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THE MACAO INT'L DOCUMENTARY FILM FESTIVAL WILL OPEN ITS SEVENTH EDITION THIS WEEKEND, WITH A VENICE GOLDEN LION WINNING FILM

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TAIWAN SUSPENDS WORK, TRANSPORT AND CLASSES AS ISLAND BRACES FOR ARRIVAL OF TYPHOON HAIKUI

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AP PHOTO



Pakistani traders went on strike this weekend against the soaring cost of living, including higher fuel and utility bills and record depreciation of the rupee against the dollar, which has led to widespread discontent among the public. The traders pulled their shutters down across the country, while protesters burned tires on roads to express their anger. The strike was called by ex-senator Sirajul Haq, who heads the religious political party Jamaat-e-Islami.

AP PHOTO



Ukraine Two people were hospitalized following a 3½-hour Russian drone barrage on a port in Ukraine's Odesa region yesterday, officials said. The attack on the Reni seaport comes a day before Russian President Vladimir Putin is due to meet with his Turkish counterpart Recep Tayyip Erdogan to discuss the resumption of food shipments from Ukraine under a Black Sea grain agreement that Moscow broke off from in July.

AP PHOTO



Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said yesterday he wants Eritrean migrants involved in a violent clash in Tel Aviv to be deported immediately and has ordered a plan to remove all of the country's African migrants. The remarks came a day after bloody protests by rival groups of Eritreans in south Tel Aviv left dozens of people injured. Eritreans, supporters and opponents of Eritrea's government, faced off with construction lumber, pieces of metal and rocks, smashing shop windows and police cars. Israeli police in riot gear shot tear gas, stun grenades and live rounds while officers on horseback tried to control the protesters.

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STORM THREAT

Over 3,000 evacuated as Typhoon Saola, the fourth strongest typhoon to hit in six years, passes the city; impact less severe than expected



XINHUA

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BIGGER THAN VEGAS

AUGUST GGR HIT RECORD-HIGH

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DEFINITELY BIGGER THAN VEGAS, AGAIN

MACAU GGR INCREASES SEVEN-FOLD IN AUGUST

PAULO COUTINHO

THE city's casino recovery is sustaining its momentum, with gaming revenue in August soaring a staggering 686% from a year earlier to the highest level since January 2020.

Gross gaming revenue (GGR) reached MOP17.2 billion (\$2.1 billion), according to data released by the Gaming Inspection and Coordination Bureau (DICJ).

According to Bloomberg, the result surpasses the median analyst estimate of a 678% increase and has rebounded to 71% of the 2019 levels.

By the end of August, overall GGR stood at MOP114 billion (\$14.1 billion), an increase of 295% from a year earlier.

Bloomberg analysts say these results indicate that "spending on travel and experiences is withstanding consumer concerns about China's economic slowdown."

The gaming industry has been buoyed by the summer holiday season and strong demand for leisure activities among Mainland consumers, who make up the bulk of the gambling hub's visitors, followed by a considerable Hong Kong patron segment (approx. 26%).

Macau recorded 2.8 million visitor arrivals in July, which has recovered to 78% of pre-pandemic levels, according to the latest official data, seen by Macau Daily Times.



RENATO MARQUES

Analysts cited by Bloomberg believe that casinos haven't seen any impact from China's economic slowdown.

"The richest 1% of the country's residents are still traveling and spending on entertainment as usual," Morgan Stanley (MS) analysts including Praveen Choudhary wrote in a report, citing operators.

MS mentions that operators are "cautious about September," with gaming revenue typically falling 9% month-on-month following the summer-break boost.

The second half of the year will test the industry's resilience as China's economic uncertainties endure, while the resumption of group tours to a raft of countries may also mean Macau faces competition in enticing visitors, Bloomberg has reported.

Macau has been pushing to

diversify its economy away from gambling, and the casino sector is reducing its reliance on high rollers from mainland China after Beijing cracked down on capital outflows.

According to data collected by IAG, premium-direct and premium-mass gamblers are replacing the old junket-based model to the benefit of casino earnings because the margins from the former are considerably higher than the latter.

TOUGH RULES OF ENGAGEMENT

Not everything is rosy for the Big Six, though.

The six concessionaires have committed at least MOP120 billion (\$15 billion) over the coming decade to develop non-gaming elements and have been hosting more concerts and MICE

events this year to draw in more mass market tourists and business visitors.

Moreover, the Big Six are also expected to contribute to urban renovations of historic neighborhoods and landmarks, and the organization of arts events in each area.

As it happened last week in Tianjin, the operators also support the promotion of Macau tourism, business, and culture in China and overseas.

Helena de Senna Fernandes, the tourism boss, put it clearly in a press briefing last week: "It's not enough [for them] to just throw money in sponsorships, they have to contribute [beyond that]."

All the gaming operators seem to be on board – in the end, they are fast recovering from the dark Covid era – but this requirement is far from being consensual.

"Our job is or should be to operate the properties and pay high taxes to enrich government coffers, and, of course, to organize events and contribute to society through our CSR policies," the Times recently heard from an insider, who must remain anonymous because he is not authorized to speak to the press.

JP MORGAN: SEPTEMBER REVENUES MAY BE LOWER THAN AUGUST

AMID Macau's bright recovery in August, which recorded the highest monthly revenue since the easing of Covid restrictions, analysts are forecasting that September's gross gaming revenue (GGR) will likely be lower.

According to JP Morgan analysts, this month's revenues of casino floors may not be as impressive due

to the transitional period between summer and the upcoming October Golden Week.

August's revenues reached 93% to 94% of pre-Covid levels. On Friday night, Macau leader Ho Iat Seng ordered a halt to casino operations due to the hoisting of T10. All casino operations were allowed to resume 8 a.m. Saturday.

GAMING

Melco: Operational capacity in place to meet growing customer demand

LYNZY VALLES

LABOUR supply issues at Melco have now mostly been resolved as Melco opens its doors wider to meet the growing customer demand in Macau, chairman and CEO Lawrence Ho said in Melco's revenue report.

The group's revenues for the first six months of the year totaled HKD13.04 billion, an increase of

116.4% compared to the HKD6.03 billion recorded in the corresponding period of 2022.

Aside from the relaxation of Covid-19 related restrictions in January, the gaming operator attributed the improved performance to openings of Studio City Phase 2's Epic Tower and indoor waterpark in April 2023, as well as the launch of residency concerts at Studio City in

the same month.

Losses for the period were HKD1.40 billion, compared with a loss of HKD4.58 billion in the same period of 2022.

