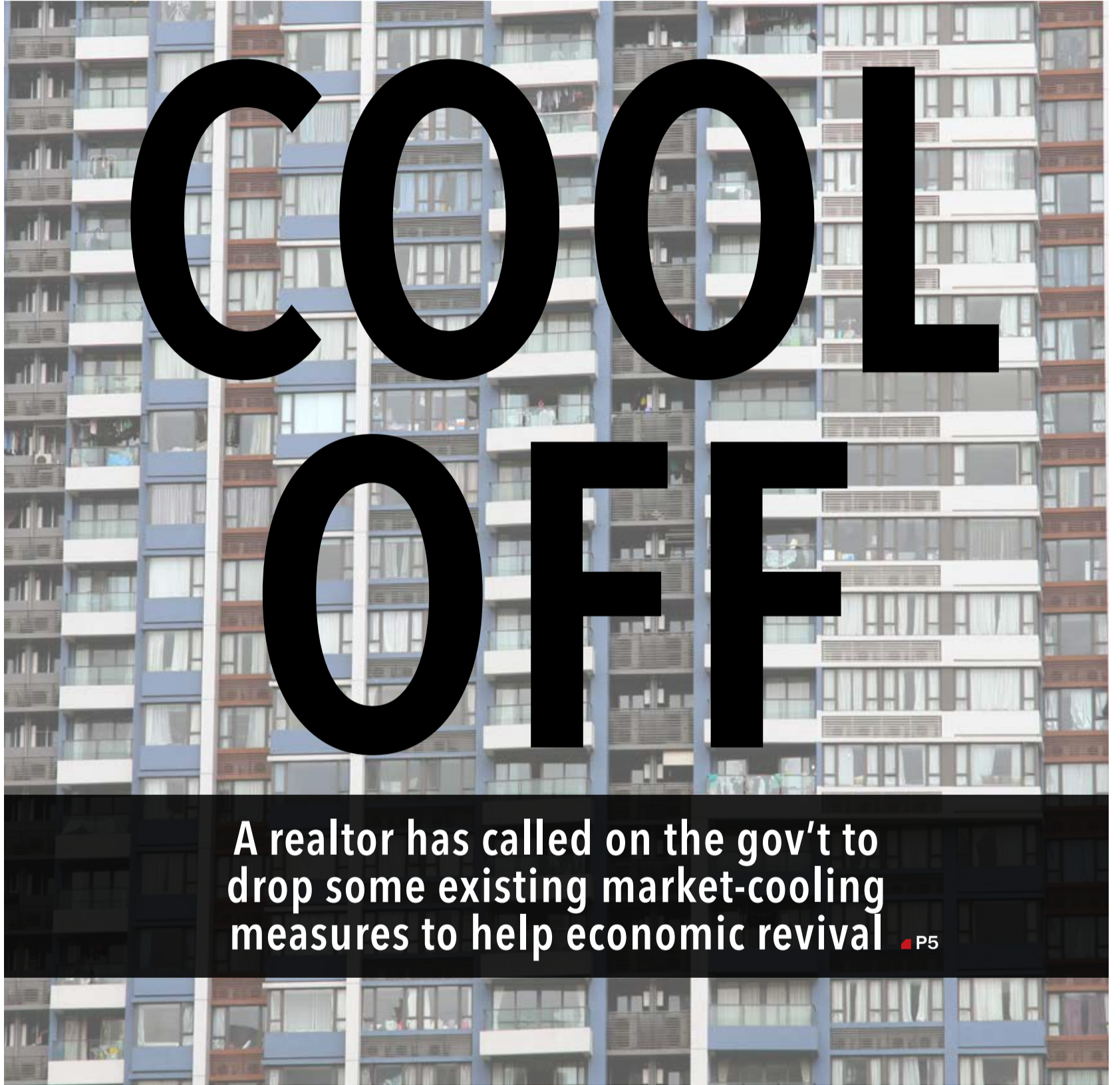
**Japan** Nissan plans to invest 600 million euros in Ampere, Renault's electric vehicle and software entity in Europe. The two companies also plan to establish more equal cross-shareholdings in the French-Japanese auto alliance, they said yesterday. The change will end a disparity that had caused friction between the automakers.

AP PHOTO



**New Zealand's** longstanding commitment to remaining nuclear-free means it won't play a role in Australia's plans to acquire nuclear-powered submarines, the leaders from both countries said after meeting yesterday. Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese made his first official visit to New Zealand since becoming leader last year and emphasized the growing closeness between the neighboring countries, including plans to make travel easier at the border.

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RENATO MARQUES

# CPU members: Small Taipa Hill hotel project 'unsuitable'

SEVERAL members of the Urban Planning Committee (CPU) have raised issues with the building of a 4-star hotel unit at the Jardins de Lisboa in the Small Taipa Hill area. The design company yesterday presented the amended development project to CPU members.

The CPU have not yet discussed the regular Urban Conditions Plan (PCU) but was only examining a preliminary presentation of the project. The committee chairman, Lai Weng Leong, said he anticipated the project would be a "polemic one" requiring "a wide collection of public opinion."

An amendment of a previously submitted plan was yesterday presented to the CPU to elicit the opinions of the CPU members about the project.

The design team highlighted the changes made according to a previous opinion from the now Land and Urban Construction Bureau (DSSCU) that had rejected the original plan because it implied a severe excavation of the hill.

That matter has been fixed in the new project proposal with the excavation area changing from the previous 28,000 cubic meters to the current 3,529.

The amendment has forced significant changes to the project, including the elimination of a basement level and a different style of construction for the building foundations.

While recognizing the efforts of the design company in reducing the excavation of the hill, several members expressed more general concerns regarding the location of a hotel unit and its operation, as well as its relation with the neighboring area composed of residential units only.

Several members, including Christine Choi, architect and president of the board of directors of the Architects Association of Macau, suggested that in cases like this, which concern the "greater good" of both the maintenance of the natural environment of Small Taipa Hill and the "peace of the residents" of the Jardins de Lisboa, the land plot (M3) owners' land right's should be transferred to another "more convenient" location. Several members agreed and suggested the project could potentially be transferred to the Zone A of the new landfills "where it could benefit from better conditions."

Other comments also noted



the difficulties that a hotel in this location would have in terms of transportation and some even said that the draft project looks "unappealing." All in all, members expressed opinions against the potential approval of the PCU for this hotel in the current location.

According to the description from one design company representative, the hotel unit would have two towers separated by a public area and be just 10 meters above the street level at the Rua Cidade de Lisboa.

At the top level, the building would have only six stories and would be level with the height of the residential building Windsor Arch.

Although not all the members

have expressed opinions on the project, the majority seemed to agree that the best solution is

not to build anything on the hill, with the government having to compensate the land rights of the

owners of the land plot in another area of Macau and potentially on the Zone A.

## ONE MORE SCHOOL APPROVED ON ZONE A, CPU MEMBERS CALL FOR PLOT MERGING

THE Urban Planning Committee (CPU) yesterday discussed and approved the construction of another school at Zone A of the new landfills.

The Urban Conditions Plan approval is related to the land plot B2 of Zone A where a school will be built in a plot with an area of 18,742 square meters divided into two sections.

At the CPU meeting, some members expressed common traffic concerns regarding the pick-up and drop-off of students to school, suggesting, as in previous discussions, the establishing of a pick-up and drop-off area underground.

Some members also noted that the B1 plot has also been approved for a school facility and called on the government to better use the resources and to merge the plots that have similar functions.

The CPU chairman noted that merging the plots at this stage is not an easy task and underground works for placing the technical galleries and other piping networks have already been built and planned in a certain manner, adding that to change the layout of the Zone A now would force all the plans back to the drawing table. RM

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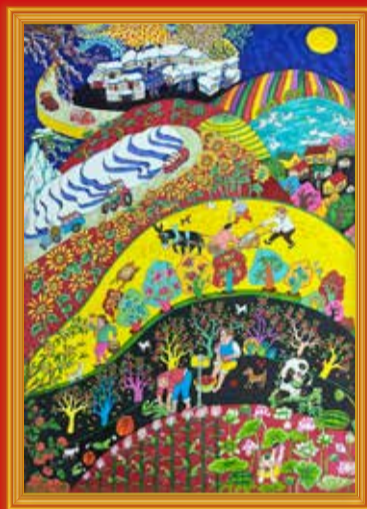
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**Wynn Celebrates the successful conclusion of the seventh "Wynn Cup - Macau Primary School Student National Education Drawing Competition", and sincerely congratulates the following winners on achieving the highest accolades:**



Inter School First Class  
Pui Va Middle School



Inter School Champion  
Escola Fuk Ien



Inter School First Class  
Instituto Salesiano



Senior Individual Champion  
Pui Ching Middle School Macau  
Chau Keng Hin



Junior Individual Champion  
Sacred Heart Canossian College (English Section) Macau  
Chan Chi U

Organized by Wynn, the seventh "Wynn Cup - Macau Primary School Student National Education Drawing Competition" attracted active participation from 52 schools and nearly 10,000 entries were received. Under the theme of "An Ode to Chinese Wisdom and Heritage: Solar Terms and Traditional Holidays", the competition encouraged children to use their brushes to depict the classic scenes of Chinese traditional festivals and the 24 solar terms. The aim was to inherit and promote the profound cultural heritage of the Chinese nation while enhancing the national consciousness of Macau's youth and fostering cultural confidence.

