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SON OF SPANISH ACTORS ARRESTED ON SUSPICION OF KILLING COLOMBIAN IN THAILAND

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AP PHOTO



New Zealand's

government said yesterday it will partner with U.S. investment giant BlackRock in its aim to become one of the first nations in the world to have its electricity grid run entirely from renewable energy. The government said it was helping BlackRock launch a \$1.2 billion fund to ramp up investments in wind and solar generation, as well as battery storage and green hydrogen. Some of the investment is expected to come from government-owned companies.

AP PHOTO



Australia Divers have recovered the flight data recorder from an Australia army helicopter that crashed at sea, killing the four crewmembers, during a military exercise with the United States last month, officials said. Recovering the black box was a priority to help determine the cause of the crash of the MRH-90 Taipan during a nighttime operation July 28 in the Whitsunday Islands off the northeast Australian coast.

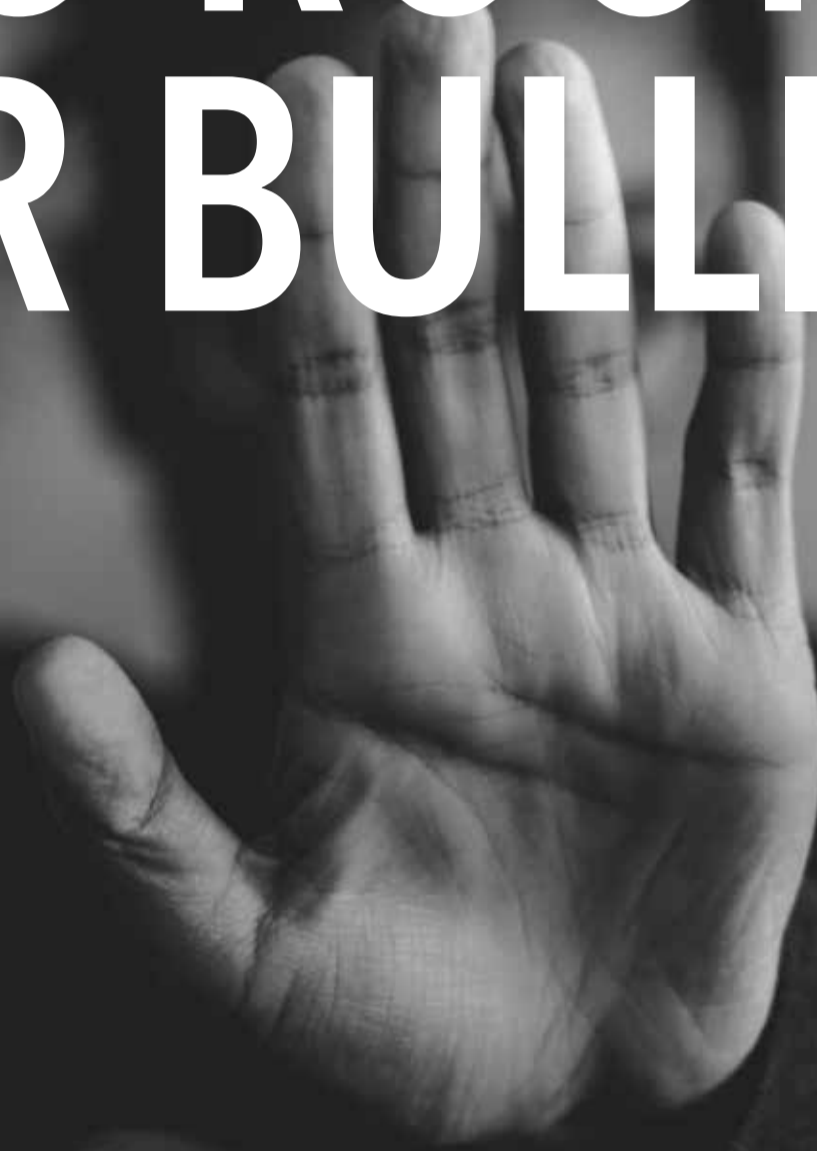
AP PHOTO



Slovenia The European Union and NATO began sending urgent aid to Slovenia after severe flooding over the weekend affecting two-thirds of the small country killed at least six people and left hundreds homeless. NATO Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg spoke by phone with Slovenian Prime Minister Robert Golob yesterday [Macau time], expressing his sympathy and the trans-Atlantic alliance's strong solidarity with Slovenia, a NATO statement said.

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AL PLENARY

LAWMAKERS IDENTIFY FLAWS ON DIVERSIFICATION PLAN, POINT OUT LACK OF CLEAR PATH FOR KEY INDUSTRIES

RENATO MARQUES

SEVERAL lawmakers have decided to make their opinions and suggestions public on the "Development Plan for Appropriate Economic Diversification of the Macao Special Administrative Region (2024-2028)."

The plan's public consultation period commenced last Friday. At the Legislative Assembly (AL) yesterday, lawmakers Ella Lei, Ma Io Fong, and Ho Ion Sang expressed their opinions on the plan in the time before the agenda of the plenary session.

Lawmaker Ella Lei said she had identified several flaws in the plan concerning the lack of a clear path for key industries. This flaw affects all industries in the plan except for the financial sector, which is the only one clearly defined, according to the lawmaker.

"The consultation text includes several key indicators on the development of adequate diversification of the economy. However, it only uses expressions such as 'maintaining growth' and 'recorded increases' for some projects, lacking clear and measurable in-

RENATO MARQUES



dicators," she said.

"There is still a lack of specific policies and measures and guidance regarding the direction of development for the training and reserve of talent and human re-

sources necessary for the development of different industries."

The lawmaker noted the government had dedicated a specific chapter to the financial sector, unlike to other sectors, where

the authorities had defined the work plan for the development of teams.

The work plan includes information on pre-employment education, training through internships, educational promotion, on-the-job training and professional accreditation. Regarding this, she said the objectives and contents are "more specific and allow a clearer vision of the sector's development prospects, the direction of policy and the means of participation."

As for the other sectors and industries, Lei said, "I hope that this can be taken as a reference to improve the content regarding other sectors, such as the technological innovation sector, instead of simply proposing further training."

Also missing from the plan, according to the lawmaker, is information on how the government will promote the professional development and diversification of residents' employment choices through practical programs, allowing them to participate in the development of the four main industries.

In turn, lawmaker Ma said that

in respect of additional training for workers, the increase in quality and improvements to the economic structure depends on education and optimizing conditions and resources at the different education levels.

For Ma, qualified staff can be trained in the non-higher education sector by raising professional levels and the capacity of the educational teams as well as the contents in areas such as scientific innovation, noting "this is the only way to achieve the healthy and sustainable development of the city and industry. Only then can society enjoy the fruits of adequate diversification of the economy."

Ma proposes to revive the technical and professional education system, focusing on the key industries to rapidly attain more qualified local staff.

In praise of the plan, Ho noted only the need for the public services to quickly adapt to this "great plan" by providing more concrete execution plans as well as a timeline for each aspect. Ho also suggested creating a revision and evaluation mechanism to promote the necessary improvements.

CRIME

Illegal currency exchange operators assault and rob competitor

ANTHONY LAM

AN illegal currency exchange operator has allegedly been beaten and robbed of HKD90,000 by four competitors at a local hotel room, the Judiciary Police (PJ) has announced.

Only two of the four alleged aggressors were caught, the police disclosed, adding that the two at large were believed to have left Macau. The two arrested are surnamed Tu, 34, and Dai, 40. Both the alleged aggressors and the victim are



from mainland China.

According to the police, in the evening of Aug. 4, they were notified by a

Cotai hotel of an alleged robbery. Inspectors managed to contact the male victim, in his 30's. The vic-

tim told inspectors he was approached by a seeker of currency exchange services the same evening. They then made arrangements to meet at the lobby of the Cotai hotel. Afterwards, the service seeker requested to relocate to a room on the seventh floor of the hotel to facilitate the transaction.

Once in the room, three other men emerged from the washroom and the four men pushed him onto the bed. During the fight, the victim believed that he was attacked with something

that resembled a drinking glass. He yelled to the attackers and begged for his own life. The four men left the room after taking his Hong Kong dollars. With his injuries, he approached the hotel staff for help.

Preliminary investigations enabled the police to identify four people. Two suspects were arrested during the early hours the next day at two other casinos in Cotai. The police found HKD230,000 in both cash and casino chips on the two apprehended suspects, of which at least HKD140,000 was in cash. The two people denied the allegations. The mainland police were notified of the case as part of police efforts to find the remaining two people.

In another case, a woman fell victim to an impersonation scam and lost HKD125,000. She received a call from a self-claimed officer at the imaginary Beijing Communications Administration, who accused her of having several mainland phone numbers for money laundering and human trafficking purposes. Denying the claim, she was diverted to the self-claimed Beijing Police, who showed her an arrest warrant and requested her immediate cooperation. Believing it to be true, she transferred the money to a designated account. Because she was not contacted again, she reported the case to the local police upon realizing that she might have been scammed.

