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FOUNDER & PUBLISHER Kowie Geldenhuys

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF Paulo Coutinho

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CARE FOR WORKPLACE MENTAL HEALTH IS BECOMING CRITICAL FOR A VARIETY OF REASONS, LAWMAKER COUTINHO SAID IN WRITTEN INQUIRY

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PREMIER LI ON CHARM OFFENSIVE AT ASEAN SUMMIT IN INDONESIA

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AP PHOTO



China's Great Wall has been pierced by Genghis Khan, the Manchus, and now, allegedly, a couple of construction workers named Zheng and Wang who wanted a shortcut. Authorities arrested two people for smashing a path through a section of the ancient wall, a cultural icon and UN protected heritage site. The area of the breach was a broken-down section far from the restored segments most Chinese and foreign tourists are familiar with.

AP PHOTO



Ukraine U.S. Secretary of State Anthony Blinken visited Kyiv, where he was expected to announce more than \$1 billion in new American funding in a display of Washington's unflinching support for Ukraine's fight. At the same time, Russian shelling yesterday killed at least 16 people and wounded 20 others at a market in the eastern Ukrainian city of Kostiantynivka, the country's prime minister said.

AP PHOTO



USA President Joe Biden has nominated former Treasury secretary Jacob Lew (pictured) to serve as the next U.S. ambassador to Israel, the White House announced. Lew, who served as White House chief of staff and director of the Office of Management and Budget during the Obama administration, would succeed Ambassador Tom Nides, who left the post in July. Lew also served as OMB director during the Clinton administration.

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RENATO MARQUES

CRIME IS RISING BUT NOT YET AT PRE-PANDEMIC LEVELS

IN general, the number of crimes has been growing over the first half (1H) of this year at a rate of 25.4%, the Secretary for Security, Wong Sio Chak said yesterday morning in a press conference organized to report the crime statistics over 1H.

When compared with the same period from 2022, the number of crimes committed is up by over 25%, with crimes against the territory and the crimes against property growing at exponential rates of 46.7% and 44.5%, respectively.

Also growing at a significantly high rate (33.3%) were crimes against society, while crimes against people only registered a slight increase of about one percentage point.

The only types of crimes to go against the rising trend were those not classified under the previously mentioned types and which are related to several forms of legislation.

In this particular, the general rate has registered a drop of 6.8% although one item (Cybercrime) has rocketed, growing some 141.1%. Crimes that dropped included crimes of helping and lodging illegal immigrants (-38.1%) as well as drug consumption (-45.5%) and shame marriage (-32.9%).

According to the Secretary, noting the growth in the majori-



ty of types of crimes, he said that regardless of the growth seen, the crime levels at the end of June this year were still lower than in 2019.

VIOLENT CRIMES 47% UP

The chapter dedicated to Violent Crimes notes a general increase of 47% in these types of crimes, with

theft (+240%), kidnapping (+200%) as well as arson, homicide, and 'other crimes against human life,' all registering figures double those from the same period in 2022.

Among these, the growth in the crimes of rape (20 cases in six months, amounting to an increase of 42.9%) and sexual abuse of chil-

dren (18 cases in 6 months, or one case more (+5.9%) than in 2022), is notable.

DISOBEDIENCE TOPPING 'CRIMES AGAINST THE TERRITORY'

According to the Security authorities, the type of crimes

that grew more were those 'against the territory,' which include the crimes of paying false declarations and disobedience. The second led the growth of these types of crimes with an increase of 65.7% to a total of 111 cases in just six months; that is, almost two cases every three days.

False declarations were also up but by 31.8%, with a total number of 58 cases.

HOUSE ROBBERIES SOARING

A rare crime during the pandemic when many border restrictions were in force, home robberies soared in the first semester of this year, with a total of 21 cases recorded by the police authorities. The figures account for a growing rate of 950%; whereas during the same period last year only two cases of this type of crime had been reported.