As the organizing institution, Wynn is delighted to witness the enthusiastic support and guidance from school principals and teachers, inspiring the children to vigorously wield their brushes and portray their dreams of childhood, dreams of Macau, and dreams of China.



# AL COMMITTEE SUBMITS OPINIONS TO PLENARY ON ASSISTED REPRODUCTION

ANTHONY LAM

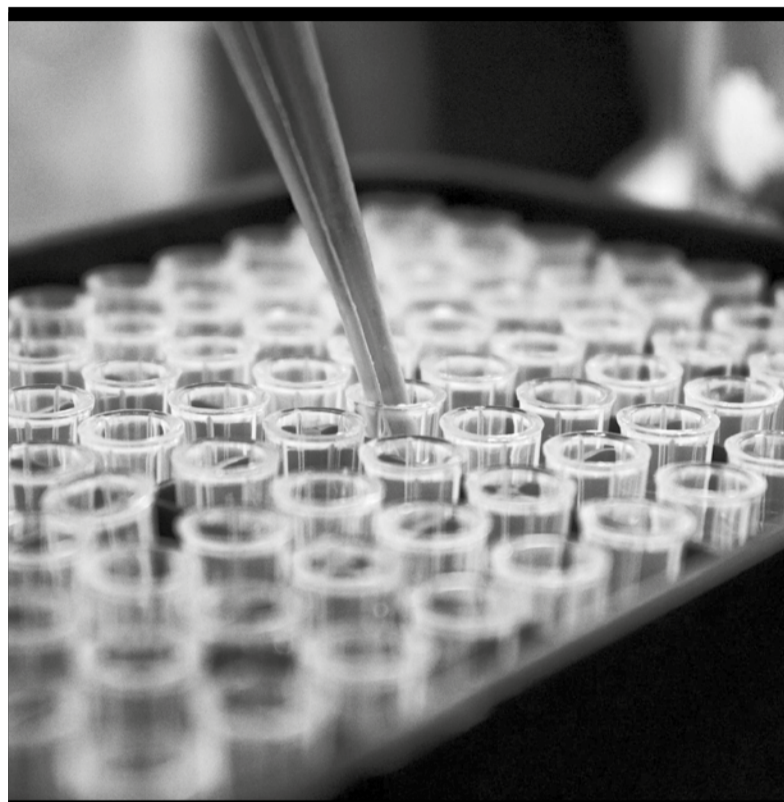
**C**LOSING the discussion on the Medically Assisted Reproduction Bill, the Second Standing Committee of the parliament will revert the bill to the plenary for second reading.

On Aug. 15, the bill will see its second reading. After passing at the plenary, the future law will be enacted in 180 days, as currently proposed in the bill.

The most updated version of the bill sees a bilateral unknown principle, meaning that the donor and the recipient will not know the identity of their counterpart, unless otherwise ordered by a court of law.

In addition, recipients shall not be permitted to designate particular donors.

The bill also proposes that the donor and the recipient should not be direct blood relatives. Approved donors will be at least 18 years old, physically and mentally sound, as well as not showing clinical symptoms of hereditary or contagious diseases.



Medical staff practicing surrogacy reproduction will be prosecuted, unless they are later proved to have no knowledge of the matter. To be eligible, a recipient must be medically diagnosed as infertile or bear-

ing the genes that are medically proven to cause hereditary diseases.

The government is inclined to charge future users of the service but might issue subsidies to a certain level.



## SAR, BRAZIL TO BOOST TRADE COOPERATION

STAFF REPORTER

**T**HE Macau and Brazil governments exchanged views on issues relating to the promotion of economic and trade cooperation between the two regions, facilitation of exchanges between scientific researchers, and how to give better play to the SAR's bridging role.

In a meeting held earlier this week at the government headquarters, Chief Executive Ho Iat Seng, met with the Secretary for Technological Development and Innovation from Brazil's Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation, Guilherme Coutinho Calheiros.

Ho pledged Macau would further its role as a commercial and trade cooperation service platform between China and Portuguese-speaking countries.

In particular, Macau would continue its effort to assist businesses based in mainland China to explore opportunities available in Portuguese-speaking countries; and help enterprises from Portuguese-speaking countries to establish a presence in the huge mainland market.

Calheiros then called for the two sides to work more closely in the future, to arrange visits of scientific research personnel; and to share and exchange technologies to achieve transformations in scientific research.

He added that Brazil would strongly support the holding of the 6th Ministerial Conference of the Forum for Economic and Trade Co-operation between China and Portuguese-speaking Countries, and would participate in related activities

# Gov't, Kiang Wu mull introducing TCM preparations at hospitals

**T**RADITIONAL Chinese medicine (TCM) preparations may be introduced in local hospitals, Pharmaceutical Administration Bureau (ISAF) has announced in a statement.

Choi Peng Cheong, president of the ISAF, said in the statement that Macau residents have been trusting and are used to taking Chinese medicine and using such services.

"To promote the development of TCM in Macau, the government is planning to promote the introduction of high-quality TCM preparations from mainland China to use at hospitals in Macau," Choi was cited as saying in the statement.

According to the statement, a delegation from a TCM hospital in Jiangsu Province has recently visited Macau and met with the ISAF and the management of the private Kiang Wu Hospital.

"The sale and flow of innovative TCM medications [in Macau] will inject vitality to Macau's TCM market, benefitting more residents and driving the development of the TCM Big Health in-



dustry," Choi said, adding that his authority will support cross-boundary manufacturing of mainland TCM preparations "with full efforts."

Moreover, he said that his authority will drive the transformation of TCM preparations "with

potential" into innovative medications, "piloted by clinical and market values."

Zhu Yuanhua, head of the Jiangsu delegation, said mainland TCM preparations had been found effective against gout and tumors, among other illnesses. **AL**

GBA

## FOOD FESTIVAL, LIGHT SHOW, CULTURAL WEEK TO BE HELD IN HENGQIN IN 2H

STAFF REPORTER

**I**N the second half of this year, the Guangdong-Macao In-Depth Cooperation Zone in Hengqin will hold a series of special cultural and tourism activities such as the Macao International Food Festival (Hengqin), water dance light show, and the cultural week of China-Portuguese-speaking countries, to attract more tourists and jointly build the brand of "Macao-Hengqin Sightseeing Tour."

The Economic Development Bureau of the Cooperation Zone will also work with Macau to design and develop high-quality tourism routes centering on "multiple destinations in one trip" so as to enhance the integrated development of Ma-

cau and Hengqin in terms of the cultural and tourism industries.

The news was stated in a three-year action plan (2023 - 2025) for high-quality development of the cultural and tourism industries in Hengqin, along with measures aimed at supporting these industries. António Lei, director of the Economic Development Bureau of the Cooperation Zone, delivered a brief on the action plan at the first plenary meeting of 2023 held by the Macao Tourism Development Committee recently.

During the meeting, he also said that in the future, the Cooperation Zone will make full use of its cultural and tourism policy advantages to accelerate the growth of cultural and tourism market entities.

# Int'l realtor calls for dropping 'tough' market-cooling measures

ANTHONY LAM

**T**HE government should drop some of the existing market-cooling measures to help economic revival, the Macau office head of an international realty agency told a press conference yesterday.

The call was based on the assumption or forecast that in the second half of this year, real property prices in Macau will see an average drop of 5% from the level that is already 10% short of the historical high.

Reviewing market figures from the first half of the year at yesterday's press conference, Oliver Tong, general manager at JLL Macau and Zhuhai, said many of these measures, which he described as tough, were formulated some 10 years ago. "The backdrop and the market have become so much different."

When asked what precise measures he hopes the government can loosen, he mentioned the buyer special stamp duty, the mortgage ceiling and the two-year resale blackout period.

He wondered if there would be any change to the buyer special stamp duty restricting purchases by non-locals, after the government actualizes its talent-attracting scheme.