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For subscription and general issues: general@macaudailytimes.com | Printed at Welfare Printing Ltd

RENATO MARQUES

AL PLENARY

THE recent case of a former employee of a media production company who suicided after having reported long-term bullying at her workplace has prompted lawmakers Leong Hong Sai and José Pereira Coutinho to address the topic at the Legislative Assembly.

Yesterday, before the agenda of the plenary session, the two lawmakers delivered separate spoken inquiries to the government on the same topic, calling for the local authorities to recognize the problem and find solutions to tackle it.

Leong noted that in the past, the discussion on bullying has been typically focused on schools only. However, in reality, "the problem also causes significant harm in the workplace."

Citing studies and surveys from Hong Kong and Taiwan, Leong said that in Taiwan, according to a survey released last year, "70% of respondents were victims of bullying at work, with 50% deciding to not report the cases."

In Hong Kong, during 2020 and 2021, surveys of nurses in public hospitals and teachers also showed concerning results. According to the studies, "80% of the nurses interviewed said they had been victims of bullying in the previous six months, but only 13% sought any form of support or advice, while only 20% reported the cases to their supervisor or the union."

The results for teachers showed similar trends, with about half of those surveyed also claiming to have experienced bullying at work in the previous six months, with many of them reporting that they experienced bullying "almost every day."

The same lawmaker noted that while in Macau there is no data on workplace bullying, it is likely that due to the difficulties of changing jobs and the need to support themselves and their families, most workers are unlikely to report bullying at work. Over time,

Bullying and harassment at work concern lawmakers



this can cause severe psychological trauma, leading to depression, anxiety, social problems and other issues such as physical assault and suicide.

The lawmaker noted that in Macau there is no specific department or service to receive and process workplace bullying complaints. As such, it is unclear where reports or requests for assistance can be made.

The lawmaker exhorted the government to consider the experiences of the neighboring regions as well as other countries to "create a specialized service, or support the development of an independent third party, for example, unions or labor organizations, to provide legal, psychological and even physical support to workers who need it."

Additionally, he called for clear guidelines and instructions on how to proceed in such cases to increase awareness and prevent bullying at work. Such guidelines are recommended to be applied

to both the government and private companies.

On the same topic, Pereira Coutinho said that such cases have been treated by the government and namely by the Labour Affairs Bureau as simple labor relation issues or disagreements. This does not reflect the severity of the problem or provide a solution to put an end to the bullying, harassment and intimidation cases that he said were frequent.

The lawmaker, who is linked with the Civil Servants Association, also said that his office is currently handling two such cases and that his office is having difficulty filing the appropriate complaints with the police authorities.

According to Pereira Coutinho, the victims have complained on several occasions of being subject to long periods of inappropriate verbal and physical conduct. As a result, they felt discomfort, humiliation and embarrassment, and are currently being monitored by psychologists on their own ini-

tiative and without any support from the government or their employers.

"The victims wanted to complain, but the official entities are not prepared to accept complaints of this nature because they confuse them with labor relations issues and are not willing to conduct an in-depth investigation. As a result, victims feel abandoned and without recourse to put an end to these acts of violence," the lawmaker said.

The lawmaker further called on the government to apply, with maximum urgency, the norms approved by the International Labour Organization several years ago concerning violence and harassment in the workplace.

The same lawmaker also called on authorities to collate the existing cases in Macau and compile them into a database on the most common types of workplace bullying in Macau to help with drafting specific measures to address them.

GOV'T DISTRIBUTED MOP5.38B FOR SUBSIDY SCHEME

Around 548,000 beneficiaries had received funding from the 2023 Wealth Partaking Scheme via bank transfer, accounting for about MOP5.38 billion, while 188,000 crossed cheques had been mailed, amounting to around MOP1.85 billion. The distribution of the 2023 subsidy scheme started July 4 and finished Aug. 4. During implementation, individual permanent residents and non-permanent residents received MOP10,000 and MOP6,000 respectively.

RESIDENTIAL PRICES HELD STEADY

The residential property price index for April - June slightly increased by 0.1% over the previous period (March - May 2023) to 251.7, data from the Statistics and Census Service (DSEC) shows. The index for Taipa and Coloane (259.0) rose by 0.3% while that for the Macau Peninsula (249.8) stayed flat over the previous period. The index for existing residential units (269.9) remained stable from the previous period. The index for those in Taipa and Coloane (310.9) grew by 0.4%, while the index for those in the Macau Peninsula (259.6) dropped by 0.1%.

BUS TO ACCEPT SIMPLE PAY TARIFF PAYMENT

Public buses will accept tariff payments using Simple Pay+ from Aug. 11, giving users another option to pay for bus fares. Last month, the two public bus operators conducted a pilot study that allowed passengers to pay bus fares using two new electronic payment methods (Alipay and WeChat Pay). The bus payment QR code functionality available in Simple Pay+ is different from the payment QR code functionality available in Simple Pay, as these are two separate functionalities. Thus, residents wishing to use Simple Pay+ to pay their bus fare must activate the payment QR code for buses functionality in their mobile payment application in advance.

EVENTS

MIECF to see four symposia this year

ANTHONY LAM

THIS year's ecological expo will see four symposia among a series of other events, the government has announced.

Held annually as the city's main environmental protection business event, the Macao International Environmental Cooperation Forum & Exhibition (MIECF) will be held between Aug. 17

and 20 this year, with four symposia spanning the four days of the event.

On Aug. 18, there will be a symposium on the innovative handling of air pollution, solid waste and wastewater. The organizer said the management of these sources of pollution is a key step in reaching ecological civilization and sustainable development.

Part of the symposium will be reserved for the

discussions of available technologies and their applications in the areas of air pollution, solid waste and wastewater management, with a focus on multifaceted environmental management and sustainable plans.

The symposium will see speakers of status present to share their insights and opinions. These speakers include area experts from Hong Kong,

mainland China and Malaysia.

Held at the CotaExpo, this year's MIECF will be themed around Building an Ecological Civilization through Innovative Initiatives. It will also see the debut of a concept that encourages individuals to take steps in carbon reduction. To facilitate this, a mobile app was written to help participants record their carbon emissions

and footprints. This will be introduced in the hopes of meeting the national targets of the carbon summit and neutralization.

A model was constructed by the Hong Kong City University under the commission by the Macau Fair & Trade Association to be used at this year's MIECF to achieve carbon neutralization. According to the organizer, this is the first instance of the achievement in Macau. It was also introduced to encourage local enterprises to strive for reduced carbon emissions and eventually carbon neutralization.

TOURISM INDUSTRY SEES INCREASING NUMBER OF GROUP TOURS

ANTHONY LAM

THE city currently sees about 100 tour groups arriving daily, with room for incremental growth, a local tourism group head has said.

Andy Wu, president of the Travel Industry Council of Macau, was cited by local media, adding that the figure equates to between 30% and 40% of 2019 levels.

In the first half of the year, the city has seen 349,000 tourists entering Macau through group tours. In June alone, there were 64,000 tourists.

Despite the optimism, Wu has suggested that the figure will only return to 80% of 2019 levels at best, or about 300 groups per day on average. His estimate was based on the changing travel habits of mainland residents.

"The number of individual travelers has returned to about 70% to 80% of 2019 levels," the tourism association head told public broadcaster TDM - Chi-



nese Radio Macau.

In addition, with tourism activities soon reviving, Wu said the workforce is even tighter, and this is particularly affecting the tour coach driver industry.

"The main reason for the shortage is that there naturally

was not much new blood in the industry," Wu told the radio. "In addition, in the past few years, many of the previous drivers have reached the legal retirement age, and their coach driver license will not be renewed."

Nonetheless, he added that

the situation is better with tour guides and tour group leaders as there had been regular new hires.

Yesterday saw the signing of a cooperative agreement between Macau and Changzhou. According to Wu, Changzhou is a mainland city popular with Ma-

cau residents.

The tourism industry will work with airlines to release flights and hotel packaged tours to the city.

HZMB TRAFFIC INCREASING

Traffic over the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macau Bridge has increased significantly since July, following the implementation of the northbound travel program and an inbound and outbound travel peak during summer.

The daily number of vehicles including passenger cars and trucks, which enter or leave the Chinese mainland via the bridge, hit 8,832 in July, according to the Gongbei Customs in Zhuhai, Guangdong province.

On Sunday alone, the number of inbound and outbound vehicles traveling across the bridge reached a record high surpassing 10,000, according to data from customs.

This year, the vehicle flow through the Zhuhai Port exceeded 1.58 million, a threefold increase compared to the same period in 2019, said the representative, adding that the increasing single-licensed vehicles from Hong Kong constitutes the primary driver behind the surge of inbound and outbound traffic at the port.

TRAVEL

Guangdong's travel permit appointments for SARs reach historical high

STAFF REPORTER

THE number of entry and exit permits in Guangdong has reached an all-time high, with an overwhelming number of Zhuhai visa appointments for Hong Kong and Macau.

The entry-exit department of the Guangdong Provincial Public Security Department has revealed that due to the surge in the number of entry-exit certificates in various parts of Guangdong this summer, the permit system is under great pressure.