"The group was able to swiftly launch several exciting new initiatives once the markets recovered. [...] With most labour supply issues now largely resolved, the group has the operational capacity in place to meet the growing

customer demand across Macau."

This September, Melco will launch W Macau at Studio City, adding approximately 560 hotel rooms to its portfolio.

Outside of Macau, the mass market segment is also driving recovery in the Philippines, with gaming volume at City of Dreams Manila continuing to outperform 2019 levels, according to the chairman.

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RENATO MARQUES

Typhoon Saola appears to cause only light damage

THE passage of typhoon Saola through Macau has caused less impact than expected, the Secretary for Security and Commander of Civil Protection task force, Wong Sio Chak said in a press conference following the end of the state of immediate prevention.

In the press conference organized by the Civil Protection Operations Centre (COPC), Wong said that the impact of the typhoon was not as severe as forecast, with a total of 188 incidents, of which 118 cases were related to treatment of objects in risk of falling and 55 related to fallen objects.

During the time the COPC was active, there was also a record of six people injured, of which one case was a bone fracture and was considered serious.

"Even if the tropical storm Saola was less severe than expected, the members of the civil protection structure efficiently launched the work of prevention and response, having ensured the life and property of the residents," Wong said, adding, "thanks to the cooperation and understanding of citizens and tourists, as well as the work done on the prevention and reduction of disasters carried out by members of the civil protection structure, the evacuation work was carried out smoothly."

According to the figures cited by the Secretary, the COPC visited a total of 9,064 housing units asking citizens to evacuate from the low-lying areas threatened by storm surge.

3,111 of those residents were evacuated from their homes and into government shelters. 10 of those people required special help to leave their homes and reach the shelter.

Wong acknowledged that the storm surge risks did not eventuate this time and the level of flooding in the low-lying areas of the city was very low and restricted to a small area. Evacuation was more of a precautionary measure.

The Secretary noted that even if the passage of Saola brought



fewer complications than expected, citizens in general and the civil protection structure should not lower their guard, remarking that Macau is still in typhoon season and other typhoons may soon affect the region.

STORM SURGE WARNINGS FAR-OFF FORECAST

During the period of immediate prevention, the Macao Meteorological and Geophysical Bureau

(SMG) issued several warnings of a storm surge, namely a "Red" warning at 7 p.m. on Friday (September 1) warning of potential flooding and water levels expected to be between 1.5 to 2.5 meter above-road. In reality, such flooding never occurred during the whole passage of "Saola," with the maximum flooding recorded in some areas of the Inner Harbour being some 20 to 30 centimeters above the road level and, even then, only

during the high tides that occurred outside the peak of the typhoon.

Although these forecasts did not eventuate, residents in the low-lying areas told government media sources that "this scenario [of an exaggerated warning] is preferable to the time when there were no warnings and people did not know how to proceed."

Still, the high-level warning, the fourth on a scale of five, led to the deployment of a significant contingent of COPC members

and vehicles to evacuate residents from the areas, which turned out to be unnecessary.

Flood alarms were sounded in the streets closer to shore for many hours. Judiciary Police vehicles were constantly patrolling those streets through the night, announcing major flooding in the area.

Typhoon Saola made landfall in southern China before dawn Saturday after nearly 900,000 people were moved to safety.

TYPHOON SAOLA: FOURTH STRONGEST TYPHOON TO HIT MACAU IN SIX YEARS

THE weather phenomena was classified as the fourth strongest of the past six years.

The civil protection authorities remarked that the two incidents caused and observed flood levels were a lot less severe than what was initially predicted.

According to the data analysis provided by the Macao Meteorological and Geophysical Bureau (SMG), after the passage of the typhoon, the weather phenomena was classified as the fourth strongest of the past six years.

The SMG added that the same data also shows that there have been more severe typhoons in the past few years.

According to SMG, this is due to climate change that makes "extreme weather phenomena

more common."

In a list provided by the SMG that lists the typhoons of signal 10 (or equivalent) since 1968, the Saola comes in fourth after Hato (2017), Higos (2020) and Mangkhut (2018).

The same data also shows that although it was not the strongest typhoon in terms of windspeed and gusts, Saola was second in terms of distance of its trajectory to Macau, passing just 30 km from Macau. On this measure, the closest hit related to the typhoon Higos, which was just 20km off the local coastline.

When compared to the strongest typhoons since 1979, Saola is the sixth strongest passing through Macau, after York (1999) and Ellen (1983). **RM**

MOST SPORTS AND CULTURAL VENUES REOPENED YESTERDAY

WITH Saola being less severe than expected, most sports and cultural venues reopened yesterday. All but two facilities under Sports Bureau (ID) management remained closed yesterday, the ID said in a press statement. "The ID needs to carry out advanced inspection and repair work on the Taipa Central Park Swimming Pool and the Coloane Karting Track. We hope to reopen to the public as soon as possible," the Bureau said in a press statement. Similarly, the Cultural Affairs Bureau (IC) noted that "after carrying out

inspection and cleaning work on heritage sites, public libraries, exhibition halls, and performance venues, among other cultural facilities, which are in good condition, most facilities will reopen to the public on September 3." Exceptions are the Macao Contemporary Art Centre - Navy Yard No.1, which will reopen to the public today, and the Heritage Exhibition of a Traditional Pawnshop Business, which will reopen on September 5 (Tuesday). The Lai Chi Vun Shipyard are closed for cleaning works and site decorations until further notice.

LRT SEES OVER 9,000 DAILY PASSENGERS IN AUGUST

The average daily passenger volume of the Macau LRT Taipa Line increased to 9,150 passengers in August, a month-on-month increase of 1,650 passengers. The figure represents the highest daily average passenger volume since the official toll operation in February 2020. Meanwhile, the Transport Bureau has said that more than 92% of LRT company employees are local residents, noting that some local employees have been able to participate in different departments.

FORUM ON WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT HELD IN MACAU

A forum on empowering women was held in the SAR on Saturday, focusing on the well-being of women today and how they can make further improvements. Guests from China and abroad gathered to discuss the current difficulties and challenges faced by women from the perspective of women's mental health and growth, women's career and economy, and women's social development and responsibilities. Yang Lan, chairperson of Sun Media Group, organizer of the forum, called for wide-ranging support from various sectors of Chinese society to create a favorable social environment for women's empowerment.