LYNZY VALLES



"Will accredited talents be subject to the same stamp duty?" he asked. "What about people from within the Greater Bay Area?" He said he was not calling for a complete relaxation of the stamp duty.

In addition, he was also asked for his views on the government's proposal to restrict Rua de Felicidade for pedestrians only. The realtor supports the proposal, seeing possibilities of reviving the commercial property market within the neighborhood.

However, he stressed that revivals are not only about pe-

destrian-zoning the district. What is more important is the manner of investment and leases persuasion and negotiation. The establishment of a unique character is also crucial to the success of similar projects, he added.

The realty agency also runs project-based lease pitching, such as for the Resorts World Macau complex situated opposite Wynn Macau.

The realty agency has also suggested the government expedite its activity to permit talent acquisition and improve procedures for issuing finan-

cial licenses, Matt Kou, senior manager of leasing at the agency told the press conference. He said that, as part of a trend seen in the first half of the year, several major insurance agencies had sought or even rented office spaces ranging in area from 6,000 to 10,000 square feet.

Discussing retail in Macau, despite seeing historical highs at MOP24 billion in sales, Tong expects the figure is inclined to drop in the second half of the year, for several reasons, including a deflating RMB and the Northbound Travel by Macau Vehicles scheme. The former will make mainland people's consumption in Macau more expensive, while both factors will attract more Macau residents to spend their money across the border.

Shop rental will see impacts from the high interest rate, Kou said, adding that the agency had suggested commercial space owners enhance the attractiveness of their properties.

When asked if the minimum wage review will affect the property management operations of JLL, Ben Tse, head of property and asset management at JLL in Macau and Zhuhai, said that current measures, such as IT equipment and the provisioning of value-adding services, will help even out the impact.

## FLIGHT CHECK-IN SERVICE AT HZMB TO OPEN AUGUST

A flight check-in service center for the Macau immigration building at the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macau Bridge (HZMB) for flights serving the Macau airport will be officially opened in August. The move is expected to attract more people to using Macau International Airport for travel, further integrating Macau into the development of the Greater Bay Area. Such facility was available back in 2019, but was suspended following fallen demand due to frozen interactions within the region amid Covid-19. The airport company stated that in the first half of this year, the passenger volume exceeded 1.95 million, and the average daily passenger volume in July was 16,000.

## CRAFT MARKET CALLS FOR CO-BRANDED PRODUCTS APPLICANTS

The Tap Seac Craft Market is now calling for co-branded products on its 15th anniversary. Selected participants can design and produce co-branded products for sale with the "Craft Market" logo and will be qualified as a booth operator in the craft market this autumn. The call is open until Aug. 17. A total of 15 participants will be selected. The selection criteria include the cultural and creative elements of the product and relevance to the theme of the 15th anniversary of the Tap Seac Craft Market.

## NIKI CONCERT CANCELED OVER 'INTERNAL VENUE SCHEDULING CONFLICT'

The upcoming concert of Nicole "NIKI" Zefanya at The Venetian Macao has been canceled due to "an internal venue scheduling conflict". According to Live Nation, the decision to cancel the show was "not taken lightly" considering that it would have been NIKI's first time in the city. The cancellation came a day before the exclusive pre-sale. The concert was scheduled for September with tickets to go on sale from today.

## CPTTM CO-HOSTS WEDDING GOWN DESIGN COMPETITION WITH RESORT

The Macau Productivity and Technology Transfer Center (CPTTM) will co-organize a Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area (GBA) Wedding Gown Design Contest with SJM Resorts, S.A. for another year. The event aims to promote the continuous development of the fashion industry in the GBA, showcase creative design talent, and foster the cross-industry synergy of "Tourism + Cultural Creativity + Wedding." Themed "Shimmering Glamour," the event will comprise a Fashion Master Sharing Session titled "Shimmering Glamour - Craftsmanship Inheritance and Innovation." After the event, participants will tour the properties of SJM. Registration is now open until Sept. 1 to legal residents within the GBA.

## WEATHER

# Macau records temperatures of 37.4 degree Celcius under Doksuri's influence

**T**HE thermometers in Macau reached as high as 37.4 degree Celcius yesterday afternoon at the weather station of the Maritime Museum in Barra, but several other locations recorded temperatures above 37 degree Celcius, namely in the peninsula, the Meteorological and Geophysics Bureau (SMG) has reported.

The very high temperatures were influenced by powerful typhoon "Doksuri" which was yesterday afternoon in the North of Luzon in the Philippines heading to the mainland and passing South of Taiwan.

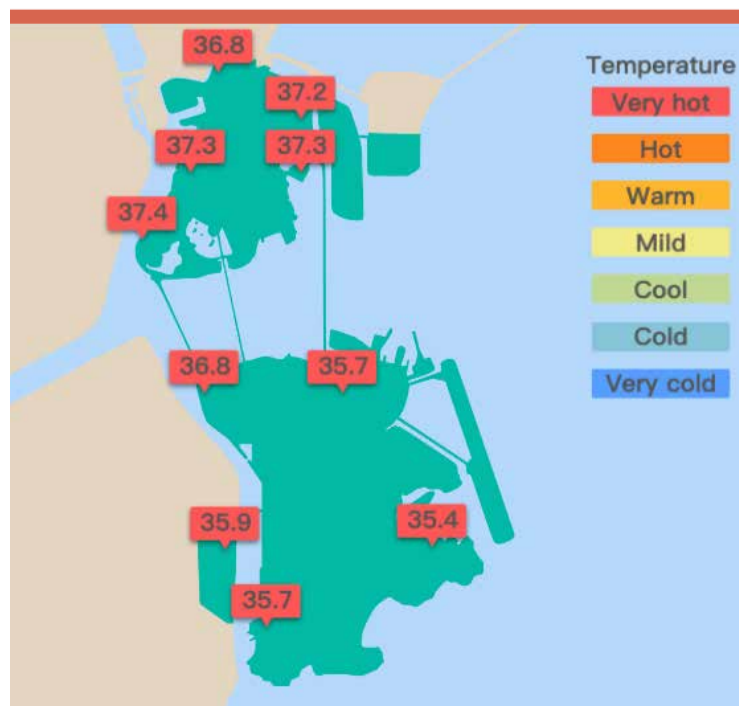
At least one person died as the typhoon lashed the coastline of the northern Philippines with gale-force winds and tor-

rential rain yesterday.

The SMG has issued the orange high-temperature warning to note the situation and had also hoisted signal no. 1 at 10 p.m. last night as the typhoon continues its path.

According to the latest forecasts, Doksuri should not cross the 400 km virtual line of distance to Macau, which means its influence should not be highly felt.

Meanwhile, the Hong Kong Observatory will hoisted Standby Signal, No. 1 last night, while its Environmental Protection Department (EPD) recorded "higher than normal air pollution levels" due to the "outer subsiding air" brought by the super typhoon. **RM**



ANALYSIS

# Foreign minister Qin is ousted, but his combative style is expected to continue

**C**HINA'S "sharp-tongued" foreign minister, Qin Gang, who echoed the words of nationalist Communist Party leader and President Xi Jinping, warning of "conflict and confrontation" with the U.S., the stakes of which could be the "future of humanity."

Now, Qin has been dismissed from office in the biggest political surprise to strike China in a decade.

Qin's departure was announced Tuesday after a month-long disappearance from public view, sparking rumors of personal scandals or friction within the top party echelons. He was absent from key meetings as the U.S. sent Secretary of State Antony Blinken and other officials to Beijing.

It also comes during economic challenges and poor relations with the United States and other nations that China relies on for economic development but is also seeking to push aside in its drive to overcome the Western-led economic order.

Ultimately, Qin's situation reflects back on Xi, who has concentrated power under his direct authority to a degree not seen since Mao Zedong in the 1960s. Xi was seen as backing the 57-year-old Qin's swift rise from

ministry spokesperson to protocol chief — where he oversaw arrangements for Xi's overseas trips — to ambassador to the U.S. and then foreign minister.

"The real issue of the Qin affair is that it showed how poor Xi's judgment was in 'helicoptering' Qin to the foreign minister post, and then took so long to act on his removal," said Steve Tsang, director of the China Institute at the London University School of Oriental and African Studies and a longtime analyst of Chinese leadership dynamics.

"Xi is not losing control, but those in the party who [may be] secretly against Xi must be drawing lessons on Xi's weaknesses," Tsang said. Before Qin became an issue, Xi "showed decisiveness whether he's right or not."

"He has not shown that over the Qin affair, which is embarrassing for him," Tsang said.

Qin's predecessor, Wang Yi, has been appointed as caretaker minister. Wang currently heads the party's foreign affairs division overseen by Xi.