According to the department, the number of appointments for Hong Kong and Macau endorsement in the next 10 working days is "overwhelming", as cited in a report by Hong Kong China News Agency.

Chinese travelers can apply for a Macau and



Hong Kong travel permit in two ways: through manual application, and through direct application via a 24-hour self-service machine.

Those who cannot meet the self-service application requirements are required to submit their applications through the office.

However, quotas for visa applications in Zhuhai have already been fully booked for weeks.

Since the resumption of entry-exit documents across the country in January this year, the total number of entry-exit applications has remained high.

The bureau requested passengers who have no travel plans to delay their appointments.

Recent data from the Statistics and Census Service (DSEC) indicated that visitor arrivals totaled 2,209,662 in June.

Visitors from the nine Pearl River Delta cities in the Greater Bay Area increased by 186% year-on-year to 709,047, with 27.1% coming from Zhuhai (192,324) and 21.9% from Guangzhou (155,285).

The number of visitor arrivals by land increased by 370.1% year-on-year to 1,695,178 in June. Of these, 48.6% arrived through the checkpoint of Border Gate (823,029).

CARGO FROM HK CAN NOW TAKE THE DELTA BRIDGE

WITH the opening of a cargo handling facility at the Macau side of the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macau Bridge, cargo from Hong Kong can now be transported via either maritime or land routes.

Yesterday saw the opening of the cross-boundary cargo transfer station at the Macau side of the bridge, marking the commencement of transport of cargo via land from Hong Kong. The station is designed to handle 800 vehicles per day.

According to Tai Kin Ip, director of Economic and Technological Development Bureau (DSE-DT), 24 enterprise users have registered to use the new station. The number equates to 106 trucks that will offer Macau-Hong

Kong cargo transfer.

During his speech, the bureau director said the opening of the new facility would bring new opportunities to the logistics industry in Macau. The operation of the new facility, meanwhile, will further deepen the cooperation between Macau and Hong Kong, fully realize the comprehensive advantages of the two cities, promote regional economic synergies and achieve economic diversification in Macau.

The government has also established a dedicated website for the new facility. Interested users of the facility should pre-register on the website each time they want to use the facility. **AL**





TECH INVESTOR

SoftBank trims losses and promises offensive turnaround

YURI KAGEYAMA, TOKYO

JAPANESE technology company SoftBank Group Corp. continued to rack up losses for the fiscal first quarter as technology investments soured amid a market downturn.

But SoftBank's April-June red ink, at 477.6 billion yen (\$3.4 billion), was smaller than a year ago, when losses totaled 3.16 trillion yen (\$22 billion), the Tokyo-based company said yesterday.

Losses came from what SoftBank calls its Vision Funds, as well as from other investments including those in telecommunications in Japan.

Chief Financial Officer Yoshimitsu Goto struck an upbeat tone, stressing that the environment for technology issues was improving.

"We must pay attention to the conditions and adjust stepping on the gas pedal, as well as on the brakes on investments accordingly," he told reporters.

SoftBank Vision Fund 1 marked

a \$12.4 billion gain since its inception, while SoftBank Vision Fund 2, set up after the first fund, was still performing at a loss of \$18.6 billion, according to SoftBank.

Over the latest period, Vision Fund 1 saw the value of its holdings rise in South Korea e-commerce company Coupang and Singaporean technology outfit Grab. That was offset by declines in its portfolio of Didi and other Chinese companies, it said.

In SBVF2, the strong performance of American warehou-

se robotics company Symbotic shares was offset by a decline in WeWork, a U.S. workspace-sharing startup. SoftBank recently announced a joint venture with Symbotic.

Goto insisted that the overall performance on the Vision Fund investments was improving.

Much of the latest quarterly loss came from the recent declining value of the yen, which negatively impacts Japanese investors, he said. If that were taken out of consideration, investments were

basically breakeven, said Goto.

Quarterly sales were little changed, edging down nearly 1% to 1.56 trillion yen (\$11 billion). The company does not give full year forecasts.

SoftBank, which invests in a sprawling array of companies, including British semiconductor and software design company Arm, has tended to suffer during technology downturns.

It was also negatively hit by the U.S. banking crisis earlier this year, as well as by uncertainties set off by geopolitical developments like Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

Still, the technology sector woes around the world appear to be gradually improving, as seen in the rise of shares lately in big names like Amazon, Facebook and Alphabet.

SoftBank used to own significant stakes in all three companies but sold them in 2021. SoftBank more recently sold its stake in Uber to ride out hard times, and dramatically reduced its stake in Alibaba, the Chinese e-commerce and technology company.

SoftBank was founded by Masayoshi Son, a graduate of the University of California, Berkeley, who is known as a defiant visionary in a Japanese corporate world dominated by tradition-bound conformists.

The billionaire has indicated he intends to turn bullish after a period of being cautious, and lead in investments in artificial intelligence, using the Japanese term for "shifting from the defensive to the offensive."

One of the companies it's investing in is Telexistence, which develops robots that stock shelves at Japanese convenience stores.

SoftBank is also planning a U.S. initial public offering of Arm, which should work as a plus for its bottom line. The company offered few details.

SoftBank Group Corp. shares rose 1.5% on the Tokyo Stock Exchange. **MDT/AP**

CORPORATE BITS

MGM to host guest chef experience with Daniel Calvert of SÉZANNE



MGM invited Chef Daniel Calvert, Executive Chef of the Michelin 2-starred French restaurant SÉZANNE in Tokyo from Aug. 17 to 19.

The acclaimed Michelin-starred chef, together with

the culinary team of MGM, will present a three-day-only exquisite fine dining experience with French cuisine.

Chef Calvert led a neo-Parisian bistro, Belon, into the coveted ranks of Asia's 50

Best Restaurants, and has become the youngest chef in Hong Kong to be awarded a Michelin star.

Combining exquisite classic French style and innovative interpretations with the finest seasonal Japanese ingredients, Chef Calvert will create a dining experience with a 10-course degustation menu, featuring a lineup of his signature creations treasured by diners of SÉZANNE. The degustation menu will be served in Aji of MGM Cotai every day between Aug. 17 to 19. Guests may also savor Chef Calvert's meticulous creations in Aji from Aug. 20 to Sep. 18, a 6-course lunch and an 8-course dinner tasting menu.

Four Seasons Hotel collaborates with Helena Rubinstein for afternoon tea



This summer, the Four Seasons Hotel Macao will present an afternoon tea set at Xiao Ting, collabora-

ting with Helena Rubinstein, a premium skincare brand. Designed with bite-sized

delicacies placed on a black and white chessboard, the afternoon tea set features highlights including Avruga Caviar and Eggplant Blinis, which "pairs the tender, mild, and earthy sweetness of smoked eggplant with the explosive umami characteristics of caviar," as cited in a statement.

Inspired by Southeast Asian flavors, Crab Cake Pâte à Choux with Coconut Lime mixes the citrus and aromatic wonders of coconut lime and lemongrass with the savoury delight of crab meat and paste. A masterpiece to behold, Yuzu Meringue Pâte Sablée refreshes the palate like a summer breeze.

JOE MCDONALD, BEIJING

ECONOMY

July exports tumble by double digits, adding to pressure to shore up flagging economy

CHINA'S exports plunged by 14.5% in July compared with a year earlier, adding to pressure on the ruling Communist Party to reverse an economic slump.

Imports tumbled 12.4%, customs data showed yesterday, in a blow to global exporters that look to China as one of the biggest markets for industrial materials, food and consumer goods.

Exports fell to \$281.8 billion as the decline accelerated from June's 12.4% fall. Imports sank to \$201.2 billion, widening from the previous month's 6.8% contraction.

The country's global trade surplus narrowed by 20.4% from a record high a year ago to \$80.6 billion.

Chinese leaders are trying to shore up business and consumer activity after a rebound following the end of virus controls in December fizzled out earlier than expected.

Economic growth sank to 0.8% in the three months ending in June compared with the previous quarter, down from the January-March period's 2.2%. That is the equivalent of 3.2% annual growth, which would be among China's weakest in three decades.

Demand for Chinese exports cooled after the Federal Reserve and central banks in Europe and

Asia started raising interest rates last year to cool inflation that was at multi-decade highs.

The export contraction was the biggest since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, according to Capital Economics. It said the decline was due mostly to lower prices, while volumes of goods were above pre-pandemic levels.

"We expect exports to decline further over the coming months before bottoming out toward the end of the year," said Capital Economics in a report.

The ruling party has promised measures to support entrepreneurs and to encourage home purchases and consumer spending but hasn't announced large-scale stimulus spending or tax cuts. Forecasters expect those steps to revive demand for imports but say that will be gradual.

"Domestic demand conti-

nues to deteriorate," said David Chao of Invesco in a report. "Policymakers have pledged further policy support, which could buoy household spending and lead to an improvement in import growth for the coming few months."

Exports to the United States fell 23% from a year earlier to \$42.3 billion while imports of American goods retreated 11.1% to \$12 billion. China's politically sensitive trade surplus with the United States narrowed by 27% to a still-robust \$30.3 billion.