CONGRESS OF RETURNED OVERSEAS CHINESE CONCLUDES IN BEIJING

The 11th national congress of returned overseas Chinese people and their relatives concluded in Beijing yesterday. Cai Qi, a member of the Standing Committee of the Political Bureau of the Communist Party of China (CPC) Central Committee and a member of the Secretariat of the CPC Central Committee, attended the closing session. Before the session, he met with overseas guests, representatives from Hong Kong and Macau, and outgoing and newly elected leadership members of the All-China Federation of Returned Overseas Chinese (AFROC).

MENTAL HEALTH

LAWMAKER CRITICIZES CURRENT SUICIDE PREVENTION MECHANISM FOR BEING REACTIVE

ANTHONY LAM

MACAU'S current suicide prevention mechanism is too passive, does not help the situation and instead causes stress for response teams, lawmaker Ron Lam has criticized in his latest written inquiry.

During discussions with teaching, social work, frontline medical and public security personnel, the lawmaker has been told that there has been a drastic increase in the number of suicides. Teenagers have also experienced an increase in mental health and stress issues.

Of concern is that there have been several cases in which the subject attempted suicide multiple times but was only assisted passively. The reason, according to the lawmaker, is that the interdepartmental coordination mechanism is a passive system and the government has not invested sufficient resources to support early intervention.

With psychological and psychiatric issues being a cause of suicide, the lawmaker hinted that the 3-dimensional prevention mechanism for mental healthcare – of which the government has repeatedly boasted – has not been effective.

Lam added that he was told by residents who had reportedly been harassed by neighbors with



suspected mental issues that no measures were possible because the patient did not want to receive medical assistance. He added that even the Social Welfare Bureau (IAS) have acknowledged their difficulties in intervening.

The lawmaker recapped that in July 2016, the government introduced a mental health service taskforce to use existing resources

to provide assistance to potential patients of severe psychiatric issues. He wondered why the aforementioned cases were not handled better if the taskforce was successful.

Amid the recent suicide of an Internet icon, the lawmaker added that the government should do more to educate against mental and physical bullying.

He asked the government about its plans to improve existing mechanisms and tools.

The Social Welfare Bureau (IAS) encourages residents to be conscious of their psychological and emotional state as well as those of their relatives and friends. If in need, residents can call Caritas' Life Hope hotline (28525222) or IAS' counseling hotline (28261126).

RENATO MARQUES

THE newly inaugurated bus service that is servicing the Macau Port of the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge to the Hong Kong International Airport Sky Pier is currently less convenient than initially expected, as noted in several media reports.

While the idea of traveling directly into the Hong Kong airport terminal and avoiding immigration procedures appears positive, there are some issues that passengers would like to see resolved.

According to the reports, the service currently has only a limited schedule, with the last available bus departing at 5:30 p.m., contrary to what was previously announced by the Macao Government Tourism Office and the Transport Bureau when it

TRANSPORT

Bus service directly to HK airport below expectations



said the bus would operate until 7:30 p.m.

Services that allow pas-

sengers to check in luggage in Macau are also limited, available only for Ca-

thay Pacific, HK Express, and Greater Bay Airlines. For all the others, passen-

gers will need to pick up their luggage at a luggage counter at the airport and then proceed normally to airline check-in counters, similar to what happened in the past with ferry services between Macau and HK airport.

The new bus will have a fare of MOP280 per adult, with a reduced fare of MOP210 for senior citizens and children. As an introductory promotion, the adult fare will be MOP250 until the end of November.

The regular fare only includes transportation of one piece of luggage per person up to a maximum weight of 20 kg. If there is extra weight or extra luggage, these will be charged at the fare of HKD80 per piece.

The trip takes about 45 minutes and uses electric vehicles with a 45 or 49 seat capacity.

CINEMA

7th documentary film festival to open with Venice Golden Lion winning film

ANTHONY LAM

THE Macao International Documentary Film Festival (MOIDF) will return for its seventh edition from Sep. 8 to 24, with a Venice Film Festival Golden Lion winning film opening.

This year's opening film is 'All the Beauty and Bloodshed,' the Golden Lion winner at the Venice Film Festival and a biographical documentary film directed by contemporary personal photography pioneer Nan Goldin.

The distinguished Cambodian-French director Davy Chou will be the Director in Focus for this year's MOIDF, and will conduct a masterclass in Macao to offer valuable insights.

This year, the Festival will showcase a selection of 29 outstanding films with thought-provoking themes. Among its highlights is the new work titled Mama Dream of Family by emerging directors from Macao, Hao Chit and Kiwi Chan,



which delves into the stories of a group of women who illegally migrated to Macao in the 1980s.

Amidst the ongoing war in Ukraine, '20 Days in Mariupol' produced by the Associated Press (AP) serves as a powerful cautionary tale of war that local journalists have risked their lives to report; the bloodshed, tears and bravery shown by countless individuals

have resulted in Myanmar Diaries, covering the aftermath of a military coup that altered the fate of the Myanmar people two years ago; while 'And Miles to Go Before I Sleep' seeks to reconstruct the truth surrounding the fatal shooting of a Vietnamese migrant worker in Taiwan from multiple perspectives.

Over 6,000 parents lost their children in the 2008 Sichuan ear-

thquake, and this melancholy has continued to haunt the grieving parents despite the arrival of newborns. 'After the Rain' delicately captures the subtle scars entwining these two generations of people. Meanwhile, 'Seven Winters in Tehran' and 'Smoke Sauna Sisterhood' showcase the brilliance and agency of women in the midst of darkness.

The 'Taste of Portuguese' section features two highly acclaimed works, including 'Rising Sun Blues,' with filmmaker Renata Ferraz skillfully incorporating elements of collective creation from theater into the work, and inviting the legendary 65-year-old sex worker, Maria Roxo, to co-direct, and co-star in, the film.

Portuguese-language film 'As-trakan 79' also delves into the realm of secrets, revolving around the memories of a 15-year-old Lisbon boy who was sent to live in the Soviet Union in 1979.

'Center Stage (Restored Version),' a feature film by Hong Kong renowned filmmaker Stanley Kwan Kam Pang will also be screened, which portrays the life of a legendary Chinese actress in the 1940s.

The MOIDF is organized by Comuna de Han-Ian and sponsored by the Macao Cultural Development Fund. The full lineup of the festival is available at www.moidf.com.

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Taiwan suspends work, transport and classes as island braces for arrival of Typhoon Haikui

TAIWAN suspended flights, rail transport and ferry services along with classes, outdoor events, and officials urged workers to stay home as the island prepared for the arrival of Typhoon Haikui later Sunday.

The storm's approach came as Typhoon Saola continued to weaken while moving along the Chinese coast, where 900,000 people and 80,000 fishing vessels had been moved to safety and most of Hong Kong and parts of the coastal mainland closed down businesses, transport and schools.