The party, not the government, dictates policy and the foreign minister is essentially a functionary. Yet, the position holds considerable prestige, and Qin's shared background with Xi as descendants of the founders of

AP PHOTO



the People's Republic likely gave him a leg-up in the world of the Chinese bureaucracy.

All mention of Qin had been deleted from the Foreign Ministry's website by yesterday. However, he is still listed as a state councilor, a Cabinet-level position with various responsibilities, an indication that his political future is not completely doomed.

Neither Xi or any of his top aides has commented on Qin's fate and it's unclear whether it will have any serious impact on Xi.

Asked yesterday about Qin's removal, Foreign Ministry spokesperson Mao Ning said only that she had no new information to release, and that the ministry website was being "updated according to relevant regulations."

"Regarding China-U.S. relations, we have a consistent position. We always view and develop relations with the U.S. in the principle of mutual respect, peaceful coexistence and win-win cooperation. The two countries always maintain dialogue and contact at various levels. This remains unchanged," Mao said. **MDT/AP**

DIPLOMACY

# Blinken visits tiny Tonga as US continues push to counter China in the Pacific

**S**ECRETARY of State Antony Blinken visited the tiny kingdom of Tonga yesterday, as the United States continues to increase its diplomatic efforts in the Pacific while China's influence in the region grows.

Home to just over 100,000 people, Tonga last year was the site of a massive volcanic eruption that created a tsunami, killed four people in Tonga and sent millions of tons of water vapor into the atmosphere.

Blinken dedicated a new U.S. Embassy in Tonga, which opened two months ago, and praised the return of Peace Corps volunteers following the end of the CO-



U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken is greeted by Tonga's Prime Minister Siaosi Sovaleni in Nuku'alofa, yesterday

VID-19 pandemic.

Blinken told reporters he had concerns about China's actions in the region including some "predatory" eco-

nom activities, its assertion of "unlawful" maritime claims and an increased focus on militarization.

"As China's engagement

in the region has grown, there has been some, from our perspective, increasingly problematic behavior," Blinken said.

Tongan Prime Minister Siaosi Sovaleni said he was not concerned about the large amount of money his country had borrowed from China, and in fact this year had started to pay back the debt.

Blinken met with Sovaleni and other officials to discuss the bilateral relationship as well as regional and global issues, said State Department spokesperson Matthew Miller.

"Secretary Blinken outlined how the United States is following through

on commitments made by President Biden at last year's historic summit with Pacific Islands leaders to elevate our diplomatic and development presence and engagement in the region," Miller said in a statement.

Miller said the visit also highlighted U.S. efforts to tackle the Pacific climate crisis, including by expanding early warning systems.

Blinken next travels to New Zealand, where today he will meet with officials and watch the women's World Cup soccer match between the U.S. and the Netherlands. He then travels to Brisbane, Australia, for meetings with Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin and

their Australian counterparts.

The trip is Blinken's third to the Asia-Pacific region in the past two months, following visits to China and Indonesia. Second gentleman Doug Emhoff, the husband of U.S. Vice President Kamala Harris, also just finished a visit to New Zealand and Samoa. French President Emmanuel Macron began a trip to the South Pacific this week.

Blinken's travel was announced soon after the State Department notified Congress it plans a massive increase in diplomatic personnel and spending for facilities at new U.S. embassies in the Pacific islands.

The update to Congress pointed out that China has permanent diplomatic facilities in eight of the 12 Pacific island nations that the U.S. recognizes and said the U.S. needs to catch up. **MDT/AP**

PHILIPPINES

# Typhoon blows off roofs, floods villages and displaces thousands

JIM GOMEZ, MANILA

**T**YPHOON Doksuri slammed an island and lashed northern Philippine provinces with ferocious wind and rain yesterday, displacing nearly 16,000 villagers as it blew tin roofs off rural houses, flooded low-lying villages and knocked out power, officials said.

There were no immediate reports of casualties after the typhoon slammed into Fuga Island off Aparri town in Cagayan province, where 15,843 people were evacuated from high-risk coastal villages. Schools and workplaces were shut down as a precaution as Doksuri approached. Thousands of people in other northern provinces were also displaced by the typhoon, which has a 700-kilometer-wide band of wind and rain.

Doksuri weakened slightly but remained dangerous and lethal with sustained winds of 175 kph and gusts of up to 240 kph. It was blowing over the coastal waters of the Babuyan Islands in Luzon Strait off Aparri town yesterday morning, forecasters said.



Rescuers wade along floodwaters caused by Typhoon Doksuri as they search for residents to evacuate to higher grounds in Bacarra, Ilocos Norte province

"Our northern coastal towns are being battered," Cagayan Gov. Manuel Mamba told The Associated Press by telephone. "I'm receiving reports of tin roofs being blown away and flooding that could not drain out probably because of tidal surges coming in from the sea."

A damage assessment would be done after the typhoon passes, but Mamba said he feared there could be extensive damage to Cagayan valley's corn and rice

farms, which have already been battered by a months-long dry spell before Doksuri hit. At least four entire towns lost power due to the onslaught and six bridges were impassable due to flooding, Cagayan officials said in an initial damage report.

"Violent, life-threatening conditions are expected to continue" over northwestern Cagayan and the outlying Babuyan Islands as well as the northern mountainous regions of Apayao

and Ilocos Norte provinces, according to an advisory from the country's weather bureau.

Coast guard personnel used rubber boats and ropes to evacuate villagers, who were trapped by brownish, waist-level floodwaters in their houses in a village in Bacarra town in Ilocos Norte, said the coast guard.

More than 3,700 inter-island ferry passengers and cargo truck drivers, along with nearly 100 passenger and cargo vessels and

motor bancas, were stranded in several ports where a no-sail order was imposed, the Philippine coast guard said.

Disaster-response officials said they were verifying reports of a woman drowning in a swollen creek amid heavy rains Monday in Cardona town southeast of Manila as the typhoon approached from the Pacific.

The typhoon has been enhancing seasonal monsoon rains in central and northern provinces, including in the densely populated capital region of metropolitan Manila. It was forecast to move away from the northern Philippines on Thursday and barrel northwestward to graze past Taiwan's southwestern coast before hitting southeastern China later this week.

Although it is not poised for a direct hit, Doksuri's outer bands brought heavy rain and strong winds to Taiwan's eastern coast yesterday. Trains were canceled between Kaohsiung and Taitung cities in the south, while ferries to outlying islands have also been put on pause.

Taiwan's Central Weather Bureau reported gusts up to 198 kph (123 mph).

Meanwhile, Taiwan has continued to hold its annual Han Kuang military exercises. The military carried out its first-ever drill at the civilian Taoyuan International Airport on yesterday morning, according to local media. The drill stopped air traffic for an hour while the military simulated stopping an invasion targeted at the airport. **MDT/AP**

CAMBODIA

# PM Hun Sen says he will step down in three weeks and his son will succeed him

SOPHENG CHEANG, PHNOM PENH

**L**ONGTIME Cambodian leader Hun Sen said yesterday he will step down in three weeks as prime minister and hand the position to his oldest son, who won his first seat in Parliament in Sunday's election.

The announcement came after their Cambodian People's Party won a landslide victory in weekend elections that Western countries and rights organizations criticized as neither free nor fair, and in which the country's main opposition was suppressed.

Hun Sen has been Cambodia's autocratic leader for 38 years but said ahead of the elections he would hand off the position to his oldest son, Hun Manet, so-



metime during the next five-year term.

Hun Manet, 45, is currently the chief of the country's army.

In a televised address, Hun Sen, who is Asia's longest-serving leader, said he had informed King Norodom Sihamoni of his decision and that the king had agreed in a formality.

Hun Sen said his son

would be named prime minister after the National Election Commission reports the final results of Sunday's election, in which the CPP won 120 of 125 seats. He has also said that a new generation would take over many of the top ministerial positions in the new government, which he said would be formed Aug. 22.

Even though he is stepping down from the premiership, Hun Sen is widely expected to remain closely involved in running Cambodia, and is also to become president of the country's Senate.

After a challenge from the opposition Cambodian National Rescue Party in 2013 that the CPP barely overcame at the polls, Hun

Sen responded by going after leaders of the opposition, and eventually the country's sympathetic courts dissolved the party.

Ahead of Sunday's election, the unofficial successor to the CNRP, known as the Candlelight Party, was barred on a technicality from running in the election by the National Election Committee.

Following the election, the European Union criticized the vote as having been "conducted in a restricted political and civic space where the opposition, civil society and the media were unable to function effectively without hindrance."

The United States went a step further, saying that it had taken steps to impose visa restrictions "on individuals who undermined democracy and implemented

a pause of foreign assistance programs" after determining the elections were "neither free nor fair."