Another of the crimes growing exponentially since the reopening of the borders was theft by pickpocketing, which during the first half of 2023 recorded a growth of 348.6% to a total of 157 cases.

The theft of motorcycles has also registered significant growth with a year-on-year growth of 193.8% to a total number of 47 cases this year, compared to 16 in 2022.

Lawmaker raises concerns for workplace mental health

ANTHONY LAM

HEALTHCARE for workplace mental health is becoming critical in Macau for a variety of reasons, lawmaker José Pereira Coutinho has said in his latest written inquiry.

Citing the WHO, Coutinho highlighted that the three pillars of workplace mental health are prevention, intervention and accommodation. He noted that the most frequently seen mental issues are anxiety, depression, breakdowns and eating disorders. Moreover, he underlined that both the WHO and the International Labour Organization (ILO) have called on governments to implement more and better specific measures to combat mental health issues

among the working population.

The lawmaker further cited the WHO as noting that risks of workplace mental health issues should be dealt with. These risks include long-term and strenuous workloads, negative acts in the workplace, as well as elements that cause disturbances or worries at work.

In response to these elements, these organizations recommend companies continually train their management staff so that they are better able to ease workplace tension and stress, as well as resolve workplace challenges and problems.

The lawmaker also pointed out that arrangements of work hours, submission to authoritative manage-

ments, lack of human interactions in the workplace, expedited timelines and escalated requirements are all elements that affect workplace mental and physical health.

Coutinho also noted that workplace bullying and threatening will harm the mental health of employees. Age and sex discrimination, long work hours, low salary, and lack of balance between work and personal lives will also affect mental wellbeing, the lawmaker said.

As a result, the lawmaker asked if the government is prepared in terms of laws and policies to address increased threats to workplace and societal mental health. He also questioned if the city has enough professionals to cope with changing

situations.

Up to this point, the government has been emphasizing that mental health care is provided at various public facilities and social organizations. In addition, with the government frequently underlining its three-pronged mental health response mechanism, the lawmaker asked for data related to the system's effectiveness and efficiency.

As a former civil servant, the lawmaker asked about the number of accredited professionals in the civil service structure who can cope with workplace mental health issues when they occur.

He also called on the government to exert additional efforts in destigmatizing mental health issues.



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Times

DIRECTOR & EDITOR-IN-CHIEF_Paulo Coutinho paulocoutinho@macaudailytimes.com
ASSISTANT EDITOR_Lynzy Valles
CONTRIBUTING EDITORS_Leanda Lee, Severo Portela, Sheyla Zandonai

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

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

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ADMINISTRATOR & CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Kowie Geldenhuys kowie@macaudailytimes.com

OFFICE MANAGER Juliana Cheang juliana@macaudailytimes.com

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

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GRAND PRIX

70th edition of GP to leave out most of last year's riders

RENATO MARQUES

AS an important part of the special celebratory edition of the seven decades of the Macau Grand Prix, the 55th edition of the Macau Motorcycle GP is going ahead on the roads of Macau with the main program of the event that this year spans two weekends.

With the final removal of restrictions related to the pandemic that stopped the Motorcycle race in both 2020 and 2021, all seemed to be set for a great 2023 edition, with the expected return of many of the names that the public in Macau follow as well as the potential return of some relatively new names who made their debut in 2022.

But, according to information that the Times received from several riders and team managers, this scenario has been discarded by the Macau Grand Prix Organizing Committee (MGPOC), which has rejected the entries of most of last year's participants.

One of the riders, who spoke to the Times on the condition of remaining anonymous, explained that according to the GP organizers, only the Top 4 finalists of last year would be allowed to participate in this year's event.

This news came as a shock, as he explained, "At the end of last year's race, I and other riders [were] approached by the organizers [who] told us that we could return this year, so, obviously we started preparing for this."

He further explained that to take part in the event in November requires months of preparation, especially when it involves long stays, traveling, and shipping the motorcycles, tires, and all other necessary tools and accessories to take part in the race.