China's imports from Russia, mostly oil and gas, narrowed by just under 0.1% from a year ago to \$9.2 billion. Chinese purchases of Russian energy have swelled, helping to offset revenue lost to Western sanctions imposed to punish the Kremlin for its invasion of Ukraine.

China, which it is neutral in the war, can buy Russian oil and



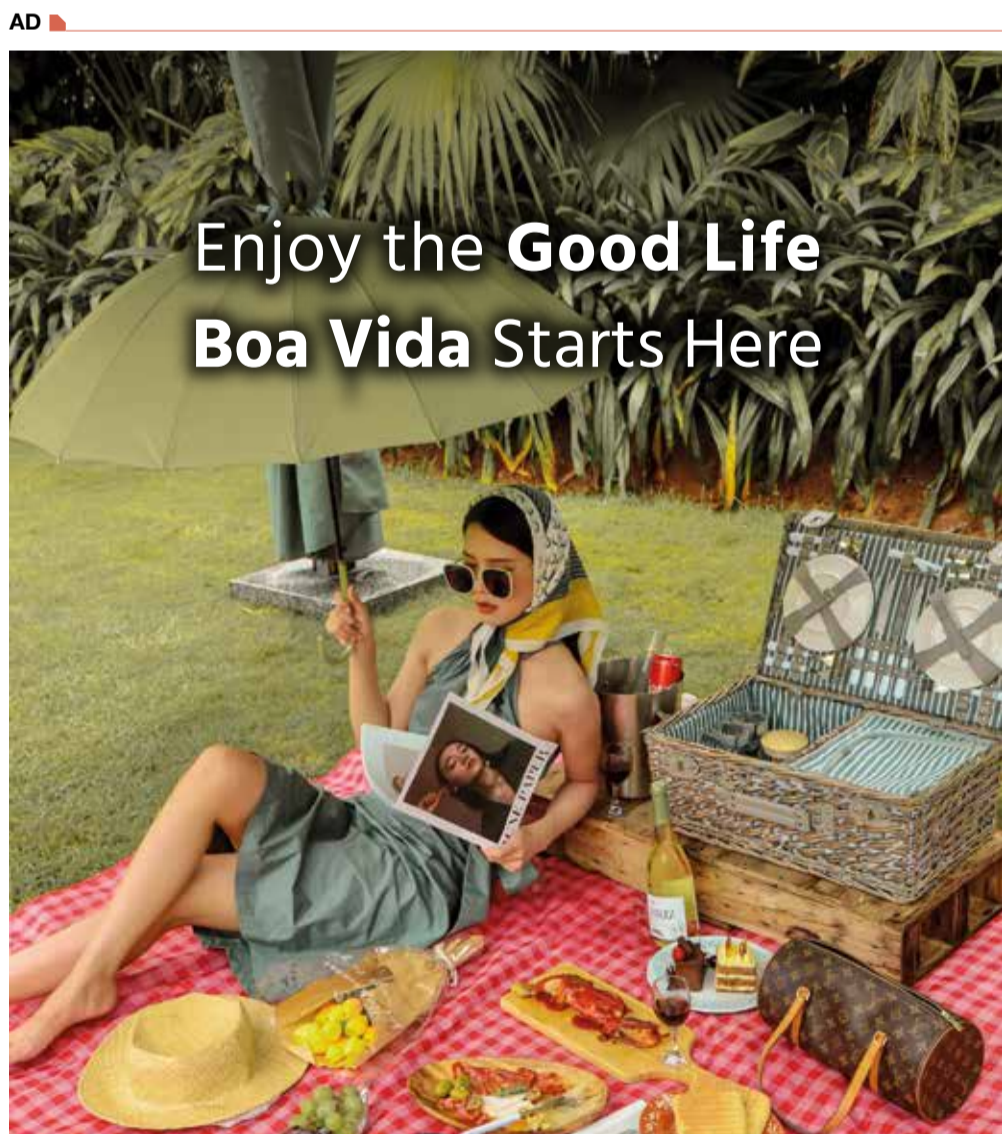
AP PHOTO

gas without triggering Western sanctions.


Exports to the 27-nation European Union slumped 39.5% from a year earlier to \$42.4 billion while imports of European goods were off 44.1% at \$23.3 billion. China's trade surplus with the

EU contracted by 32.7% to \$19.1 billion.

For the first seven months of the year, Chinese exports were off 5% from the same period in 2022 at just over \$1.9 trillion. Imports were down 7.6% at \$1.4 trillion. **MDT/AP**



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SOUTH KOREA

Thousands of Scouts evacuated from coastal campsite as tropical storm nears

KIM TONG-HYUNG, SEOUL

CARRYING huge backpacks and water bottles, tens of thousands of Scouts began arriving at university dormitories, government and corporate training centers, and hotels around Seoul and other inland cities yesterday afternoon as the South Korean government evacuated the World Scout Jamboree ahead of a tropical storm.

The South Korean government had scrambled to keep the 12-day gathering of Scouts going in the face of struggles with heat, hygiene and land use controversies, as thousands of British and American Scouts departed over the weekend.

It wasn't until Monday afternoon that officials announced the decision to abandon the coastal campsite in the southwestern town of Buan, after forecasters raised alarms that Tropical Storm Khanun was heading toward the Korean Peninsula.

The 37,000 Scouts, who hailed from 156 countries and were mostly teenagers, folded up their tents before boarding over 1,000 vehicles for the evacuation. Officials say 656 vehicles have left the campsite as of 4 p.m.

Most of the scouts will be accommodated in Seoul and the surrounding area, with others sent to other provinces in the country's north and central regions.

Scouts from Britain, who had transferred to hotels in Seoul over the weekend because of extreme



heat at the Jamboree site, visited a war memorial and the former presidential palace.

South Korean officials say the Jamboree will continue in the form of cultural events and activities, including a K-Pop concert in Seoul Friday.

The provincial government had hoped the event would draw attention and investment to a controversial swath of reclaimed land.

Concerns had been raised beforehand about having such large numbers of young people in a vast, treeless area lacking protection from heat as South Korea grappled with one of its hottest summers in years. After the Jamboree began, hundreds of participants were treated for heat-related ailments.

The government insisted the event was safe enough to conti-

nue and channeled resources to keep the event going, adding medical staff, air-conditioned buses, military shade structures, and hundreds of workers to maintain bathrooms and showers, which some Scouts had complained were filthy or unkempt.

Saemangeum is the result of a 19-year project to build a 33-kilometer seawall, which South Korea describes as the world's longest.

Since the wall was finished in 2010, the land the wall helped to reclaim from the sea remained largely barren. Once seen as a major development project for a region lacking an industrial base, it's now increasingly viewed as an ecological blunder that wiped out coastal wetlands and hurt fisheries production.

Local government officials insist that the project remains key to the region's economic future,

despite its failure to deliver on early promises.

In a 2018 document describing its successful bid to host, the North Jeolla provincial government wrote that its main reason for hosting the event was to lure badly needed infrastructure investment to the area after initial plans didn't progress as hoped.

"North Jeolla Province needed a project that could spur the construction of an international airport and other SOC (social overhead capital) investments to further encourage the development of Saemangeum's inner areas," provincial officials wrote, using an acronym that refers to infrastructure projects.

Local officials continue to pursue plans for new highways, ports and an international airport. The airport was initially supposed to be built for the Jamboree, but construction hasn't started yet.

Organizers said the campsite will not be used for any other events after the Scouts leave.

Tropical Storm Khanun has meandered around Japan's southwestern islands for more than a week, dumping heavy rain, knocking out power and damaging homes.

Early yesterday morning, the storm was centered 350 kilometers south of Kagoshima, a city on the southwestern tip of Japan's main southern island of Kyushu. Khanun produced winds of 108 kph with gusts to 144 kph and was slowly moving north, the Japan Meteorological Agency reported.

South Korea's weather agency, which measured the storm at

typhoon strength of 126 kph, expected it to gain strength slightly before making landfall Thursday morning. It's expected to bring strong winds and heavy rains to South Korea from Wednesday to Friday.

In an emergency meeting to discuss the storm yesterday, South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol called for officials to be aggressive with disaster prevention measures, including evacuations of residents in risk areas, to prevent injuries or deaths. He also said the country will do its "utmost" to ensure the safety of the Scouts so that they can "return home with good memories."

South Korea's Ministry of the Interior and Safety instructed local officials to prepare to shut down coastal areas, hiking trails, river parks, underpass tunnels and other places vulnerable to flooding.

More than 270 police cars and four helicopters were deployed to escort the buses transporting the Scouts, said Interior and Safety Minister Lee Sang-min.

"This is the first time in more than 100 years of World Scout Jamborees that we have had to face such compounded challenges," said Ahmad Alhendawi, secretary general of the World Organization of the Scout Movement, who credited South Korea's government of "mobilizing all available resources" into the relocation effort.

"It's disappointing that these adverse weather conditions have forced us to shift our plans," he said. **MDT/AP**

THAILAND

Son of Spanish actors arrested on suspicion of killing Colombian in Koh Phagnan

THE son of two Spanish film stars has been arrested in Thailand on suspicion of murdering and dismembering a Colombian surgeon on a tourist island, police said.