Hun Sen had been a middle-ranking commander in the radical communist Khmer Rouge responsible for genocide in the 1970s before defecting to Vietnam. When Vietnam ousted the Khmer Rouge from power in 1979, he quickly became a senior member of the new Cambodian government installed by Hanoi.

A wily and sometimes ruthless politician, Hun Sen has maintained power as an autocrat in a nominally democratic framework.

Hun Manet is a graduate of the U.S. Military Academy West Point graduate with a master's degree from New York University and a doctorate from Bristol University in Britain.

Despite his Western education, however, observers don't expect any immediate shifts in policy after his father steadily moved Cambodia closer to China in recent years. **MDT/AP**

KOREAN WAR

# Chinese and Russian officials to join North Korean commemorations of armistice

KIM TONG-HYUNG, SEOUL

**R**USSIA and China are sending government delegations to North Korea this week for events marking the 70th anniversary of the armistice that halted fighting in the 1950-53 Korean War.

The visits suggest North Korea is further opening up after years of pandemic isolation and is eager to showcase its partnerships with authoritarian neighbors in the face of deepening nuclear tensions with Washington, Seoul and Tokyo.

North Korea's state media said yesterday that a Russian delegation led by Defense Minister Sergei Shoigu arrived in Pyongyang Tuesday evening, where they were greeted by senior North Korean officials including Defense Minister Kang Sun Nam.

Russia's Defense Ministry said in a statement that Shoigu later held a meeting with Kang for talks that he said would "help strengthen cooperation between our defense departments." Video footage from Russian media showed Shoigu and other Russian delegates laying wreaths at a Soviet war monument in Pyongyang and saluting the city's statues of Kim Il Sung and Kim Jong Il, respectively the grandfather and father of current North Korean leader Kim Jong Un.

China's ruling Communist Party is also sending a mid-level official, Li Hongzhong, in hopes of restoring exchanges between the allies.

North Korea has been preparing huge celebrations of the anniversary that are likely to be capped off by a military parade in the capital, Pyongyang, where Kim Jong Un could showcase his most powerful, nuclear-capable missiles designed to target neighboring rivals and the U.S.

Pyongyang's official Korean Central News Agency said that Kim and his top defense and foreign policy officials visited two cemeteries, including one for Chinese troops who died while fighting alongside North Korea



In this photo provided by the North Korean government, Kim Jong Un (foreground) prepares to offer a flower at a liberation war martyrs cemetery in Pyongyang, Tuesday

during the war.

Kim expressed gratitude for the Chinese soldiers who dedicated their lives to repel imperialist aggression, calling them "martyrs" who would be "immortal in the hearts of the Korean people."

North Korea launched the Korean War, an unsuccessful attempt to conquer its southern rival. No peace treaty ending the conflict has ever been signed, and the border between the Koreas remains one of the most tense in the world. The North still celebrates the armistice as a victory in the "Grand Fatherland Liberation War."

The conflict brought in forces from the newly created People's Republic of China, aided by the then Soviet air force, while South Korea, the U.S. and troops from various countries under the direction of the United Nations battled to repulse the invasion.

The visits by Russian and Chinese delegations mark only the second known time foreign government officials were invited to enter North Korea since the start of the pandemic, following the arrival of China's ambassador to Pyongyang, Wang Yajun, in March, according to South Korea's Unification Ministry, which handles inter-Korean affairs.

North Korea had spent the first two years of the pande-

mic in a self-imposed lockdown to shield its poor health care system. But since last year, the country has gradually reopened trade with China to improve its dismal economy.

"For now, it's premature to say whether or not North Korea further opens its borders in the future, but considering their measures to ease virus controls and signs that they are preparing to send athletes to international sporting events again, it's possibly only a matter of time," the South Korean ministry said in a statement to The Associated Press.

The anniversary comes during a time of heightened tensions in the region as the pace of both North Korea's weapons tests and U.S. military exercises with South Korea have intensified in a tit-for-tat cycle.

Some experts say North Korea might ramp up its weapons tests around the anniversary of the armistice today. North Korea has conducted three separate rounds of missile firings since last week, apparently in protest of the United States sending naval vessels — including a nuclear-armed submarine — to South Korea in a show of force.

Since the start of 2022, North Korea has test-fired around 100 missiles as Kim exploits the distraction crea-

ted by Russia's war on Ukraine to accelerate the expansion of the nuclear-capable weapons he sees as his strongest guarantee of survival.

North Korea has also been aligning with Russia over the war in Ukraine, insisting that the "hegemonic policy" of the U.S.-led West has forced Moscow to take military action to protect its security interests. The Biden administration has accused North Korea of providing arms to Russia to aid its fighting in Ukraine, although the North has denied the claim.

Both Moscow and Beijing have been thwarting U.S. efforts to strengthen U.N. Security Council sanctions on North Korea over its flurry of missile tests.

When asked whether Washington had any concerns about China and Russia showing support for North Korea with the visits, Vedant Patel, deputy spokesperson at the U.S. State Department, called for Beijing and Moscow to play a more constructive role in defusing tensions and bringing Pyongyang back to dialogue.

"They can use their influence over (North Korea) to encourage them to refrain from threatening, unlawful behavior — behavior that will not just incite tensions in the immediate region but also the region broadly," he said. MDT/AP

## this day in history

### 1978 TRANSATLANTIC BALLOONISTS IN TROUBLE



Two British balloonists battling to be the first to cross the Atlantic are in difficulties half way across the ocean.

Don Cameron, 39, and Major Christopher Davey, 34, were 1,000 miles west of the UK when they reported a helium gas leak in their bright yellow 90 ft (27.4m) tall balloon.

They say they are "limping along" and are not in immediate danger but the RAF control centre at Bracknell in Berkshire is on standby for a rescue.

A spokesman for the centre said: "they are in trouble but they are going on."

RAF Nimrod aircraft have been following the pair on their transatlantic journey to provide assistance and weather reports.

The balloonists are maintaining a height of 7,000 feet (over 2,000m) and speed of 30 knots (55.5 km/h)

They took off yesterday from St John's in Newfoundland in the 13th attempt in recent years to cross the Atlantic by balloon.

They hope to land safely in Cornwall or Brittany in France in the next couple of days.

The balloon and 14 ft (4.27m) gondola - designed to be a floating survival capsule - cost £150,000.

The first model of a hot-air balloon flew in 1782 and was made of paper-lined cloth by Joseph and Etienne Montgolfier in France.

A duck and a sheep were the first balloon passengers, but the first manned flight was made by Pilatre de Rozier in France in 1783.

But two Britons achieved the first non-stop trans-Atlantic flight in 1919 in a Vickers Vimy aircraft.

Pilot John Alcock and navigator Arthur Whitten Brown claimed a £10,000 prize from the Daily Mail for their achievement.

Courtesy BBC News

## IN CONTEXT

Mr Cameron and Major Davey were within 350 miles of land and ready to touch down in Cornwall a day later.

But the next day a massive storm ripped an eight-foot-long (2.4m) gash in the balloon. The balloonists jettisoned enough ballast to bring them within 110 miles of land - near Brest - before the balloon collapsed into the sea.

The men were picked up by a trawler and taken back to the UK.

Later in the year the first transatlantic balloon flight was made by Maxie Anderson, Ben Abruzzo and Larry Newman, from Maine in the US to Miserey in France.



MACAU'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

**YOUR STARS**



**ARIES**

Mar. 21-Apr. 19

Socialize with friends, but don't overspend on lavish entertainment. Your fun loving approach will be admired and appreciated by others.



**TAURUS**

Apr. 20-May. 20

Talk to employers in order to promote your career objectives. Try to put your money away for a rainy day. Passion is about the best way for you to relieve tension.



**GEMINI**

May. 21-Jun. 21

You can expand your circle of friends if you get out and socialize. Try not to hang out with coworkers if you wish to avoid problems later.



**CANCER**

Jun. 22-Jul. 22

Sudden changes concerning coworkers may surprise you. Don't let them blame you. Travel will be good if you are seeking knowledge.



**LEO**

Jul. 23-Aug. 22

Your emotional attitude with respect to your status and direction in society may be unrealistic. Your leadership ability will enhance your reputation.



**VIRGO**

Aug. 23-Sep. 22

Keep your wits about you and be sure that you can trust those you confide in. You can beautify your surroundings by renovating or redecorating.



**LIBRA**

Sep. 23-Oct. 22

Confusion could result when communicating with others. Don't consume more than necessary. Try to curb your bad habits, and compromise if your partner gives you an ultimatum.