"On top of this, the news that our entries have been rejected also carries other consequences as we already started to work on liveries, racing leathers, helmet designs, and



many other things. The mechanics also had to prepare and take leave in advance from their year-long jobs to be able to travel to Macau. This is really sad and disappointing."

Another rider told the Times a similar story, noting also that he had reached out to at least other three racers who said they had been contacted between Monday and Tuesday to be informed that their entries had been rejected.

"As far as I heard, although it is not an official reply [from the MGPOC], the criteria of choice were based on performance – but I have also heard that Nadieh [Schoots] has been invited to join this year's event so I guess it's not just performance," he said, noting that Schoots, racing for the first time in Macau last year, classified in the last position and over one and half minutes behind the time of the winner, the

Finn Erno Kostamo, in an 8-laps-only race.

On the same topic, a member of one of the teams with extensive knowledge of the Macau racing event said, "We know that the Macau race is an invitational one and the organizers can pick anyone they like but what is bothering most of the people (in my opinion) is that the same organizers have met the riders and the teams after the event last year and they provided them with feedback, which, in most cases was positive and we were told that we could join this year, and in some cases this was not the case. What we don't understand is the change of mind from the organizers, which is causing a lot of damage for the riders and teams of small structure – as most of them are."

"I think the local organizers need to change their approach and have a more professional attitude towards their role. Maybe last year they were just being polite or expressing personal views that were not shared by the structure of the GP itself, I honestly don't know... But there are some very angry people out there for whom this turnout of events feels like a betrayal."

"I asked for an explanation as they had promised it and I told them I was already working on the bike..." the first rider remarked, "But their reply was: Thank you for your understanding, perhaps you can return next year," he said, referring to the poor communication from the local officials.

"When the 'Big Boys' didn't want to come [to Macau] we were fine. Now that coronavirus is gone, the little heroes can fuck off."

AAMC CLAIMS 'SAFETY' IS THE PRIORITY

To hear from the organizers on the matter, the Times contacted the MGPOC through the Automobile General Association Macao-China (AAMC), responsible for handling the registration and invitation process.

In a written response to the Times the AAMC said, "As Macau's Guia Circuit is a street circuit, safety is one of the biggest priorities," adding, "The Macau Motorcycle Grand Prix Event's tradition is to have entries from the riders who have experience in races regarded as being of similar status and challenge as the Macau Motorcycle Grand Prix, particularly in 'International Isle of Man Tourist Trophy Races' or 'North West 200,' as you can see from the entries in the past."

The local entity that rules over motorsports noted that due to the absence of quarantine measures, "many riders are eager to return to join the Macau Grand Prix, especially in a remarkable year of its celebration," adding that the entries are still ongoing and that the final entry list will be only submitted to the sporting subcommittee for selection at a later stage, "before it will be officially announced in October by the organizer."

ISLANDS HOSPITAL TO RECRUIT 200 STAFF IN OCTOBER

A total of 200 doctors, nurses, administrative staff and other personnel will be recruited in October, with the Peking Union Medical College Hospital sending managers and senior doctors to Macau. The SAR government will complete the hardware construction of the Islands Hospital this year and it will be put into use in phases in December, with more than 800 beds and more than 300 beds in the rehabilitation hospital.

OVER 30 MILLION PASSED THROUGH QINGMAO PORT

Gongbei Customs stated that more than 30 million people have passed through Qingmao Port in the past two years, effectively relieving the customs clearance pressure at Gongbei Port. Qingmao Port opened on September 8, 2021, implementing 24-hour customs clearance. Travelers, especially those residing in Fai Chi Kei, Toi San and Ilha Verde Districts, found the facility more convenient than the Border Gate on the Macau side. Its proximity to the High-speed Railway Zhuhai Station has positioned the Qingmao Border Checkpoint as a strategic project in the development of the Greater Bay Area.