Damage appeared to be minimal, however, and restrictions had largely been lifted by Sunday.

Parts of Taiwan were already feeling the effects of Haikui's heavy rain and high winds, and dozens of domestic flights were canceled, along with air services to Hong Kong and Macau. The storm had maximum sustained

AP PHOTO



winds of 137 kph, with gusts up to 173 kph, according to the island's meteorological bureau.

Among events canceled was a hot air balloon festival in the central Taichung region, several

outdoor concerts, art events and a baseball festival. National parks and treacherous roads in the island's mountainous center were also closed.

Haikui was expected to conti-

the highest warning under the city's weather system for the first time since 2018.

However, by Saturday night, the observatory had canceled all warnings and the hundreds who had taken shelter at prepared facilities were returning home.

In recent months, China has experienced some of its heaviest rains and deadliest flooding in years in various regions. Dozens of people have been killed, including in outlying mountainous parts of the capital, Beijing.

Hong Kong's government said various departments received reports of a total of 1,206 uprooted trees and flooding was reported in 18 areas. It said 75 people visited hospitals with storm-related injuries.

Despite the twin storms, China's military continued to conduct operations meant to intimidate Taiwan, a self-ruled democracy that Beijing seeks to bring under Chinese sovereignty by force if necessary.

Taiwan's Defense Ministry said it was monitoring the movements of Chinese military aircraft and navy ships near the island. However, it said there were no indications any had crossed the median line in the Taiwan Strait or entered Taiwan's air defense identification zone as they frequently do. **MDT/AP**

nue on toward China after crossing over Taiwan, and authorities in the Chinese city of Shantou in Guangdong province were advising residents to take precautions.

Because of Saola, workers in a number of Chinese cities stayed at home and students saw the start of their school year postponed from Friday to Monday. Trading on Hong Kong's stock market was suspended Friday and hundreds of people were stranded at the airport after about 460 flights were canceled in the key regional business and travel hub.

The cross-border bridge connecting Hong Kong, the gambling hub of Macau and manufacturing center of Zhuhai was closed at one point, with Macau leader Ho Iat Seng ordering a halt to casino operations.

As the storm side-swiped the densely populated financial center, the Hong Kong Observatory issued a No. 10 hurricane alert,

DIPLOMACY

Delegation of Australian ministers to visit China in further sign of improving ties

A delegation of Australian federal ministers will attend a high-level dialogue in Beijing this week in a further sign of a warming of relations after a years-long chill.

Delegates will discuss trade and investment, people-to-people links and regional and international security at the Sept. 7 gathering.

"This is the first time the dialogue has been held since early 2020 and it represents another step towards increasing bilateral engagement and stabilizing our relationship with China," Foreign Minister Penny Wong said Saturday.

The resumption of the talks was one of the outcomes of a meeting the minister held with China's State Councilor and Foreign Minister, Wang Yi, in Beijing in December.

"It provides an opportunity for representatives from both countries to discuss our perspectives and how we can grow our cooperation in areas of shared interest," Wong said.

AP PHOTO



Foreign Minister Penny Wong

The resumed dialogue comes a month after China lifted a stifling 3-year-old tariff on Australian barley — in a strong sign of the improving bilateral trade relationship since Australia's government changed.

China effectively closed its door to Australian barley in May 2020 by imposing an 80.5% tariff.

The trade barriers were widely regarded as punishment for the previous Australian government passing laws that ban covert foreign interference in domestic politics, barring Chinese-owned telecommunications giant

Huawei from rolling out Australia's 5G network due to security concerns, and for calling for an independent investigation of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Former Labor trade minister Craig Emerson will co-chair the event, with former coalition foreign minister Julie Bishop attending as a delegate and session lead. China's former foreign minister and current Honorary President of the Chinese People's Institute of Foreign Affairs, Li Zhaoxing, will co-chair and lead the Chinese delegation. **MDT/AP**

ELECTIONS

ASPIRING TAIWAN LEADER TERRY GOU RESIGNS FROM BOARD OF APPLE SUPPLIER FOXCONN

ASPIRING Taiwanese leader Terry Gou has resigned from the board of Foxconn, the Apple supplier he founded nearly a half-century ago.

The company, officially registered as Hon Hai Precision Industry Co., Ltd., issued a news release late Saturday saying Gou, its former chair, had resigned for personal reasons.

It wasn't clear what, if any, immediate effect Gou's decision would have on the operations of Foxconn, ranked 20th in the 2023 Fortune Global 500 and considered one of the world's largest technology companies.

It is headquartered in Taiwan,

but does the vast majority of its manufacturing in China, where it employs hundreds of thousands making iPhones in vast factory-dormitory complexes that have sometimes seen frictions between workers and management over employment conditions.

Guo announced Aug. 28 he would run as an independent candidate in Taiwan's election, ending months of speculation.

At a news conference, Gou criticized the governing Democratic Progressive Party, saying its policies have "brought Taiwan into the risk of war" with China. **MDT/AP**

AP PHOTO



Terry Gou

SPACE

India launches a spacecraft to study the sun after successful landing near the moon's south pole

ASHOK SHARMA
& AIJAZ HUSSAIN

INDIA launched its first space mission to study the sun on Saturday, less than two weeks after a successful uncrewed landing near the south polar region of the moon.

The Aditya-L1 spacecraft took off on board a satellite launch vehicle from the Sriharikota space center in southern India on a quest to study the sun from a point about 1.5 million kilometers from Earth. The point, known as L1, affords an uninterrupted view of the sun.

The spacecraft is equipped with seven payloads to study the sun's corona, chromosphere, photosphere and solar wind, the Indian Space Research Organization said.

After over an hour, the ISRO said the launch was "accomplished successfully."

"The vehicle has placed the



AP PHOTO

satellite precisely into its intended orbit. India's first solar observatory has begun its journey to

the destination of Sun-Earth L1 point," ISRO posted on the X platform, formerly known as Twitter.

The satellite is scheduled to take 125 days to reach the L1 point.

India became the first country to land a spacecraft near the moon's south pole on Aug. 23 — a historic voyage to uncharted territory that scientists believe could hold vital reserves of frozen water. After a failed attempt to land on the moon in 2019, India joined the United States, Russia and China as only the fourth country to achieve the milestone.

Jitendra Singh, India's junior minister for science and technology, praised the ISRO officials for their work on the latest launch.

"Congratulations India. Congratulations ISRO," he said while being present at the ISRO control room. "It's a sunshine moment for India."