Daniel Sancho Bronchalo was taken from Koh Phagnan, where the remains of Edwin Arrieta Arteaga were found, to another island, Samui, where he is being held, Surat Thani provincial police commander Saranyu

Chamnanrat said yesterday.

Sancho, a chef with a YouTube channel, has been charged with premeditated murder, which carries a possible death penalty, and with concealment of a body to cover up the death, Saranyu said.

Details of the killing emerged last week when Thai media reported that plastic bags containing body parts of a man, later identified by police as Arrie-

ta, were found at a landfill on Koh Phagnan, an island famous for its monthly "full moon parties."

Police said Sancho came in to report a missing person after the body parts were found and was subsequently detained. He later confessed to killing and dismembering Arrieta and then dumping the body parts in the landfill and the sea, although he denied that it was premeditated, police said. His arrest

warrant was issued by the Koh Samui Provincial Court on Saturday.

Saranyu declined to elaborate when asked about the motive, but said it was likely due to a personal relationship between the suspect and the victim. Thai media have cited police as saying that Sancho, who came to Thailand for a holiday, told the authorities that the two had a romantic relationship and that he tried to

break up with the victim but the victim refused.

Security camera video broadcast by Thai media reportedly taken a day before the body parts were found showed Sancho and Arrieta on a motorbike together.

Regional police chief Surapong Thanomchit told public broadcaster Thai PBS that Sancho was seen buying a knife, garbage bags and cleaning solutions before Arrieta's death.

Media reports say Sancho is the son of Rodolfo Sancho and Silvia Bronchalo, famous Spanish actors. Sancho's uncle, Felix Sancho, told journalists in Spain that, "A little respect for the family is all we ask for, because this is so painful."

The Spanish Embassy in Bangkok said it was aware of a crime involving a Spanish man but declined to give further information because of data protection legislation.

Colombia's Ministry of Foreign Affairs posted a statement on its website Sunday thanking the Thai police for their investigation and said it is providing assistance to the family of the victim. **MDT/AP**

USA

Biden will announce Grand Canyon monument designation during his Arizona visit

CHRIS MEGERIAN & TERRY TANG, TUSAYAN (ARIZ.)

PRESIDENT Joe Biden will use his visit to Arizona today [Macau time] to formally announce a national monument designation for the greater Grand Canyon, making Native American tribes' and environmentalists' decades-long vision to preserve the land a reality.

Biden is expected to announce plans for a new national monument to preserve about 1,562 square miles just outside Grand Canyon National Park, national climate adviser Ali Zaidi confirmed. It will mark the Democratic president's fifth monument designation.

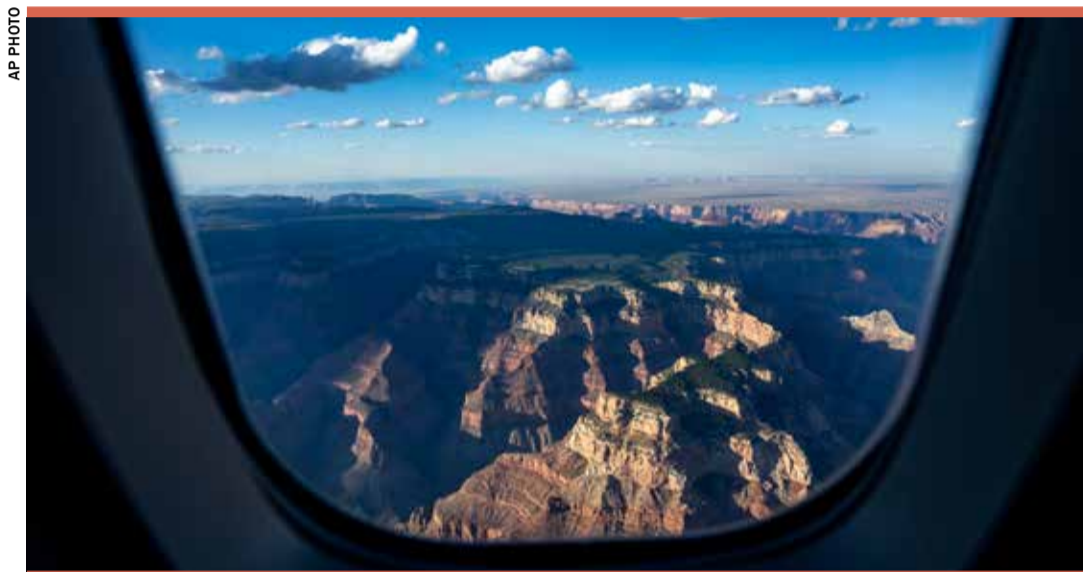
Tribes in Arizona have been pushing Biden to use his authority under the Antiquities Act of 1906 to create a new national monument called Baaj Nwaavjo I'tah Kukveni. "Baaj Nwaavjo" means "where tribes roam," for the Havasupai people, while "I'tah Kukveni" translates to "our footprints," for the Hopi tribe.

Tribes and environmentalists for decades have been trying to safeguard the land north and south of Grand Canyon National Park, while Republican lawmakers and the mining industry tout the economic benefits and raise mining as a matter of national security.

The designation is a reminder of a "new era" in which collaboration and stewardship with tribes is valued, said U.S. Interior Secretary Deb Haaland, the first Native American cabinet secretary.

"It will help ensure that indigenous people can continue to use these areas for religious ceremonies, hunting and gathering of plants, medicines and other materials, including some found nowhere else on Earth," said Haaland, who recently visited the Havasupai Indian Reservation. "It will protect objects of historic and scientific importance for the benefit of tribes, the public and for future generations."

Biden arrived yesterday at Grand Canyon National Park



AP PHOTO

Airport, where he was greeted by Democratic congressmen Raúl Grijalva and Ruben Gallego. Biden embraced them when he got off Air Force One, and the trio chatted for a few minutes. Grijalva, who serves on the House Natural Resources Committee, has repeatedly introduced legislation to create the monument.

Biden will be speaking in an area that is between Pinyon Plain Mine, which is being developed and has not opened, and Red Butte, a site culturally significant to the Havasupai and Hopi tribes.

Representatives of various northern Arizona tribes have been invited to attend the president's remarks. Among them are Yavapai-Apache Nation Chairwoman Tanya Lewis, Colorado River Indian Tribes Chairwoman Amelia Flores, Navajo President Buu Nygren and Havasupai Tribal Councilwoman Dianna Sue White Dove Uqualla. Uqualla is part of a group of tribal dancers who will perform a blessing.

"It's really the uranium we don't want coming out of the ground because it's going to affect everything around us — the trees, the land, the animals, the people," Uqualla said. "It's not going to stop."

The Interior Department, reacting to concerns over the risk of contaminating water, enacted a 20-year moratorium on the filing of new mining claims around the national park in 2012.

Existing mining claims will not be affected by this designation, senior Biden administration officials countered.

Furthermore, the monument site encompasses around 1.3% of the nation's known and understood uranium reserves. Officials say there are significant resources in other parts of the country that will remain accessible.

A U.S. Geological Survey in 2021 found most springs and wells in a vast region of northern Arizona known for its high-grade uranium ore meet federal drinking water standards despite decades of uranium mining.

In 2017, Democratic President Barack Obama backed off a full-on monument designation. The idea faced a hostile reception from Arizona's Republican governor and two senators. Then-Gov. Doug Ducey threatened legal action, saying Arizona already has enough national monuments.

Opponents of establishing a monument have argued it won't help combat a lingering drought and could prevent thinning of forests and stop hunters from keeping wildlife populations in check. Ranchers in Utah near the Arizona border say the monument designation would strip them of privately owned land.

The landscape of Arizona's political delegation has since changed considerably. Gov. Katie Hobbs, Democratic Sen. Mark Kelly and Sen. Kyrsten Sinema, an independent, are all on board. Hobbs, a Democrat, has openly urged Biden to issue a designation. In a letter sent to Biden in May, Hobbs claimed that she heard from people across the political spectrum, including

sporting groups and outdoor groups, in support of a monument.

Mining companies and the areas that would benefit from their business remain vehemently opposed. Buster Johnson, a Mohave County supervisor, said the monument proposal feels solely politically driven and there should have been another hearing on the matter. He doesn't see the point of not tapping into uranium and making the country less dependent on Russia.

"We need uranium for the security of our country," Johnson said. "We're out of the game."

No uranium mines are operating in Arizona, although the Pinyon Plain Mine just south of Grand Canyon National Park has been under development for years. Other claims are grandfathered in. The federal government has said nearly a dozen mines within the area that has been withdrawn from new mining claims could still potentially open, even with the monument designation, because their claims were established before 2012.

After Arizona, Biden will go on to Albuquerque, where he will talk about how fighting climate change has created new jobs. He'll then visit Salt Lake City on Thursday to mark the first anniversary of the PACT Act, which provides new benefits to veterans who were exposed to toxic substances. He'll also hold a reelection fundraiser in each city. **MDT/AP**

this day in history

1969 FILM STAR STABBED IN 'RITUALISTIC' KILLINGS

Actress Sharon Tate has been found brutally murdered in her Los Angeles home, along with three high-society friends and a fifth, as yet unnamed, victim.