CIVIL SERVANT GROUP VISITS PORTUGUESE EMBASSY IN CHINA

President of Macau Civil Servant's Association Rita Santos recently met in Beijing with Duarte Pinto da Rocha, deputy chief of mission and Ricardo Brilhante, political counselor, of the Portuguese Embassy in China, as well as Nuno Lima Leite, director of the Beijing office, Trade and Investment Promotion Agency of Portugal. Saying that the meeting lasted two hours, Santos added that the status quo of the Greater Bay Area and Macau's position between Portugal and China were introduced to the Portuguese diplomats. She also recapped the association's work in relation to Portuguese citizens in Macau.

EXPECTED RETURNS TO THE GP

ALTHOUGH the list of riders to take part in the event is not final yet, according to the information collected by the Times, the organizers aim to see back from 2022, the winner Kostamo as well as podium finishers David Datzler and Sheridan Morais. Also joining should be the fourth-place finisher Lukas Maurer and the female racer Nadieh Schoots. According to the same team mem-

ber the final list of racers this year should be limited to a maximum of 21 or 22 (due to space limitations). To the names already mentioned should be added tentatively 16 or 17 of the most well-known names from road racing and Guia Circuit, including Michael Rutter (who told the Times back in March this year that he would return this year), Peter Hickman, David Johnson and Davey Todd, among others.

LABOR

Domestic helpers' salaries back to pre-pandemic levels due to lower demand

LYNZY VALLES

DEMAND for domestic workers has decreased, resulting in lower monthly wages, which dropped by up to 30%.

According to the Association of Employment Agencies for Foreign Workers, monthly wages of these particular workers has dropped to MOP4,000 to MOP5,000, compared to the pandemic levels of MOP5,000 to MOP6,000.

During the closure of the borders from March 2020 due to the pandemic, many workers were laid off due to the economic turnaround.

A number of domestic workers have also opted to go back home for good, with many deciding that not seeing their families for over two years is a big price to pay for a minimum wage.

Data from the Statistics and Census Service (DSEC) shows that the number of domestic workers in the region

LYNZY VALLES



has declined to 23,700 in the first quarter of 2023, a 23.8% decrease from 2020 figures that stood at 31,100.

Due to the shortage of domestic helpers amid the pandemic, the government launched a pilot program to allow the entry of Philippine domestic workers in April 2022.

However amid those times,

job searches seen by the Times show that employers were willing to offer even up to MOP7,000 to MOP9,000 to take care of seniors, in addition to housework.

Others were willing to pay up to MOP6,000 for taking care of their children.

Currently, according to the association's president, Ao Ieong Kuong, the market demand has

slowed down, which is believed to be related to the fact that employer salaries have not rebounded.

As cited in a report by Macao Daily, some industry insiders said that the application time has now been shortened by half compared to the pandemic period.

Previously it took up to four months to process the quotas and

bluecards of these employees.

On social media, it can be seen that several employers are looking for stay-out domestic helpers, offering a salary between MOP4,000 to MOP5,000 for at least nine to 11 hours of work.

Last year, the Labour Affairs Bureau (DSAL) was grilled by the UN Human Rights Committee (UNHRC) over the absence of a minimum wage for domestic helpers.

The UNHRC questioned why domestic workers are treated in a different manner, as the basic law states that there cannot be discrimination on any ground such as race, ethnicity or social origin.

The DSAL defended the government's decision to exclude domestic workers from the minimum wage by noting, "The main reason for it is because domestic helpers are special and families [who] employ domestic workers are providing jobs and the domestic workers are not there [to help them] make profit."

Social advisor suggests hiring private vehicles under T8 or higher

ANTHONY LAM

DURING the first meeting of the Islands District social advisors after Super Typhoon Saola, the suggestion to hire private vehicles to meet transport needs under typhoon signal 8 was raised.

Every now and then, discussions occur to find ways to strike a balance between ensuring the safety of transport drivers and meeting the inevitable needs for transportation under typhoon signals 8 or higher.

Under such weather conditions, all public transport is suspended. It is at taxi drivers' discretion to operate or not, but insurance plans do not cover damages or injuries caused by any outdoor activities or movements.