**SCORPIO**

Oct. 23-Nov. 21

Don't hesitate to sign up for lectures or seminars that will enlighten you. You could have a need to make some changes today. You must consider yourself for a change.



**SAGITTARIUS**

Nov. 22-Dec. 21

You can make major gains if you talk to your boss about your findings. Limitations at work might set you back. Risks will not be profitable.



**CAPRICORN**

Dec. 22-Jan. 19

You can pick up information that will give you an edge. Exercise your talents and present your ideas to groups you think you can contribute to.



**AQUARIUS**

Jan. 20-Feb. 18

An older member of the family may need assistance. Be careful not to sign your time or your cash away. Get out and enjoy some entertainment.

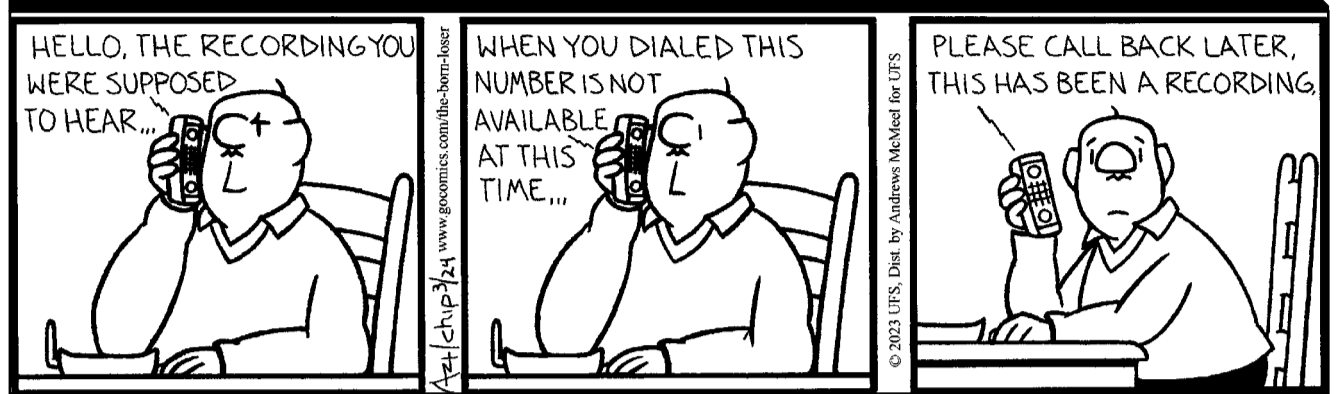


**PISCES**

Feb. 19-Mar. 20

Difficulties at an emotional level may be likely. You may find that someone at work hasn't been trustworthy. Avoid being overly opinionated or you will alienate friends.

**The Born Loser by Chip Sansom**



**SUDOKU**

**EASY**

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

**EASY+**

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

**MEDIUM**

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

**HARD**

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

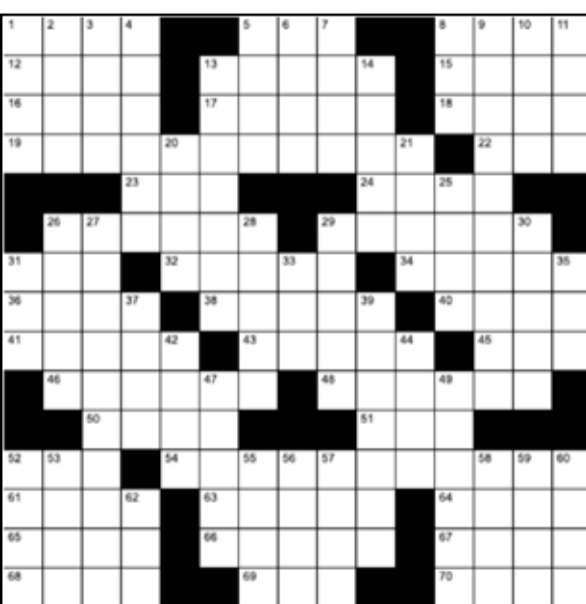
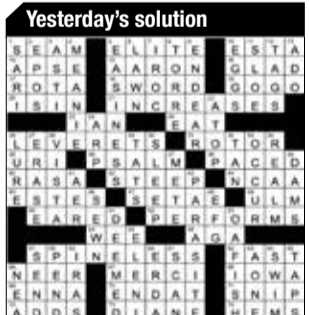
**WEATHER**

	MIN	MAX	CONDITION
<b>CHINA</b>			
Beijing	24	32	rain
Changchun	23	30	cloudy
Chengdu	22	28	showers
Chongqing	26	30	rain
Fuzhou	27	31	rain
Guangzhou	27	36	cloudy
Guiyang	21	28	showers
Haikou	25	33	cloudy
Hangzhou	26	31	rain
Harbin	22	31	rain
Hefei	25	32	thunderstorms
Nanjing	26	31	thunderstorms
Shanghai	26	30	rain
Taipei	26	29	rain
Wuhan	25	34	cloudy
Hong Kong	28	32	thunderstorms
<b>WORLD</b>			
Moscow	18	23	rain
Frankfurt	16	19	rain
Paris	18	24	rain
London	16	22	rain
New York	26	35	overcast

**CROSSWORDS**

ACROSS 1- Semicircular recess; 5- Falsehood; 8- Hammett hound; 12- Sportscaster Albert; 13- Dough; 15- Musical composition for two; 16- Director Preminger; 17- Ancient region of Asia Minor; 18- \_\_\_ take arms against...; 19- English dramatist; 22- 21st letter of the Greek alphabet; 23- Projection at the corner of a door architrave; 24- Gumbo veggie; 26- Person with a flat, say; 29- Anxiety; 31- Equivalent wd; 32- Threads; 34- Pantywaist; 36- Ceremonial act; 38- Challenges; 40- Evening, informally; 41- Bridge bid, briefly; 43- Fortune-telling cards; 45- New Jersey cager; 46- Cavern; 48- Dirty mark; 50- Ballet bend; 51- Gasteyer of "Saturday Night Live"; 52- Cookie holder; 54- Contemplation; 61- Assortment; 63- \_\_\_ ware (Japanese porcelain); 64- Wishing won't make \_\_\_; 65- Rick's love in "Casablanca"; 66- Roman goddess of the moon; 67- Defense grp. since 1949; 68- Russian no; 69- "ER" extras; 70- Singer Campbell;

DOWN 1- Old Testament book; 2- Course; 3- Mex. miss; 4- Calls forth; 5- Coil; 6- Actress Skye; 7- "On the Waterfront" director Kazan; 8- Bustle; 9- Excelling; 10- 9th letter of the Hebrew alphabet; 11- Yours, in Tours; 13- Engage in textual misprision; 14- Biblical brother; 20- Like pie?; 21- Squeezes (out); 25- Drops from the sky; 26- Dishonest; 27- Business activity; 28- Muse of lyric poetry; 29- Software buyers; 30- Rival of Helena; 31- Box-office letters; 33- Heston's org.; 35- Are we there \_\_\_?; 37- Hydroxyl compound; 39- East African nation; 42- Elevator man; 44- "Chicken of the sea"; 47- Halfhearted; 49- Going out with; 52- Connect; 53- Associate; 55- Islamic chieftain; 56- James of "The Godfather"; 57- Samovars; 58- Romance lang.; 59- Bone; Prefix; 60- High time?; 62- Porridge plant;



Crossword puzzles provided by BestCrosswords.com

**USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS**

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



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AD

MEXICO

NATIVE ETHNIC GROUPS PROMOTE THEIR HERITAGE DURING OAXACA'S BIGGEST CULTURAL FESTIVAL

MARÍA TERESA HERNÁNDEZ, OAXACA

Leticia Santiago carries her ancestral heritage wherever she goes. Every time she addresses the crowds during the Guelaguetza, the biggest cultural event in southwestern Mexico, her words, her garments and her skin reveal a clue about the town where she was proudly born.

The 35-year-old Mexican was elected as Centéotl goddess in late June, which means she'll represent the Aztec deity of maize for a year and lead all festivities during the Guelaguetza, which will run in the state of Oaxaca through July 28. During the government-sponsored event, 16 Indigenous ethnic groups and the Afro-Mexican community promote their traditions through public dances, parades and craft sales.

Santiago can't help but smile when she talks about the history of her ethnic group, known as "Chatinas." Her hometown, Santiago Yaitepec, is located five

AP PHOTO



Dancers perform on the first day of the Guelaguetza in Oaxaca, Mexico

hours away from Oaxaca City, between the mountains and the coast.

"It is said that we come from the sea and our ancestors were

fish," Santiago said. "When a sea monster started devouring them, our Holy Father, the Sun, took pity on them and turned them into human beings. That's how our

story began."