The sun study, combined with India's successful moon landing, would completely change the image of the ISRO in the world community, said Manish Purohit,

a former scientist at the research organization.

Hundreds of people who had gathered to watch the launch cheered as India's sun mission took off.

Among the spectators, Prakash, who gave only one name, said the launch was "one more milestone" like the country's recent moon mission. "This is going to set the bar high for ISRO," he said.

"We are privileged to be Indian and witness this kind of developmental activities on the space center for India," said Sridevi, who also gave only one name.

Once in place, the satellite would provide reliable forewarning of an onslaught of particles and radiation from heightened solar activity that has the potential to knock out power grids on Earth, said B.R. Guruprasad, a space scientist, in an article in The Times of India newspaper. The advanced warning can protect the satellites that are the backbone of the global economic structure as well as the people living in space stations.

"Those seven payloads are going to study the sun as a star in all the possible spectrum positions that we have visible, ultraviolet, and X-ray. ... It's like we're going to get a black and white image, the color image and the high-definition image, 4K image of the sun, so that we don't miss out on anything that is happening on the sun," Purohit said. MDT/AP

KOREAS

N. KOREA FIRES CRUISE MISSILES INTO THE SEA AFTER US-S. KOREAN MILITARY DRILLS END

HYUNG-JIN KIM, SEOUL

NORTH Korea launched several cruise missiles into the sea Saturday, South Korea's military said, extending its weapons testing activities in response to the United States-South Korea summer military drills.

South Korea's military detected the launches early Saturday morning off the North's west coast, the South's Joint Chiefs of Staff said in a statement.

The statement said South Korean and U.S. intelligence authorities were analyzing details of the launches. It said South Korea has boosted its surveillance posture and maintains a firm military readiness in close coordination with the United States.

The launches came two days after the U.S. and South Korean militaries wrapped up their 11-day training exercises that Nor-



AP PHOTO

th Korea regards as a rehearsal for invasion. Washington and Seoul officials maintain their drills are defensive.


A day before the U.S.-South Korean training ended, North Korea fired two short-range ballistic missiles into the sea in a launch it said was meant to simulate "scorched earth" nuclear strikes on South Korea. The North said it was separately holding a command post exercise aimed at rehear-


ing an occupation of South Korea's territory in the event of conflict.

On Aug. 21, the day when the U.S.-South Korean drills began, North Korea's state media said its leader Kim Jong Un observed cruise missile launches.

North Korea's second attempt to place a military spy satellite in orbit failed Aug. 24, but the country said it will make a third attempt in October. MDT/AP

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RELIGION

Pope joins shamans, monks and evangelicals to highlight Mongolia's faith diversity

NICOLE WINFIELD & SARUUL ENKHBOLD ULAANBAATAR

WITH China's crackdown on religious minorities as a backdrop, Pope Francis joined Mongolian shamans, Buddhist monks and a Russian Orthodox priest yesterday to highlight the role that religions can play in forging world peace, as he presided over an interfaith meeting highlighting Mongolia's tradition of religious tolerance.

Francis listened intently as a dozen faith leaders — Jewish, Muslim, Bahai, Hindu, Shinto and evangelical Christian among them — described their beliefs and their relationship with heaven. Several said the traditional Mongolian ger, or round-shaped yurt, was a potent symbol of harmony with the divine — a warm place of family unity, open to the heavens, where strangers are welcome.

"The fact that we are meeting together in one place already sends a message: It shows that the religious traditions, for all their distinctiveness and diversity, have impressive potential for the benefit of society as a whole," Francis said in remarks that cited Buddhist writings, Gandhi, his namesake St. Francis of Assisi and the existential philosopher Soren Kierkegaard.

"If the leaders of nations were to choose the path of encounter and dialogue with others, it would be a decisive contribution to ending the conflicts continuing to afflict so many of the world's peoples," he said.

The interfaith event, held at a theater in the capital, Ulaanbaatar, came midway through Francis' four-day visit to Mongolia, the first by a pope. He is in Mongolia to minister to one of the world's smallest and newest Catholic communities and highlight Mongolia's tradition of tolerance in a region where the Holy See's relations with neighboring China and Russia are often strained.

According to statistics by



Pope Francis speaks during a meeting with religious leaders at the Hun Theatre in the Sky Resort compound some 15 kilometers south of the Mongolian capital Ulaanbaatar, yesterday

the Catholic nonprofit group Aid to the Church in Need, Mongolia is 53% Buddhist, 39% atheist, 3% Muslim, 3% Shaman and 2% Christian.

Later Sunday, Francis presided over a Mass in the capital's sports stadium attended by an estimated 2,000 people, including many Chinese pilgrims. There, he kissed babies held up to him and sought to encourage Mongolia's Catholic flock, telling them they know well the fatigue of the Biblical figure of Abraham, journeying through the desert.

"All of us are 'God's nomads,' pilgrims in search of happiness, wayfarers thirsting for love," he said.

The Vatican's difficult relations with China and Beijing's crackdown on religious minorities have been a constant backdrop to the trip, even though the Vatican hopes to focus attention instead on Mongolia and its 1,450 Catholics. No mainland Chinese bishops are believed to have been allowed to travel to Mongolia, whereas at least two dozen bishops from other countries across Asia have accompanied pilgrims for the events.

"We really hope that gradually our government and leaders will accept him and invite him to visit our country," said Yan Zhiyong, a Chinese Catholic businessman

in Mongolia who attended an event on Saturday with Francis at the city's cathedral. "That would be the most joyful thing for us."

Hong Kong Cardinal-elect Stephen Chow, who made a historic visit to Beijing earlier this year, accompanied 40 pilgrims to Mongolia. He declined to discuss the absence of his mainland Chinese counterparts, focusing instead on Francis and the importance of his visit to Mongolia for the Asian church.

"I think the Asian church is also a growing church. Not as fast as Africa — Africa is growing fast — but the Asian church also has a very important role to play now in the universal church," he told reporters.

Chinese President Xi Jinping has demanded that Catholicism and all other religions adhere strictly to party directives and undergo "Sinicization."

The Vatican and China did sign an accord in 2018 over the thorny issue of Catholic bishop nominations, but Beijing has violated it.

Most Mongolians follow the dominant Gelugpa school of Tibetan Buddhism and revere its leader, the Dalai Lama.

As a result, many Mongolians are concerned with the Chinese Communist Party's opposition to the exiled Tibetan leader and its control

over monastic life and what appears to be a concerted effort to gradually eliminate Tibetan culture.