At the same time, the government has always recommended people stay indoors under such weather conditions to ensure safety, although



during the impact of the Super Typhoon Saola, the government ordered all casinos to close as soon as typhoon signal 9 was hoisted.

At the meeting, social advisor for the district Ho Chong Chun suggested the government hire or "expropriate" private or social service vehicles to cater to the needs of tourists and residents.

To support his suggestion, he recapped that

under the recent super typhoon, the government first relocated people from taxi stands to indoors and issued tickets to them to ensure order.

He even suggested that the government extend this special measure to other immigration checkpoints.

Another advisor, Lo Chung Yee, said that the government should seek ways to ensure that taxi accidents that occur un-

der typhoon signals 8 or higher be covered by insurance policies, so that the needs for transport by tourists can be settled.

She added that the opening of the LRT Barra Station should be expedited to cater to the transport needs under extreme weather conditions.

With a full Taipa line running outdoors, the LRT service is suspended under extreme weather conditions.

EVENTS

FIREWORKS DISPLAY CONTEST TO OPEN THIS WEEKEND, WITH ROAD DETOUR

THE international fireworks display contest is set to return this Saturday evening after three years of suspension, due to Covid-19 immigration restrictions.

The Macao Government Tourism Office (MGTO) announced that this year's contest will be unveiled with Cardile International Fireworks Company from Australia, which will showcase the southern hemisphere country's floral, animal and natural aesthetics at 9pm. Fireworks will be accompanied by Australian pop, rock and folk music to present an overall experience.

Meanwhile, at 9:40pm the same evening, Switzerland's La Pirotecnica SAGL will offer colorful and delicately choreographed graphics paired with rock music, to intrigue the audience with a night of rock.

Both companies have won acclaimed awards in the past, the MGTO highlighted.

To listen to the music, audiences can tune in to TDM

– Chinese Radio Macau on FM100.7, which will broadcast the music live during the shows.

Besides suggesting five key viewing points – Nam Van Lake, ZAPE Promenade, One Central, Macao Science Center and Avenida do Oceano – the MGTO also noted that public broadcaster TDM will air the shows live on two of its channels. Interested viewers can thus enjoy the shows in the comfort of their residences, restaurants or hotel accommodation.

The MGTO emphasized that announcements will be made in due course should a typhoon strike Macau near to or on any show nights.

In addition, in order to facilitate smooth presentations of the display-contest, certain traffic arrangements will be in place. During shows, Governor Nobre de Carvalho Bridge will be blocked for pedestrians. Bus stops and routes will also be adjusted to accommodate additional audience traffic.