All five died from shooting and multiple stab wounds.

Sharon Tate, 26, was the wife of film director Roman Polanski and was eight months pregnant.

In what police said appeared to be a "ritualistic" murder, she was found tied together with her former fiancé, hair stylist Jay Sebring.

Police said both had nylon nooses around their necks, and Mr Sebring's head was covered with a black hood.

They said both probably died of stab wounds.

The bodies of Abigail Folger, 25, a member of a wealthy coffee-manufacturing family, and her boyfriend Voytek Frykowski, 32, were found sprawled on the lawn outside. Both had been shot.

The fifth victim, a man, was found slumped over the wheel of a car with multiple gunshot wounds.

Police described a horrific scene at the hilltop house in the wealthy Bel Air district of the city.

Some of the bodies had been mutilated, with blood smeared everywhere and the word "Pig" scrawled on the front door in blood. Police said the phone and electricity lines had been cut.

It's believed that Miss Folger and Mr Frykowski, as well as Mr Sebring, had come from San Francisco to spend the weekend at the house.

The bungalow-style property, in an isolated area between Beverly Hills and the San Fernando Valley, is owned by Terry Melcher, son of film star Doris Day.

It was being rented by Roman Polanski and Sharon Tate who had recently returned there to have her baby after working in London.

Mr Polanski was still in Europe directing his latest film, but left immediately for Los Angeles on hearing the news.

Immediately after the discovery of the bodies, police arrested a houseboy, William Garretson, 19, who was living in a guest house behind the house. After five hours of questioning, he was charged with five counts of murder.

Sharon Tate began her acting career in the television series, Beverly Hillbillies. She also had parts in the films Valley of the Dolls, the Americanisation of Emily, and The Sandpiper.

Courtesy BBC News

IN CONTEXT

The fifth victim was later identified as Steven Parent, 18, a local boy who had been visiting William Garretson.

The bodies of another wealthy couple were found 36 hours later not far from the scene of the Tate murders.

Leno LaBianca and his wife Rosemary had also been brutally murdered in their own home. The crime scene bore striking similarities to the Tate murders. William Garretson was released without charge on the same day. The LAPD were reluctant to link the Tate murders and the LaBianca killings, until mid-October when another similar murder led the police to a hippie group calling itself the Manson family.

In January 1971, Charles Manson and three of his followers - Susan Atkins, 22, Patricia Krenwinkel, 23 and Leslie Van Houten, 21 - were convicted of the Tate-LaBianca murders, after the longest murder trial in US history.

They were all sentenced to death, but this was commuted to life imprisonment after California abolished the death penalty in 1972.



YOUR STARS

ARIES Mar. 21-Apr. 19
Spend some time with people who can shed some light on your personal situation. Do something together and you'll be surprised how sweet a deal you can make.

TAURUS Apr. 20-May. 20
Think about starting your own small business. Trips will be enjoyable, and communication with your lover will clear up any misconceptions.

GEMINI May. 21-Jun. 21
You can get others to do things for you but be sure not to overpay them or lend them money. Encourage the youngsters in your family. Plan a nice evening for two.

CANCER Jun. 22-Jul. 22
Help elders in your family. Let your boss know your goals. Travel will be on your mind, but you should be sure that you've got all your work up-to-date.

LEO Jul. 23-Aug. 22
Be very careful while in transit or while traveling in foreign countries. Don't blow situations out of proportion. Family responsibilities are mounting.

VIRGO Aug. 23-Sep. 22
Minor health problems could result through exhaustion. Try not to be so demonstrative. Don't let your health suffer because of worry.

LIBRA Sep. 23-Oct. 22
Romance is quite possible if you are willing to approach someone who interests you. Changes at home might come fast and furious.

SCORPIO Oct. 23-Nov. 21
You should be trying to clear up legal contracts that have been pending. You may find out that someone has not been completely honest with you.

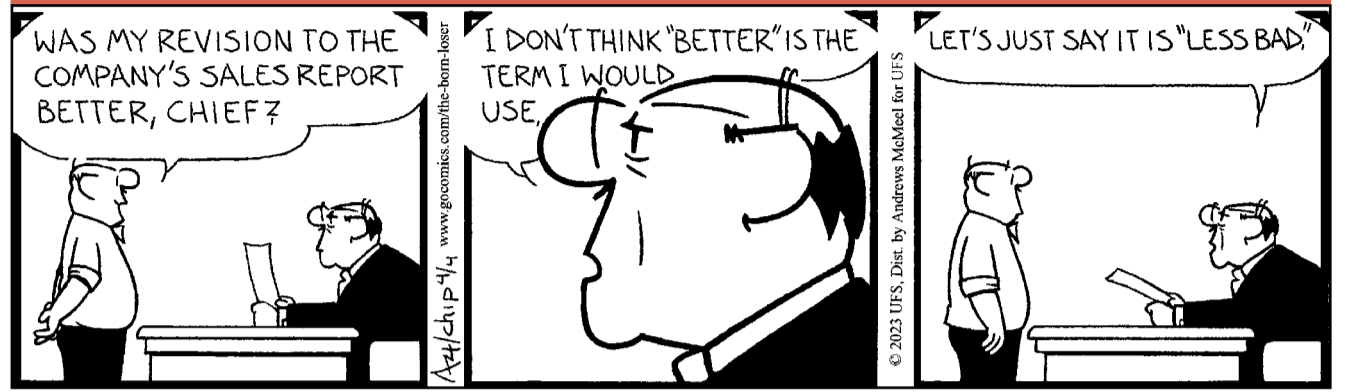
SAGITTARIUS Nov. 22-Dec. 21
Make sure you concentrate if operating machinery or vehicles. Don't bother getting even; they'll make themselves look bad. Adventure will result in added knowledge.

CAPRICORN Dec. 22-Jan. 19
You need to lie back and enjoy a little rest. You will be emotional about family matters. Don't exaggerate. Don't vacillate about asking for assistance if you need it.

AQUARIUS Jan. 20-Feb. 18
If you work in conjunction with someone else you may find they're trying to steal your thunder. You are able to make changes in your home that will be favorable to all involved.

PISCES Feb. 19-Mar. 20
Take special care in any home improvement project you work on today, you'll be glad you did. Sudden changes regarding work and colleagues are apparent.

The Born Loser by Chip Sansom



SUDOKU

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

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

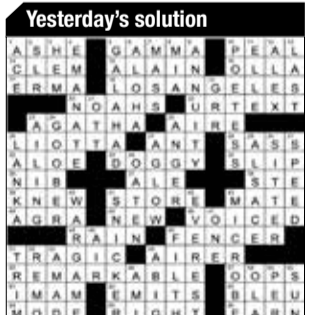
WEATHER

	MIN	MAX	CONDITION
CHINA			
Beijing	24	32	overcast
Changchun	19	26	cloudy
Chengdu	23	32	showers
Chongqing	27	35	cloudy
Fuzhou	26	34	rain
Guangzhou	26	35	fine
Guiyang	21	28	showers
Haikou	27	34	cloudy
Hangzhou	26	36	thunderstorms
Harbin	18	26	thunderstorms
Hefei	23	32	cloudy
Nanjing	24	32	overcast
Shanghai	27	34	fine
Taipei	26	30	rain
Wuhan	27	36	showers
Hong Kong	27	36	showers
WORLD			
Moscow	15	23	thunderstorms
Frankfurt	11	22	rain
Paris	16	25	cloudy
London	14	24	cloudy
New York	22	31	overcast

CROSSWORDS

ACROSS 1- Watering hole; 6- No ifs, ____; 10- High cards; 14- Roofing stone; 15- Get as a result; 16- Zilch; 17- General Powell; 18- Story; 19- Cross inscription; 20- Ques. response; 21- Goal of a journey; 24- Fact; 26- Ringlike formation; 27- Hill insect; 28- Musical drama; 30- Enlarge, as a hole; 33- Full; 35- Cheering word; 38- Flummoxed; 40- And so on; Abbr.; 41- Role for Valerie; 43- 21st letter of the Greek alphabet; 44- Impudent; 47- School founded in 1440; 48- Fab Four name; 49- Always, poetically; 51- Small galley; 54- Diary; 58- Type of massage therapy; 61- Bit of wordplay; 62- Coal unit; 63- Confront; 64- Starbucks order; 66- To ____ (perfectly); 67- River to the Caspian; 68- Say "y'all," say; 69- Dispatched; 70- Covers; 71- Folded food;

DOWN 1- Academy award; 2- Isolated; 3- Chip dip; 4- Lord, is ____?; 5- Submit; 6- Bohemian; 7- Cool!; 8- Painter of limp watches; 9- Trysail; 10- "Peer Gynt Suite" dancer; 11- Funnel-shaped; 12- Matriculate; 13- Paris divider; 22- Kitchen addition; 23- Broadcaster; 25- Like some excuses; 28- Sleek swimmer; 29- Select; 30- Blame; 31- Old verb ending; 32- Faulkner's "____ Lay Dying"; 34- ____-do-well; 35- Poppycock; 36- "Much ____ About Nothing", play by Shakespeare; 37- Solo of "Star Wars"; 39- Bogie, e.g.; 42- Aromatic plant; 45- Malevolent; 46- Planetary revolution; 48- Little drink; 50- Place for a lace; 51- Balls; 52- Sharp; 53- Light unit; 54- Affairs of honor; 55- Pertaining to the eye; 56- Best; 57- Leg joints; 59- Dress often worn by Hindu women; 60- Great quantity; 65- Like;



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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LINDSEY BAHR, LOS ANGELES

FILM

WILLIAM Friedkin, the generation-defining director who brought a visceral realism to 1970s hits "The French Connection" and "The Exorcist" and was quickly anointed one of Hollywood's top directors when he was only in his 30s, has died. He was 87.