She claims that she entered the Centéotl goddess contest to share the Chatina heritage to the world. All her public speeches include some of her native language and every time someone asks for a photo, she enthusiastically raises a side of her bright-colored skirt.

Chatinas learn to cross-stitch as young girls because embroidering birds and flowers has a spiritual meaning. In the community's worldview, the Earth is their mother and their closeness with nature can be seen in their textiles.

"Through threads and needles, through waist looms, we have created an identity. Preserving it has been a struggle for us," Santiago said.

Not every Oaxacan community can be a part of the Guelaguetza, which began in 1932 when the government organized a celebration. Participants are selected by a committee, which for years was criticized by academics and activists over the groups it excluded. Santiago's own community was

ignored until now.

"Because of that, nearby towns started to organize their own Guelaguetzas and added more local elements," said Oaxacan anthropologist Enrique Martínez. According to his records, up to 26 similar events have been held in parallel.

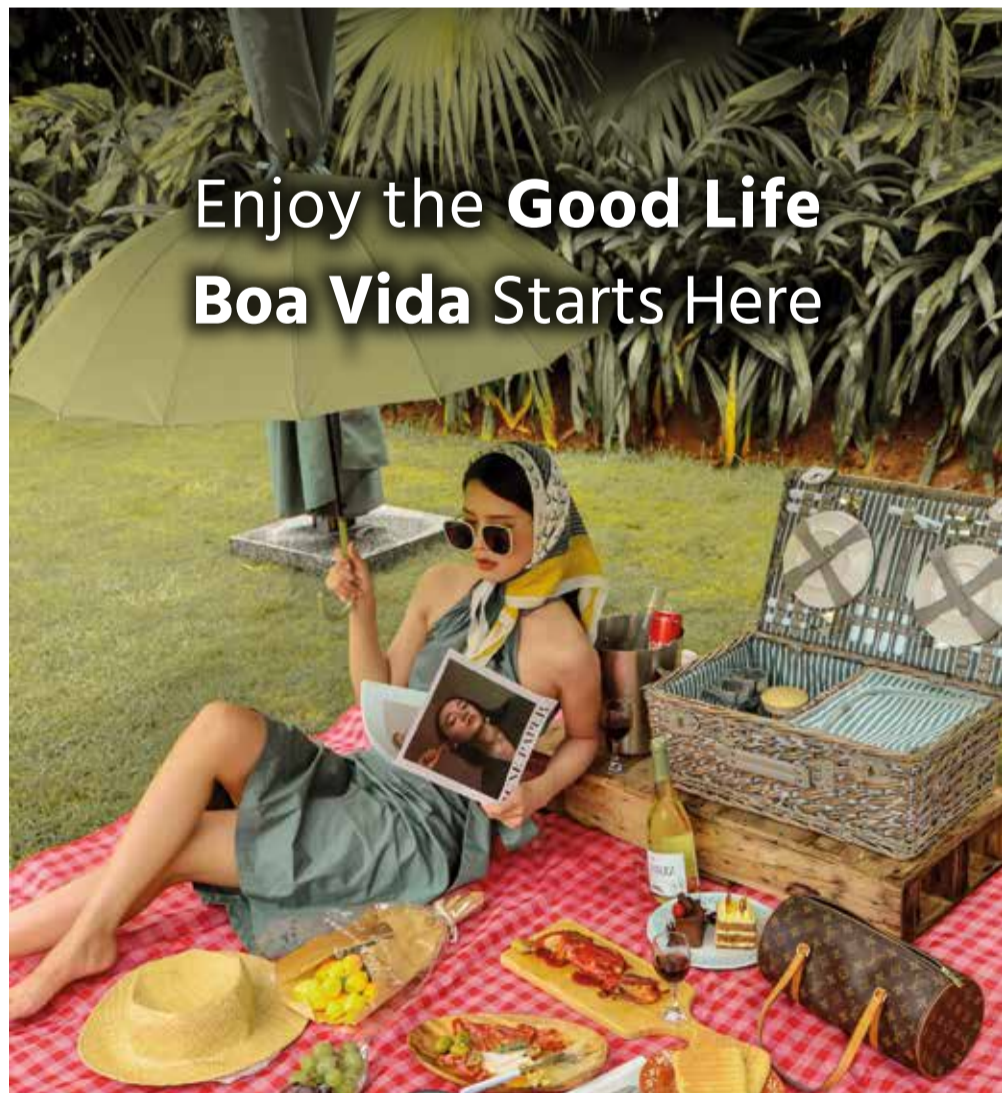
When a new governor came into power in 2022, the committee in charge of selecting the participants was overhauled and vowed to be more inclusive. "This year the discourse has changed, and they invited communities that were previously left out," said Gabriela Zapién, who is also a Mexican anthropologist.

Some of the racial diversity of the local ethnic groups can be seen along the streets of Oaxaca City during this year's Guelaguetza.

Tonatiuh Estrada, a craftsman who specializes in cardboard figures, was asked to create dolls representing women from the eight regions of the state. The three-meter-tall figures are regularly used during "calendas," as Oaxacans call processions held during Catholic festivities to honor their patrons or saints.

"For me, these dolls are like documents," Estrada said. "When people look at them, they don't only see a 'huipil' (a traditional garment) or a local hairstyle. They can read them and understand their meanings." MDT/AP

AD



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\*The activities are subject to change without prior notice. \*\*Gifts and discounted products are available on a first-come, first-served basis. All images are for reference only. \*\*\*Should there be any disputes, the organizers reserve the right of final decisions.



Coordinator: Creation Advertising Co., Ltd.

FOOTBALL

# Indigenous Football Australia pushes for direct funding out of Women's WC legacy

**T**HE Indigenous Football Australia Council has urged FIFA to address what it calls an "egregious omission" of First Nations-led organizations in a Women's World Cup legacy plan.

Former Sydney Swans Australian rules football star Adam Goodes and John Moriarty, the first Indigenous player selected for Australia's national soccer team, were among the signatories to a letter sent to soccer's world governing body regarding legacy funding from the 2023 World Cup.

Football Australia's Legacy '23 strategy aims to deliver economic, social and health benefits and multicultural inclusion following its co-hosting of the global tournament with New Zealand.

But the IFA Council said while the legacy report report acknowledged First Nations contributors, it didn't commit specific funding for programs that are led and managed by Indigenous people.

"Despite ubiquitous Indigenous culture, symbolism, traditional ce-



Australia players pose for a group photo with the Aboriginal flag prior

remories and installations at the World Cup and the holding out of Indigenous culture as something of central value to football, not a single dollar from the legacy program has been committed to organizations that are Indigenous-led," the letter said. "Without support for the Indigenous community and their programs, we consider this symbolism empty."

The letter was also signed by Sydney FC goalkeeper Jada Whyman, an Indigenous player who was called into Matildas camp in April

for games against England and Scotland, former Matildas player and now union representative Kate Gill, A-League women's players Gema Simon and Allira Toby and former Socceroo Travis Dodd.

It was addressed to FIFA's president Gianni Infantino, secretary-general Fatma Samoura, and head of women's football Sarai Bareman, as well as Football Australia and the sports minister.

FIFA yesterday said Bareman, who is New Zealand-born and of Samoan and Dutch heritage, res-

ponded by letter to the IFA Council and her work is ongoing with the soccer federations in both countries on legacy and grassroots programs.

Among other initiatives for this World Cup, FIFA has used traditional place names along with common-use names for all competition venues in Australia and New Zealand, and is running a "Unite for Indigenous Peoples" campaign.

Ahead of the tournament, Samoura said the World Cup provided a platform to give opportunities to all people, and officials needed to highlight issues for First Nations people in Australia and New Zealand.

"Because you cannot play the simple game of football by leaving outside the people without whom this nation would not have existed," Samoura said during a visit with Indigenous players. "We cannot come and just play and leave."

Steph Catley, who is leading the Matildas while star striker Sam Kerr is injured, told a news conference ahead of Group B match against

Nigeria that she wasn't aware of the specifics raised in the letter to FIFA "but obviously it's an important part of grassroots football."

"If there's funding it should absolutely be given in that direction," Catley said. "It's something our team is very passionate about."

Goalkeeper Lydia Williams and striker Kyah Simon are Indigenous players on the Matildas' World Cup roster and have spoken about their different pathways to the national team.

Many of the Matildas players have highlighted Cathy Freeman's gold-medal win in the 400 meters at the Sydney 2000 Olympics as their sporting inspiration. To add a little more, Freeman, the first Indigenous athlete from Australia to win an individual Olympic gold, visited the Australian women's team ahead of the tournament.