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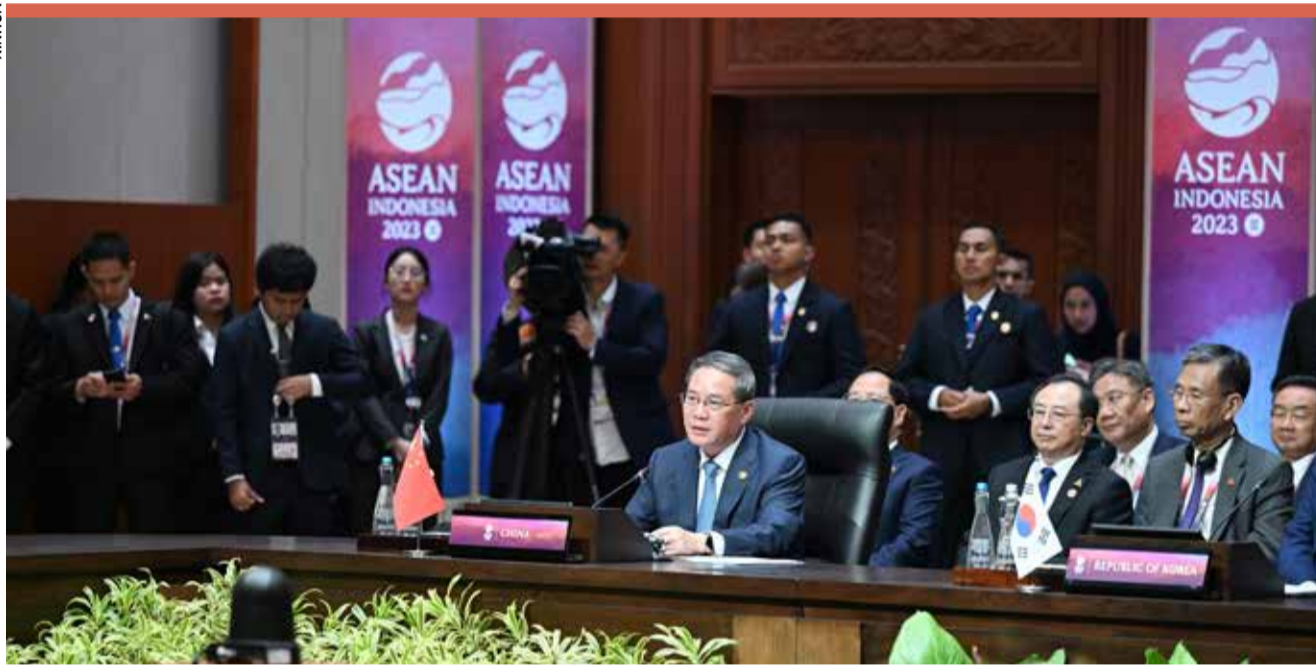
ASEAN SUMMIT

Premier Li on charm offensive as rivals protest Beijing's aggression at sea

IN talks with Southeast Asian leaders yesterday in the Indonesian capital, Chinese Premier Li Qiang underscored his country's importance as the world's second-biggest economy and as the top trading partner of the region.

Countering renewed alarm over Beijing's aggression in the disputed South China Sea, Li cited China's long history of friendship with Southeast Asia, including joint efforts to confront the coronavirus pandemic and how both sides have settled differences through dialogue.

"As long as we keep to the right path, no matter what storm may come, China-ASEAN cooperation will be as firm as ever and press ahead against all odds," Li said. "We have preserved peace



Chinese Premier Li Qiang attends the 26th ASEAN Plus Three (APT) Summit in Jakarta

and tranquility in East Asia in a world fraught with turbulence and change."

But rival claimant sta-

tes in the South China Sea, which belong to the 10-nation bloc of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations,

have protested China's aggressive moves to fortify its vast territorial claims in the strategic sea passage. A

new Chinese map set off a wave of protests from other countries' leaders, who say it shows Beijing's expansive claims encroaching into their coastal waters.

Philippine President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. has expressed his alarm over recent combativeness in the disputed waters. In early August, a Chinese coast guard ship used a water cannon to try to block a Philippine navy-operated boat that was bringing supplies to Filipino forces in the disputed Second Thomas Shoal.

"We do not seek conflict, but it is our duty as citizens and as leaders to always rise to meet any challenge to our sovereignty, to our sovereign rights, and our maritime jurisdictions in the South China Sea," Marcos told fellow leaders in an ASEAN-only meeting Tuesday.

A copy of Marcos' remarks during ASEAN's hour-long meeting with Qiang yesterday issued to journa-

lists showed the Philippine president fired a veiled critique but did not raise any specific aggressions in the disputed sea.

The Philippines "continues to uphold the primacy of the 1982 U.N. Convention on the Law of the Sea as the framework within which all activities in the seas and oceans are conducted," Marcos said in the meeting. "We once again reaffirm our commitment to the rule of law and peaceful settlement of disputes."

In 2016, an arbitration tribunal in The Hague, Netherlands, set up under that United Nations convention, ruled that China's vast territorial claims in the South China Sea based on historical grounds have no legal basis.

China, a full dialogue partner of ASEAN, did not participate in the arbitration sought in 2013 by the Philippines, rejected the 2016 ruling, and continues to defy it.