Yet, given the need to maintain stable relations with Beijing — China is Mongolia's top export partner — the country's leaders have not spoken out on the matter, just as they have remained largely silent about repressive linguistic and cultural policies toward their ethnic brethren in China's Inner Mongolia region.

While the Dalai Lama wasn't present yesterday, he was mentioned by the head of Mongolia's main Tibetan Buddhist monastery, Khamba Nomon Khan Gabju Chojjamts Demberel.

The abbot noted that "His Holiness," as the Dalai Lama is known, had recently recognized the 10th reincarnation of the head lama of Mongolian Buddhists known as the Jebtsundamba Khutughtu.

"This is an extraordinary fortune for us," said the abbot.

The Dalai Lama's recognition has posed a problem, given that China has required all reincarnated lamas to be born within China and be officially certified by Beijing. The newly recognized Mongolian lama meets neither criteria.

Russia's war in Ukraine also loomed large in the background of Sunday's encounter. **MDT/AP**

this day in history

1997 SUICIDE BOMBINGS PUT PEACE VISIT IN DOUBT



Eight people have been killed and over 150 injured in a series of suicide bomb attacks in the centre of Jerusalem.

The three bombers — who are among the dead — detonated their nail bombs in a packed pedestrian area at about 1500 local time (1300 BST).

The militant Palestinian group Hamas claimed it carried out the bombings.

The explosions came within a minute of each other and appeared calculated to cause maximum civilian damage.

A survivor told reporters of the carnage and confusion immediately after the attacks.

"I heard my friend screaming and then I heard another bang — I saw blood everywhere", he said.

Palestinian leaders were quick to condemn the violence.

The Cabinet Secretary for the Palestinian Authority, Amin Abdul Rahman, called the bombings a "crime against civilian people".

But the Israeli government has accused the Palestinians of not doing enough to stop groups like Hamas.

"When we see them dragging their feet in the fight against terror then I think we have a right to point the finger in their direction," a government spokesman told the BBC.

The peace process — already fragile after the suicide bomb in Mahane Yehuda market five weeks ago — now seems close to collapse.

The attack also seems intended to sabotage the peace mission of the US Secretary of State, Madeleine Albright, who arrives next week.

It has not yet been confirmed whether the visit will still take place.

Courtesy BBC News

IN CONTEXT

The number of people killed in this attack was confirmed as seven the next day. The number of injured rose to over 170, and this triple suicide bombing was widely viewed as a significant escalation in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

Two days later the Israeli Prime Minister, Binyamin Netanyahu, announced he felt no longer bound by peace accords with the Palestinians and would suspend Israeli withdrawal from the West Bank.

Madeleine Albright carried out her visit to the region but had little success in forwarding the peace process.

Netanyahu's right wing coalition collapsed in January 1999 and in May 1999 Labour's Ehud Barak was elected prime minister.

MACAU'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

YOUR STARS

ARIES
 Mar. 21-Apr. 19
 You can expect to face opposition on the home front. Don't overspend on friends or children. Your lover will be annoyed with your participation.

TAURUS
 Apr. 20-May. 20
 You can make rewarding connections through the organized groups you associate with. You can prosper if you invest in property or mutual funds.

GEMINI
 May. 21-Jun. 21
 Uncertainties about your living arrangements may be unnerving. You will meet a person who may turn out to be more than just a friend. Sudden changes regarding colleagues may surprise you.

CANCER
 Jun. 22-Jul. 22
 Changes in your home may be disruptive and upsetting. You have done all you can to sort things out a personal level. You will expand your circle of friends if you join groups.

LEO
 Jul. 23-Aug. 22
 Your high energy will enable you to enlist the help of those in a position to back you. Get together with friends and catch up on reading and letter writing.

VIRGO
 Aug. 23-Sep. 22
 Your self confidence will attract members of the opposite sex. Do something special for them. You need to reevaluate your situation.

LIBRA
 Sep. 23-Oct. 22
 A trip to visit relatives should be rewarding. You can make personal changes that will enhance your appearance and bring you greater popularity.

SCORPIO
 Oct. 23-Nov. 21
 Good friends will give you honest answers. You can make money if you put your mind to it. Concentrate on spending quality time with children.

SAGITTARIUS
 Nov. 22-Dec. 21
 Don't let others bait you into arguments. Avoid arguments with relatives who might be conservative and outdated. You will have difficulties spreading yourself between your work and your home.

CAPRICORN
 Dec. 22-Jan. 19
 Your creative talent may well be recognized by others today. Do not jump to conclusions concerning your romantic partner. Opportunities for romance are present.

AQUARIUS
 Jan. 20-Feb. 18
 You may have difficulties with in-laws or family members. Your determination may make you a little overbearing when dealing with others.

PISCES
 Feb. 19-Mar. 20
 Don't avoid situations that may deteriorate; try to mend them. You will communicate easily and should be able to accomplish all that you set out to do.

The Born Loser by Chip Sansom



SUDOKU

EASY

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

EASY+

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

MEDIUM

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	6						4	
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	8			4				5
	4	3				8		
6								9

HARD

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

WEATHER

	MIN	MAX	CONDITION
CHINA			
Beijing	21	32	cloudy
Changchun	19	26	cloudy
Chengdu	21	32	fine
Chongqing	25	36	fine
Fuzhou	26	30	rain
Guangzhou	25	34	cloudy
Guiyang	18	27	cloudy
Haikou	25	30	thunderstorms
Hangzhou	24	31	rain
Harbin	17	24	thunderstorms
Hefei	21	29	overcast
Nanjing	23	30	showers
Shanghai	25	31	overcast
Taipei	26	28	rain
Wuhan	22	31	fine
Hong Kong	28	31	overcast
WORLD			
Moscow	12	21	overcast
Frankfurt	16	30	overcast
Paris	18	30	clear
London	17	23	overcast
New York	21	26	thunderstorms

CROSSWORDS

ACROSS 1- Coil; 5- Plant problem; 10- Guzzle; 14- Architect Saarinen; 15- Birth-related; 16- Narrow strip of wood; 17- Dagger of yore; 18- Humiliate; 19- Sheltered, nautically; 20- Native drum; 22- Assume; 24- Altar words; 25- Memory unit; 26- Magician; 30- Orchestra section; 35- Abu Dhabi's fed.; 36- History book chapter; 37- Ancient region of Asia Minor; 38- Act as chairperson; 41- Lager; 43- Adjust to zero; 44- Summer shade; 45- "Respect for Acting" author Hagen; 46- Journalist ___ Rogers St. Johns; 47- Indolent; 50- Emit coherent light; 53- Society page word; 54- Breakfast food; 58- Reserved; 62- Legal rights org.; 63- Gandhi's land; 66- Some nest eggs; 67- Conifer; 68- Chamber; 69- Bites; 70- "___ quam videri" (North Carolina's motto); 71- Specimen of genus Aquila; 72- Ratio words;