Football Australia said support and advancement of Indigenous football programs were integral parts of the sport's national commitment, supported by its National Indigenous Advisory Group. **MDT/AP**

A large advertisement for Duffy's Irish Pub Macau. The top part shows the interior of the pub with patrons and a sign that reads "DUFFY'S IRISH PUB MACAU". Below this, a man in a white shirt is shown pouring a drink into a glass. The text "DUFFY'S IRISH PUB where everyone gets lucky!" is prominently displayed. Below the text are several bullet points: "A GREAT PLACE TO HANG OUT FOR FUN &amp; HAVE GOOD TIMES WITH FAMILY &amp; FRIENDS", "WITH OUTDOOR SEATING &amp; A PRIVATE SNUG FOR INTIMATE GATHERINGS", and "HAS A GREAT SELECTION OF WHISKEY, GIN, BEERS, ETC.". At the bottom, there are circular images showing people socializing and a glass of beer. The address "DUFFY'S IRISH PUB MACAU BROADWAY FOOD STREET AT GALAXY MACAU" and phone number "TEL.: 2875 2945 OR 63281245" are listed at the bottom.

An advertisement for the Benfica Macau Academy. The top part features a collage of photos showing children playing football and basketball. Below the photos is the Benfica Macau logo, which includes a shield with a bird and the text "MACAU 澳門". To the right of the logo is the text "BENFICAMACAU ACADEMY" and "澳門賓菲加體育學校". A QR code is located to the right of the text. At the bottom, the text "FOOTBALL | BASKETBALL | DAILY TRAININGS" is displayed.

**OPINION**

**World Views**

John Authers, Bloomberg



**MARKETS HOPE FOR DECISIVE CHINA CHANGES. ARE THEY?**

Something's going on in China. Of that we can be sure. What exactly is happening, maddeningly, is harder to discern, but any big and unscheduled change in personnel matters. On Tuesday, the world's second-largest economy made two of them.

Of greatest importance to markets, Pan Gongsheng has taken over as governor of the central bank. The 60-year-old was appointed by the National People's Congress Standing Committee to replace Yi Gang, who had reached the official retirement age of 65. The power Pan will wield won't be unfamiliar. The long-time central banker had already been named the Communist Party's secretary at the People's Bank of China earlier this month. In fact, when US Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen visited Beijing, she already referred to Pan — widely seen as a technocrat — as "acting governor."

But it could be significant that Pan's appointment marks the first time in around five years that the top two positions at the PBOC — governor and Communist Party secretary — will be held by one person. As Bloomberg colleagues wrote, unlike most of the western central banks, China's is not independent. It answers to the State Council led by Premier Li Qiang and needs approval before big actions like changing interest rates or intervening in the currency — a pressing issue at present as the yuan touches record depths.

Pan's appointment can be taken as a sign that the leadership wants a coordinated plan to steer the economy out of its current downturn. Very many investors hope that will mean more monetary stimulus. Since the PBOC raised hopes with an interest rate cut last month, it had taken a cautious approach under Yi's leadership, continuing to focus on curbing risks of a financial crisis. Maybe that now changes.

Many are viewing Pan's appointment in the light of the pronouncements on the economy from President Xi Jinping's top decision-making Politburo earlier this week. The 24-member body had a pro-growth tone that was "slightly more dovish" than markets expected, according to economists at Goldman Sachs Group Inc.

The Politburo seemed concerned about the waning recovery but didn't brush back perceptions that it will hold off from any massive stimulus. Even if they're not "bringing out the bazooka," however, the statement does "signal greater urgency on the part of China's leadership to boost domestic demand and confidence," said 22V's Michael Hirson. "The language is stronger than in the Politburo's meeting in Q1."

The big news out of the meeting was a pledge by officials in their commentary to "adjust and optimize property policies timely," instead of Xi's mantra of "housing is for living, not for speculation," said Peter Bookvar, chief investment officer of Bleakley Financial Group. Real estate has been lackluster for two years, due largely to a government clampdown on leverage.

The PBOC wasn't the only Chinese institution with a personnel move.

In a much more startling development, Qin Gang was removed as foreign minister just seven months into the job.

To Adam Phillips, managing director of portfolio strategy at EP Wealth Advisors, the incident emphasizes the need for a cautious view on China, which is why he is underweight emerging markets. For the future, he suggests that acknowledging the weakness in the housing sector alleviates concern that the leadership was oblivious to the problems building around them.

"They obviously know that they're under pressure to continue growing the economy and they want to avoid the same problems that Japan ultimately suffered during that balance sheet recession," he said. "I think they have history as a guide here."

[Abridged]

A large number of Airbus passenger jets will need to have their engines removed and inspected in the coming months after engine maker Pratt & Whitney discovered a problem that could cause parts to wear out more quickly, potentially adding to stress on airlines during the remainder of a hectic summer travel season.

RTX said that a "rare condition" in powder metal used to manufacture certain parts made between late 2015 and mid-2021 will require speeded-up fleet inspections. The engine involved is most often used to power the Airbus A320neo, a midsize jet

popular for short and medium-distance flights.

The company said it expects that about 200 of Pratt PW1100 engines will need to be pulled off and inspected by mid-September, and another 1,000 engines will need inspections in the next nine to 12 months.

Many Airbus A320 family jets use engines from CFM, but nearly 800 A320 and A321s have the affected Pratt engines, according to aviation-data firm Cirium. Indian low-cost airline IndiGo has nearly 140, Air China has 43, Germany's Lufthansa has 37, and Mexico's Volaris has 35.

AP PHOTO



A 4-month-old cub called Yuan Meng, which means "the realization of a wish" or "accomplishment of a dream", is pictured during its naming ceremony at the Beauval Zoo in Saint-Aignan-sur-Cher, France, on Dec. 4, 2017

**FIRST PANDA BORN IN FRANCE SAYS GOODBYE AND HEADS TO CHINA**

**ENSCONCED** in a glass cage lined with bamboo shoots, the first panda ever born in France bid "adieu" to the French zoo where it grew up and set off yesterday [Macau time] for its new home in China.

Named Yuan Meng, the 120-kilogram panda peered out of the cage as staff at the Beauval Zoo south of Paris paid an emotional farewell. Its name means "the realization of a wish" or "accomplishment of a dream."

A crowd of well-wishers

waved goodbye as the trailer pulling the cage rolled out of the zoo, the words "Bon Voyage Yuan Meng" painted on its sides.

Yuan Meng was born in 2017 to parents at Beauval on a 10-year loan from China. The mother later gave birth to twin pandas. All the offspring are meant to be eventually be sent to China.

Yuan Meng's departure was initially delayed because of the COVID-19 pandemic. While the trip was long planned, Beauval

Zoo director Rodolphe Delder described the day as "heartbreaking."

Giant pandas have difficulty breeding and so the births were particularly welcomed. There are about 1,800 pandas living in the wild in China and a few hundred in captivity worldwide.

While China for decades gifted friendly nations with its unofficial mascot as part of a policy of "panda diplomacy," the country now loans pandas to zoos on commercial terms. **MDT/AP**

AP PHOTO



**Russia** Some African leaders arrived in Russia yesterday for a summit with President Vladimir Putin as the Kremlin seeks more allies amid the fighting in Ukraine. Putin has billed the two-day summit that opens Thursday in St. Petersburg as a major event that would help bolster ties with a continent of 1.3 billion people that is increasingly assertive on the global stage. Putin is set to hold separate meetings with the leaders of Egypt and Ethiopia ahead of the summit.

AP PHOTO



**Israel** Thousands of doctors walked off their jobs, labor leaders threatened a general strike and senior justices rushed home from a trip abroad on Tuesday, a day after the government's approval of a law that weakens the country's Supreme Court. Critics say the legislation will erode the system of checks and balances. Four leading Israeli newspapers covered their front pages in black ink — an ominous image paid for by an alliance of high-tech companies. The only words on the pages were in a line at the bottom: "A black day for Israeli democracy."

AP PHOTO



**Greece** An air force water-dropping plane crashed while diving into a wildfire in southern Greece on Tuesday, killing both pilots, as authorities battled blazes that have been raging for days across the country amid a return of heat wave temperatures. Summer wildfires blamed on climate change have also struck other Mediterranean countries, leaving at least 34 people dead in Algeria in recent days and two people dead in southern Italy on Tuesday.

**THE DECISIVE MOMENT**

AP Photo/Mahesh Kumar A.



Turn up the heat. An artist performs a fire stunt during a procession marking "Bonalu" festival in Hyderabad, India. Bonalu is a month-long Hindu folk festival dedicated to Kali, the Hindu goddess of destruction.