China, Taiwan and some ASEAN member states — Brunei, Malaysia, the Philippines and Vietnam — have been locked for decades in an increasingly tense territorial standoff in the South China Sea, where a bulk of global trade transits.

It's also become a delicate frontline in the U.S.-China rivalry.

Washington does not lay any claim to the offshore region but has deployed its warships and fighters to undertake what it says are freedom of navigation and overflight patrols. China has warned the U.S. not to meddle in what it says is a purely Asian dispute. **MDT/AP**

PREMIER TAKES A TEST RIDE ON INDONESIA'S NEW HIGH-SPEED RAILWAY

CHINESE Premier Li Qiang took a test ride yesterday on Southeast Asia's first high-speed railway, which connects two Indonesian cities as part of China's Belt and Road infrastructure initiative.

Li is visiting Jakarta for two days of talks with leaders of the Association of Southeast Asia Nations and other countries.

The \$7.3 billion rail project, funded largely by China, connects Jakarta and Bandung, the heavily populated capital of West Java province. It is to begin commercial operations on Oct. 1 and will cut travel time between the two cities from the current three hours to about 40 minutes.

Li rode the train from Halim station in eastern Jakarta to the next station in West Java's Karawang city, a 40-kilometer distance that took about 11 minutes. He was accompanied by Indonesian officials including the coordinating minister for maritime and investment, Luhut Binsar Pandjaitan.

"This is clear proof of modern, high-quality cooperation between the two countries," Pandjaitan said.

Li then returned on the same train to Halim for the East Asia Summit in Jakarta, where he is attending meetings with Asian and Western leaders, including U.S. Vice President Kamala Harris, Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida, Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau and Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov.



This aerial photo taken on July 20, 2023 shows Tegalluar Station of Jakarta-Bandung High-Speed Railway and nearby scenery in Bandung

Construction of the rail line began in 2015. It was originally expected to begin operations in 2019, but was delayed by disputes over land acquisition, environmental issues and the COVID-19 pandemic. It was planned to cost 66.7 trillion rupiah (\$4.3 billion) but the amount ballooned to 113 trillion rupiah (\$7.3 billion).

The 142.3-kilometer railway was constructed by PT Kereta Cepat Indonesia-China, known as PT KCIC, a joint venture between an Indonesian consortium of four state-owned companies and China Railway International Co. Ltd. The joint venture said the trains will be the fastest in Southeast Asia with speeds of up to 350 kilometers per hour.

The trains were modified for Indonesia's tropical climate and are equipped with a safety system that can respond to earthquakes, floods and other emergency conditions.

The rail deal was signed in October 2015 after Indonesia selected China over Japan in competitive bidding. It was financed with a loan from the China Development Bank for 75% of the cost. The remaining 25% came from the consortium's own funds.

The project is part of a planned 750-kilometer high-speed train line that would cut across four provinces on the main island of Java and end in the country's second-largest city, Surabaya.

China is Indonesia's largest trade and investment partner. Southeast Asia's largest economy wants a larger role in supplying nickel and other raw materials for China's fast-growing electric car market. The nickel smelting plants in Indonesia are part of China's Belt and Road transnational development program. **MDT/AP**

LI URGES JAPAN TO HANDLE NUCLEAR-CONTAMINATED WATER RESPONSIBLY

CHINESE Premier Li Qiang clarified here yesterday China's position on the issue of the discharge of nuclear-contaminated water from Japan's Fukushima nuclear plant, and called on Japan to handle the matter responsibly. Addressing the 26th ASEAN Plus Three Summit, Li said the disposal of nuclear-con-

taminated water concerns the global marine ecological environment and people's health. He called on Japan to faithfully fulfill its international obligations, fully consult with its neighbors and related stakeholders, and handle the nuclear-contaminated water in a responsible manner. **XINHUA**

ANALYSIS | NORTH KOREA

Will he go by plane or train? How Kim may travel to Russia for a meeting with Putin

KIM TONG-HYUNG & HYUNG-JIN KIM, SEOUL

AP FILE PHOTO

NORTH Korean leader Kim Jong Un's possible trip to Russia might be like his first one in 2019 — a rattling, 20-hour ride aboard a green-and-yellow armored train that is a quirky symbol of his family's dynastic leadership.