DOWN 1- In case; 2- Vintner's prefix; 3- City near Provo; 4- Beautifully imaginative; 5- Captivated; 6- Apply lightly; 7- Greek vowel; 8- Large and dense; 9- Aboriginal Alaskan; 10- Thunder unit; 11- Head light?; 12- Salt Lake City hoopsters; 13- Clarified butter; 21- Shelley's "___ to the West Wind"; 23- Jeopardy; 25- Lift giver; 26- Above; 27- Paddled; 28- Actress Witherspoon; 29- Poetic conjunction; 31- Goddess of dawn in Greek mythology; 32- Boredom; 33- Eats to a plan; 34- Mother of Isaac; 39- Poivre's partner; 40- Author Calvino; 41- Crony; 42- Deluge; 44- Literary monogram; 48- "Fancy that!"; 49- Third sign of the zodiac; 51- Not dead yet; 52- Capital of Yemen; 54- Fence opening; 55- Some TVs; 56- ___ well...; 57- Dangerous weapon; 59- "Trinity" author; 60- Deeply moved; 61- Canadian gas brand; 64- Made a hole; 65- Unwell;

Friday's solution

P	O	O	H		P	H	A	S	E		K	E	P	T
I	R	A	E		G	U	S	T		N	A	S	A	
N	E	H	I		A	N	T	A	E		R	S	E	
T	O	U	G	H		A	I	L	L		M	E	N	T
U	P	S	T	R	E	A	M							
G	R	E	S	E	R	U	M							
T	I	E	S		R	I	S	E						
V	E	N	T	A										
S	O	A	P											
C	O	W	L	I	P									
T	R	A												
L	A	I	R											
A	N	E	T											

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PJ (Open line) 993	Telephone - Report 1000
PJ (Picket) 28 557 775	Electricity - Report 28 339 922
PSP 28 573 333	Macau Daily Times 28 716 081
Customs 28 559 944	
S. J. Hospital 28 313 731	
Kiang Wu Hospital 28 371 333	
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Tourism 28 333 000	
Airport 59 888 88	



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BASKETBALL

South Sudan to represent Africa, Japan to represent Asia in Paris Olympic

TIM REYNOLDS, MANILA

IT was a chant that Luol Deng waited years to lead. He stood along the side of the South Sudan locker room after their run in the World Cup was over, cupped his hands around his mouth and yelled the same thing, over and over.

"Where we goin'?" he shouted.

"Paris," the players all responded.

Deng's vision when he founded the national team about a decade ago was to use basketball as a beacon of hope for his homeland. And his vision never seemed more real than on Saturday.

A struggling country just 12 years removed from gaining its independence — making it the youngest nation in the world — is headed to the Paris Olympics as the automatic qualifier from Africa. Carlik Jones finished with 26 points, 15 assists and seven rebounds, and South Sudan rolled



Japan's supporters cheer the team during the second half of their Basketball World Cup classification match against Cape Verde in Okinawa, southern Japan, Saturday

led past Angola 101-78 on Saturday in the final game of the World Cup for both teams.

The win, combined with Egypt's 88-86 loss to New Zealand in a game that went final about a half hour later, clinched the Olympic berth for South Sudan as the highest-ranked

African team in the tournament. And later Saturday, Japan joined the Olympic field as the highest-ranked World Cup team from Asia — clinching that spot by holding on for an 80-71 win over Cape Verde.

"This team is a beam of light, like I keep on saying," South

Sudan coach Royal Ivey said. "We're bringing unity, camaraderie, love and friendship to this country. This country's only been independent for 12 years. To do this, for Luol Deng to put this together, this is incredible. This is incredible."

Marial Shayok scored 18, Nuni Omot — the reigning MVP of the NBA-backed Basketball Africa League — scored 17 and Wenyen Gabriel added 15 for South Sudan (3-2).

Childe Dundao led Angola (1-4) with 21 points.

South Sudan and Japan joined Australia (the Oceania automatic qualifier) and France (the host nation) as teams to have clinched spots in the 12-team Olympic men's basketball field.

The World Cup serves as a qualifier for seven teams — the two highest-ranked teams from the Americas, the top two from Europe, and the top finisher from Asia, Oceania and Africa — into the Olympic field. Those seven join France, and the other

four spots will be decided in last-chance qualifying spots next summer.

"I love this team," Ivey said. "Man, this is a great feeling. This is a great feeling. I wish I could bottle this up right now."

Japan played host to the Olympics two summers ago and now has secured another trip to the games, though it was far from easy at the end.

Keisei Tominaga put the hosts — Japan got to play its World Cup games in Okinawa — up 73-53 on a 3-pointer with 2:00 remaining in the third quarter.

Cape Verde roared back. It held Japan scoreless for the next nine minutes, going on a 15-0 run to get within 73-68 on a 3-pointer by Betinho Gomes. Japan went 11 minutes without a field goal, but Joshua Hawkins had the team's only baskets of the final quarter. They both came in the last minute, one setting up a three-point play, the other a 3-pointer to help the hosts advance. **MDT/AP**

AD

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OPINION

China Daily
Editorial, China Daily

CIFTIS SIGN OF ECONOMIC GROWTH MOMENTUM

Will China's economy experience a deep recession? Is China facing an unprecedented economic crisis? Will China's economic woes worsen? Such questions are catching the attention of the world.

Some in the West who fear China's rise and keep talking about a "China threat" have indulged in schadenfreude making such forecasts of gloom and doom for the Chinese economy. Some who know how important China's growth is to the development of the global economy worry the answer to such questions is "yes".

China's economy has continued to go from strength to strength despite such forecasts about its collapse having been heard numerous times in the past. The resilience of China's economy which enables it to overcome difficulties makes a mockery of the doomsayers.

The current China International Fair for Trade in Services, being held in Beijing, sends a strong message that China's economy will continue to maintain its momentum for growth, and China's market still has great appeal for international investment.

A total of 82 countries and international organizations have participated in the offline exhibitions and meetings of the CIFTIS, and 2,400 companies, including 424 of Fortune 500 and top industrial players will exhibit online and offline. More than 70 renowned enterprises and institutions are unveiling innovations at the fair.