Friedkin, who won the best director Oscar for "The French Connection," died Monday (yesterday, Macau time) in Los Angeles, Marcia Franklin, his executive assistant for 24 years, told The Associated Press on behalf of his family and wife, former studio head Sherry Lansing. His son Cedric Friedkin told the AP he died after a long illness.

"He was role model to me and to (my brother) Jack," Cedric Friedkin said. "He was a massive inspiration."

He cemented his legacy early with "The French Connection," which was based on a true story and deals with the efforts of maverick New York City police Detective James "Popeye" Doyle to track down Frenchman Alain Charnier, mastermind of a large drug pipeline funneling heroin into the United States.

It contains one of the most thrilling chase scenes ever filmed: Doyle, played by Gene Hackman in an Oscar-winning performance, barely misses making the arrest on a subway train, then stops a passing car to follow the train as it emerges on an elevated railway. He races underneath, dodging cars, trucks and pedestrians, including a woman pushing a baby buggy, before catching up to one of Rey's henchmen and shooting him.

The movie, which was made for only \$2 million, became a box office hit when it was released in 1971. It won Academy Awards for best picture, screenplay and film editing, and led critics to hail Friedkin, then just 32, as a leading member of a new generation of filmmakers.

He followed with an even bigger blockbuster, "The Exorcist," released in 1973 and based on William Peter Blatty's bestselling novel about a 12-year-old girl possessed by the devil.

The harrowing scenes of the girl's possession and a splendid cast, including Linda Blair as the girl, Ellen Burstyn as her mother and Max Von Sydow and Jason Miller as the priests who try to exorcise the devil, helped make the film a box-office sensation. It was so scary for its era that many viewers fled the theater before it was over and some reported being unable to sleep for days afterward.

"The Exorcist" received 10 Oscar nominations, including one for Friedkin as director, and won two, for Blatty's script and for sound.

With that second success, Frie-

William Friedkin, Oscar-winning director of 'The Exorcist' and 'The French Connection,' dead at 87



William Friedkin, winner of the award for best achievement in directing for "French Connection," and (from right) Jane Fonda, best actress for "Kluge," Gene Hackman, best actor for "The French Connection" and producer Philip D'Antoni, for best picture for "The French Connection," pose in the press room at the Academy Awards, March 27, 1971 in Los Angeles

dkin would go on to direct movies and TV shows well into the 21st century. But he would never again come close to matching the acclaim he'd received for those early works, and gained a reputation for clashing with both actors and studio executives.

"I embody arrogance, insecurity and ambition that spur me on as they hold me back," he wrote in his 2012 memoir.

His 1977 film "Sorcerer," a gangster thriller starring Roy Scheider was widely panned at the time and also failed with audiences. It's since been reappraised by critics and has become a cult classic that Friedkin himself would continue to defend. In 2017, he told IndieWire that it's the only of his films that he could still watch.

"The zeitgeist had changed by the time it came out," he said in 2013. "It came out at the time of 'Star Wars,' and that more than any film that I can recall really captured the zeitgeist."

"Star Wars" was a film he was approached to produce, but he said later that he couldn't see its potential. He also turned down "M(asterisk)A(asterisk)S(asterisk)H" for the same reason.

Francis Ford Coppola praised Friedkin in a statement, saying his films "are alive with his genius."

"Pick any of them out of a hat and you'll be dazzled. His lovable, irascible personality was cover for a beautiful, brilliant, deep-feeling giant of a man. It's very hard to grasp that I will never enjoy his company again, but his work will at least stand in for him," Coppo-

la's statement said.

A few years after "Sorcerer" brought him back to Earth, he followed with another disappointment: "Cruising," starring Al Pacino as a cop who goes undercover to solve the grisly murders of several gay men. It was protested by gay rights activists for how it depicted homosexuality.

Other film credits included "To Live and Die in L.A.," "Rules of Engagement" and a TV remake of the classic play and Sidney Lumet movie "12 Angry Men." Friedkin also directed episodes for such TV shows as "The Twilight Zone," "Rebel Highway" and "CSI: Crime Scene Investigation."

Born in Chicago on Aug. 29, 1939, he began working in local TV productions as a teenager. By age 16, he was directing live shows.

"My main influence was dramatic radio when I was a kid," he said in a 2001 interview. "I remember listening to it in the dark, Everything was left to the imagination. It was just sound. I think of the sounds first and then the images."

He moved from live shows to documentaries, making "The People Versus Paul Crump," in 1962. It was the story of a prison inmate who rehabilitates himself on Death Row after being sentenced for the murder of a guard during a botched robbery at a Chicago food plant.

Producer David Wolper was so impressed with it that he brought Friedkin to Hollywood to direct network TV shows.

After working on such shows as "The Bold Ones," "The Alfred Hitchcock Hour" and the documentary "The Thin Blue Line," Friedkin landed his first film, 1967's "Good Times." It was a lighthearted musical romp headlined by the pop duo Sonny and Cher in what would be their only movie appearance together.

He followed that with "The Night They Raided Minsky's," about backstage life at a burlesque theater, and "The Birthday Party," from a Harold Pinter play. He then gained critical attention with 1970's "The Boys in the Band," a landmark film about gay men.

Author and film historian Mark Harris wrote on social media that, "Not many directors can say they made a gay movie that people argue about decades later. William Friedkin made two: Boys in the Band (I like it, many don't) and Cruising (I don't like it, many do). That's not nothing."

Friedkin had three brief marriages in the 1970s and '80s, to French actress Jeanne Moreau; British actress Lesley-Anne Down, with whom he had a son; and longtime Los Angeles TV news anchor Kelly Lange. In 1991, he married Paramount studio executive Lansing.

In recent years, Friedkin wrote a candid memoir, "The Friedkin Connection," and directed several well-received movies adapted from Tracy Letts plays including "Bug" and "Killer Joe," starring Matthew McConaughey as a hit man. And he wasn't done working yet: A new film, "The Caine Mutiny Court-Martial," starring Kie-

fer Sutherland, is set to premiere at the Venice Film Festival next month.

He was also always willing to reflect on his rollercoaster career, especially as "The French Connection" celebrated its 50th anniversary. Thinking back to the iconic car chase sequence, Friedkin told NBC News in 2021 that it was legitimately life-threatening and that he'd never do it again.

"Everything you see, we actually did. There was no CGI then. There was no way to fake it. I just put the pedal to the metal, and we went 90 miles an hour in city traffic," he said. "The fact that nobody got hurt is a miracle. The fact that I didn't get killed, the fact that some of the crew members didn't get hurt or killed. That's a chance I would never take again. I was young and I didn't give a damn. I just went out and did it. I set out to make a great chase scene and I didn't care about the consequences, and now I do."

Friedkin's influence on film and popular culture continues to live on too. A new "Exorcist" film is even coming out this year, from director David Gordon Green, with Burstyn reprising her role.

Friedkin said he never got too worried about what the critics were saying over the years.

"I really don't live by what the critics write, although I was aware of the critical reception of all of my films," he reflected in 2013. "My own take on the films I've made is based on what I achieved versus what I set out to do." **MDT/AP**

BMX

Hannah Roberts of the US wins her fourth straight freestyle world championship

DAVE SKRETTA

HANNAH Roberts has won just about everything possible on a freestyle BMX bike except an Olympic title.

That could be coming next.

The 21-year-old American trick artist didn't even need her second run in the finals of the world championships yesterday [Macau time], posting a score of 91.04 points during her opening run to secure her fourth straight title and fifth overall. Roberts was followed by all five of the riders from emerging powerhouse China, led by silver medalist Sibeil Sun and bronze medalist Huimin Zhou.

"I mean, Team China, they're coming on strong. They have some of the best riders in the world and they're so motivated to keep it going," said Roberts, who finished second at the Tokyo Olympics. "They placed second through sixth and that's incredible for an entire team. So going

AP PHOTO



United States' Hannah Roberts competes in the women's Elite Qualification in the BMX Freestyle

into the event, I knew there was some big stuff I wanted to pull for the first run. I did what I could."

The British mostly dominated their home world championships Monday in Glasgow, Scotland.