CIFTIS will host 202 activities including 10 summits, 107 themed forums, 17 side events, two highlight events and 66 promotional business talks.

What is particularly noteworthy is the conference on the wider opening-up of the service sector, which highlights the continuation of the country's efforts to open its market wider to the world.

The output of the service sector makes up two-thirds of the global gross domestic product and two-thirds of global foreign direct investment is in this sector as well. This fair, the largest of its kind in the world, is of great significance to both China's economic growth and the development of the global economy.

The trade in services has become an important engine for the growth of China's economy. Its foreign trade in services totaled nearly 6 trillion yuan (\$826.3 billion) in 2022, an increase of 12.9% year-on-year, and the second largest in the world for the ninth consecutive year.

The hosting of such a large-scale international event for the trade in services will provide a boost to the development of the global economy. The opportunities CIFTIS will create for foreign investors to invest in the increasingly open service sector in China will be a boon for the recovery of the global economy.

AI PROJECT IMAGINES ADULT FACES OF CHILDREN WHO DISAPPEARED DURING ARGENTINA'S MILITARY DICTATORSHIP

THE BUZZ

If a baby was taken from their parents four decades ago during Argentina's military dictatorship, what would that person look like today?

Argentine publicist Santiago Barros has been trying to answer that question using artificial intelligence to create images of what the children of parents who disappeared during the dictatorship might look like as adults.

Almost every day, Barros uploads these images to an Instagram account called iabuelas, which is

a portmanteau in Spanish for artificial intelligence, or IA, and grandmother, or abuela — taken from the well-known activist group Grandmothers of Plaza de Mayo that searches for missing children.

Using an app called Midjourney, Barros combines photos of the disappeared fathers and mothers from the public archive of the Grandmothers website, creating images of what the faces of their children might look like as adults today.



Nobel laureates and the royal family of Sweden during the Nobel Prize award ceremony at the Concert Hall in Stockholm, Dec. 10 2022

NOBEL FOUNDATION WITHDRAWS INVITATION TO RUSSIA, BELARUS AND IRAN TO ATTEND CEREMONIES

THE Nobel Foundation on Saturday withdrew its invitation for representatives of Russia, Belarus and Iran to attend this year's Nobel Prize award ceremonies after the decision announced a day earlier "provoked strong reactions."

Several Swedish lawmakers said Friday they would boycott this year's Nobel Prize award ceremonies in the Swedish capital, Stockholm, after the private foundation that administers the prestigious awards changed its position from a year earlier and invited representatives of the three countries to attend, saying it "promotes opportunities to convey the important messages of the Nobel Prize to everyone."

Some of the lawmakers cited Russia's war on Ukraine and the crackdown on human rights in Iran as reasons for their boycott. Belarusian opposition figure Sviatlana Tsikhanouskaya on Friday called on the Swedish Nobel Foundation and the Norwegian Nobel Committee not to invite representatives of Belarusian President Alexander Lukashenko's "illegitimate regime to any events."

On Saturday, she welcomed the Nobel Foundation's decision. She told The Associated Press that it was "a clear sign of solidarity with the Belarusian and Ukrainian peoples."

"This is how you show

your commitment to the principles and values of Nobel," Tsikhanouskaya said.

Ukrainian Foreign Ministry spokesperson Oleh Nikolenko called the decision a "victory for humanism."

"Thank you to everyone who demanded that justice be restored," he wrote on Facebook, adding that "a similar decision" should be made regarding the attendance of Russian and Belarusian ambassadors at celebrations taking place in Norway following the ceremony in Sweden.

Swedish Prime Minister Ulf Kristersson, who said Friday he wouldn't have allowed the three countries to participate in the award ceremonies, was also happy with the decision. He posted on social media platform X, formerly known as Twitter, that "the many and strong reactions show that the whole of Sweden unambiguously stand on Ukraine's side against Russia's appalling war of aggression."

The foundation said Saturday it recognized "the strong reactions in Sweden, which completely overshadowed this message" and therefore it had decided not to invite the ambassadors of Russia, Belarus and Iran to the ceremony in Stockholm where the prizes in Sciences and Literatures are awarded.

However, the Norwegian Nobel Committee that awards the Nobel Peace Prize said it would follow its

usual practice and invite all ambassadors to the ceremony in the Norwegian capital of Oslo where the Nobel Peace Prize is awarded.

"The Committee wishes the government authorities in every country officially represented in Norway to have the opportunity to take part in the Nobel Peace Prize award ceremony and to familiarize themselves with the Nobel Peace Prize laureates' important message," the Committee said to the AP in a statement.

"This applies not least to countries with an authoritarian regime which wage war against other countries or against their own population, and which our Peace Prize laureates oppose."

Saturday's announcement was widely praised in Sweden by politicians. Even the Swedish Royal House reacted with spokeswoman Margareta Thorgren saying, as quoted by newspaper Aftonbladet, that "we see the change in the decision as positive." She added that King Carl XVI Gustaf was planning to hand out this year's Nobel awards at ceremonies in Stockholm "as before."

This year's Nobel prize winners will be announced in early October. The laureates are then invited to receive their awards at glittering prize ceremonies on Dec. 10, the anniversary of award founder Alfred Nobel's death in 1896. MDT/AP



German Chancellor Olaf Scholz dismissed a suggestion by a junior coalition partner that the country should keep open the option of using its closed nuclear power plants, declaring that atomic energy is a "dead horse" in Germany. Germany switched off its last three nuclear reactors in April, completing a process that received wide political support after Japan's Fukushima nuclear reactor disaster in 2011. But some argued for a rethink after energy prices spiked because of the war in Ukraine. Among those who advocated a reprieve were members of the Free Democrats, a pro-business party that is part of Scholz's governing coalition.



UK An independent body will unveil plans for a permanent memorial to Britain's Queen Elizabeth II in 2026, to mark what would have been the late monarch's 100th birthday, the government said yesterday. The Cabinet Office said Robin Janvrin, Elizabeth's former private secretary, has been appointed as chairman of the Queen Elizabeth memorial committee to consider proposals for a "fitting tribute" to Britain's longest-reigning monarch following her death in September 2022.



Mexico As the U.S. government built its latest stretch of border wall, Mexico made a statement of its own by laying remains of the Berlin Wall a few steps away. The 3-ton pockmarked, gray concrete slab sits between a bullring, a lighthouse and the border wall, which extends into the Pacific Ocean. "May this be a lesson to build a society that knocks down walls and builds bridges," reads the inscription below the towering Cold War relic, attributed to Tijuana Mayor Montserrat Caballero and titled, "A World Without Walls."