Kieran Reilly made good on his immense promise by winning the men's freestyle BMX title, Ethan Vernon ended Italian star Elia Viviani's dominance of the elimination race, and the duo

of Neah Evans and Elinor Barker won the women's Madison event.

Harrie Lavreysen won his fifth consecutive sprint gold medal by beating Nicholas Paul of Trinidad and Tobago in back-to-back finals races, while Jack Carlin beat Mateusz Rudyk of Poland to claim the bronze medal.

Roberts was the favorite to win freestyle BMX when it made its Olympic debut two years ago in Tokyo. And she made good on

the expectations in the opening runs of the finals, posting the highest score. But on their second runs, Britain's Charlotte Worthington jumped into first place, and Roberts failed to finish her second run after a poor landing and finished second.

Worthington, who was seventh, was among the first to congratulate Roberts when they came off the park.

"I'm super grateful," Roberts

said. "I'm still emotional."

In the men's freestyle competition, Reilly thought he'd done enough to earn the world championship before a home crowd during his superlative second run, dropping his bike at the end of it as if it was a mic drop.

He had to wait through a 50-minute rain delay to find out for sure.

There were still six riders to go, and they were the heaviest hitters in the sport, when the 22-year-old European champion posted a score of 95.80 with his second of two finals runs. Those left included Olympic champion Logan Martin, the final rider to hit the freestyle park, and who just about knocked Reilly from the stop step of the medal stand.

The two-time world champion from Australia only scored 95.30 with his second run, though, allowing Reilly to win by a sliver of a margin. Former world bronze medalist Nick Bruce of the U.S. took bronze with his score of 93.30. **MDT/AP**

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OPINION

China Daily
 Editorial, China Daily

**NATIONAL COMPLIANCE
 KEY TO BIOLOGICAL
 WEAPONS BAN**

With the Ukraine crisis having led to talk about the possibility of using unconventional weapons, the second meeting of the Working Group on the Strengthening of the Biological Weapons Convention, which takes place from Monday to Aug 18 in Geneva, is an important gathering to discuss national implementations regarding the convention.

As of February this year, 185 countries have become party to the treaty that entered into force in 1975. However, it is a fact that the convention's effectiveness has been limited due to insufficient institutional support and the absence of any formal verification regime to monitor compliance.

China firmly supports the purposes and objectives of the convention, strictly fulfills its obligations under the convention, and actively participates in and supports multilateral processes to enhance the effectiveness of the convention. The country is deeply involved in global biosecurity governance, and actively contributes Chinese wisdom and offers Chinese solutions, which is aligned with the Global Security Initiative it has put forward, to promote the implementation of the convention.

Beijing advocates strengthening the convention, and vigorously promotes the establishment of a verification mechanism through multilateral negotiations to ensure compliance with the convention. It stands for the prohibition and destruction of all weapons of mass destruction, including biological weapons, and firmly opposes the proliferation of biological weapons and their technologies.

In April 2021, the Biosafety Law of China came into effect, providing stronger legal and institutional guarantees for China's implementation of the convention. The country has also actively advocated for the negotiation and formulation of an international convention on combating acts of biological and chemical terrorism to plug the loopholes in international law.

China also actively supports strengthening the review of the development of biotechnology under the framework of the convention, promoting responsible biological research, and formulating necessary voluntary codes of conduct. It has played an indispensable role in facilitating the formation and release of Tianjin Biosecurity Guidelines for Codes of Conduct for Scientists in 2021.

Plus, in response to the call of developing countries for sharing the dividends of scientific and technological development in biology and other fields, China has also submitted its proposal for Promoting International Cooperation on Peaceful Uses under the Framework of the Biological Weapons Convention to the United Nations. That it has been adopted as a resolution of the UN General Assembly for two consecutive years shows the important role China plays in promoting dialogue and cooperation in the crucial field to prevent it from becoming a new area for major power contest at the cost of less-developed countries.

As such, China will continue to play a key role in the ongoing meeting in Geneva, working with the international community to promote global biosafety governance, and making greater contributions to universal security and common development.

**ELON MUSK SAYS HE MAY NEED SURGERY BEFORE
 PROPOSED 'CAGE MATCH' WITH MARK ZUCKERBERG** **THE BUZZ**

Elon Musk says he may need to get surgery before a proposed "cage match" with Mark Zuckerberg.

The two tech billionaires seemingly agreed to an in-person face-off in late June. It's unclear if a physical fight will actually end up happening, but Musk and Zuckerberg have continued to fuel interest in the potential match through online jabs at one another — most recently on Sunday, when Musk said the fight would be live-streamed on his social media site X, formerly known as Twitter. Musk added that the fight's proceeds would go to a charity for

veterans. On his Threads social media account, Zuckerberg responded: "Shouldn't we use a more reliable platform that can actually raise money for charity?" In a follow-up post, the CEO of Facebook's parent company Meta said he wasn't "holding his breath" for a fight.

"I'm ready today. I suggested Aug 26 when he first challenged, but he hasn't confirmed," wrote Zuckerberg, who is actually trained in mixed martial arts and posted about completing his first jiu jitsu tournament earlier this year.

AP PHOTO



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Cyprus A multinational force is helping Cyprus fight stubborn wildfires in the summer heat, with Israel joining Lebanon, Greece and Jordan in sending aircraft to fight a blaze that has scorched miles of mountainous terrain, officials said. Israel said two "Air-Tractor" firefighting aircraft, ground crews and wildfire experts along with six tons of flame retardants were on their way to the island nation, adding to the 20 tons of material that Greece is sending.

USA Ratings agency Moody's downgraded the credit ratings of 10 U.S. banks and warned of possible cuts to more lenders. Moody's cut the ratings of those banks by one notch and also placed some other banks on review for potential downgrades. "Many banks' Q2 results showed growing profitability pressures that will reduce their ability to generate internal capital," the ratings agency wrote in a note. The downgraded banks include M&T Bank, Pinnacle Financial Partners, Prosperity Bank and BOK Financial Corp.

AP PHOTO



Argentines lined up on a bitterly cold winter morning this week in an annual pilgrimage to a Roman Catholic shrine for the patron saint of work, asking for jobs and prosperity as many struggle with one of the world's highest inflation rates. Voters are set to go to the polls Sunday in national primary elections that will determine party candidates for the October presidential race. But many of those in line at the shrine to St. Cayetano had little optimism things would change regardless of who comes out on top.

**JULY WAS THE HOTTEST
 MONTH ON RECORD BY
 FAR: EUROPEAN SCIENTISTS**

SETH BORENSTEIN

Now that July's sizzling numbers are all in, the European climate monitoring organization made it official: July 2023 was Earth's hottest month on record by a wide margin.

July's global average temperature of 16.95 degrees Celsius (62.51 degrees Fahrenheit) was a third of a degree Celsius (six tenths of a degree Fahrenheit) higher than the previous record set in 2019, Copernicus Climate Change Service, a division of the European Union's space program, announced yesterday. Normally global temperature records are broken by hundredths or a tenth of a degree, so this margin is unusual.

"These records have dire consequences for both people and the planet exposed to ever more frequent and intense extreme events," said Copernicus deputy director Samantha Burgess. There have been deadly heat waves in the Southwestern United States and Mexico, Europe and Asia. Scientific quick studies put the blame on human-caused climate change from the burning of coal, oil and natural gas.

Days in July have been

hotter than previously recorded from July 2 on. It's been so extra warm that Copernicus and the World Meteorological Organization made the unusual early announcement that it was likely the hottest month days before it ended. Tuesday's calculations made it official.

The month was 1.5 degrees Celsius (2.7 degrees Fahrenheit) warmer than pre-industrial times. In 2015, the nations of the world agreed to try to prevent long-term warming — not individual months or even years, but decades — that is 1.5 degrees warmer than pre-industrial times.

Last month was so hot, it was .7 degrees Celsius (1.3 degrees Fahrenheit) hotter than the average July from 1991 to 2020, Copernicus said. The world's oceans were half a degree Celsius (0.9 degrees Fahrenheit) warmer than the previous 30 years and the North Atlantic was 1.05 degrees Celsius (1.9 degrees Fahrenheit) hotter than average. Antarctica set record lows for sea ice, 15% below average for this time of year.

Copernicus' records go back to 1940. That temperature would be hotter than any month the U.S. Natio-

nal Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration has recorded and their records go back to 1850. But scientists say it's actually the hottest in a far longer time period.

"It's a stunning record and makes it quite clearly the warmest month on Earth in ten thousand years," said Stefan Rahmstorf, a climate scientist at the Potsdam Institute for Climate Research in Germany. He wasn't part of the Copernicus team.

Rahmstorf cited studies that use tree rings and other proxies that show present times are the warmest since the beginning of the Holocene Epoch, about 10,000 years ago. And before the Holocene started there was an ice age, so it would be logical to even say this is the warmest record for 120,000 years, he said.

"We should not care about July because it's a record, but because it won't be a record for long," said Imperial College of London climate scientist Friederike Otto. "It's an indicator of how much we have changed the climate. We are living in a very different world, one that our societies are not adapted to live in very well." **MDT/AP**