In what would be his first foreign travel since the start of the pandemic, United States officials say Kim may visit Russia this month for a meeting with Russian President Vladimir Putin, possibly to advance talks on North Korean arms sales to refill Russian reserves drained by its war on Ukraine.

According to U.S. reports, a potential venue for their meeting is the eastern city of Vladivostok, the site of their first meeting in April 2019, where Putin is expected to attend the annual Eastern Economic Forum that takes place on the campus of the Far Eastern Federal University from Sunday to Wednesday.

How Kim, the 39-year-old authoritarian leader, would get there is a focus of media attention.

While Kim has used planes more frequently than his famously flight-averse father, he has also used his family's armored train for his previous meetings with Putin, Chinese President Xi Jinping, and then-U.S. President Donald Trump in 2018 and 2019, reviving an old symbol that has long been part of the Kim dynasty's lore.

Putin, for his part, now prefers to avoid airplanes and travel on a special armored train since his decision to invade Ukraine in early 2022, according to Gleb Karakulov, a defector from Putin's secretive elite security service.

Kim's earlier meeting with Putin required a daylong trip that began at the North Korean capital of Pyongyang and chugged over the country's aging railways along the eastern coast before crossing a border river into Russia.

Kim went to China four



times from 2018 to 2019 to meet Xi — two of them by his train and the other two by his private Russian-made jet. In June 2018, he borrowed a Chinese Boeing 747 plane to fly to Singapore for his first summit with Trump, reportedly because his jet was deemed unsafe. For his second meeting with Trump in February 2019 in Hanoi, Vietnam, Kim took his train for a two-and-a-half day trip.

Kim's meetings with Xi and Putin surrounded his high-stakes diplomacy with Trump, where he attempted to leverage his nukes for badly needed economic benefits. The Kim-Trump diplomacy eventually collapsed after their Hanoi meeting.

Since closing his country's borders in early 2020 to guard against the COVID-19 pandemic, Kim hasn't met any foreign leader.

Kim's possible second trip to Russia could signal a restart of a summit-driven diplomacy and may be followed by a trip to China for a meeting with Xi, said Yang Moo-jin, president of the University of North Korean Studies in South Korea.

Kim's father, Kim Jong Il, made about a dozen trips abroad during his 17-year rule, almost all to China and all by train. North Korea's state media said that Kim Jong Il died of a heart attack during a train trip in 2011.

According to an account published in 2002 by Konstantin Pulikovsky, a Russian official who accompanied Kim Jong Il on a three-week trip to Moscow a year earlier, the train carried cases of expensive French wine and passengers could feast on live lobster and pork barbeque.

The train's most important feature, however, would be security. According to South Korean media reports, North Korea has 90 special carriages in total and operates three trains in tandem when a leader is traveling — an advance train to check the rails, the train with the leader and his immediate entourage, and a third train behind for everyone else. High-tech communication equipment and flat-screen TVs are installed so a leader can give orders and receive briefings.

A life-size mock-up of one of the train's carriages is on permanent display at a mausoleum on the outskirts of Pyongyang where Kim Jong Il and his state-founding father, Kim Il Sung, lie in state.

It's not immediately clear whether Kim Jong Un would choose to travel to Russia on a train again when he seems equally comfortable with flying. When Kim jetted off to the northeastern Chinese city of Dalian in May 2018 for his second meeting with Xi, he became the first North Korean leader to

fly abroad in 32 years. The last time a North Korean leader had publicly gone abroad by air had been Kim Il Sung's flight to the Soviet Union in 1986.

Schooled for several years in Switzerland,

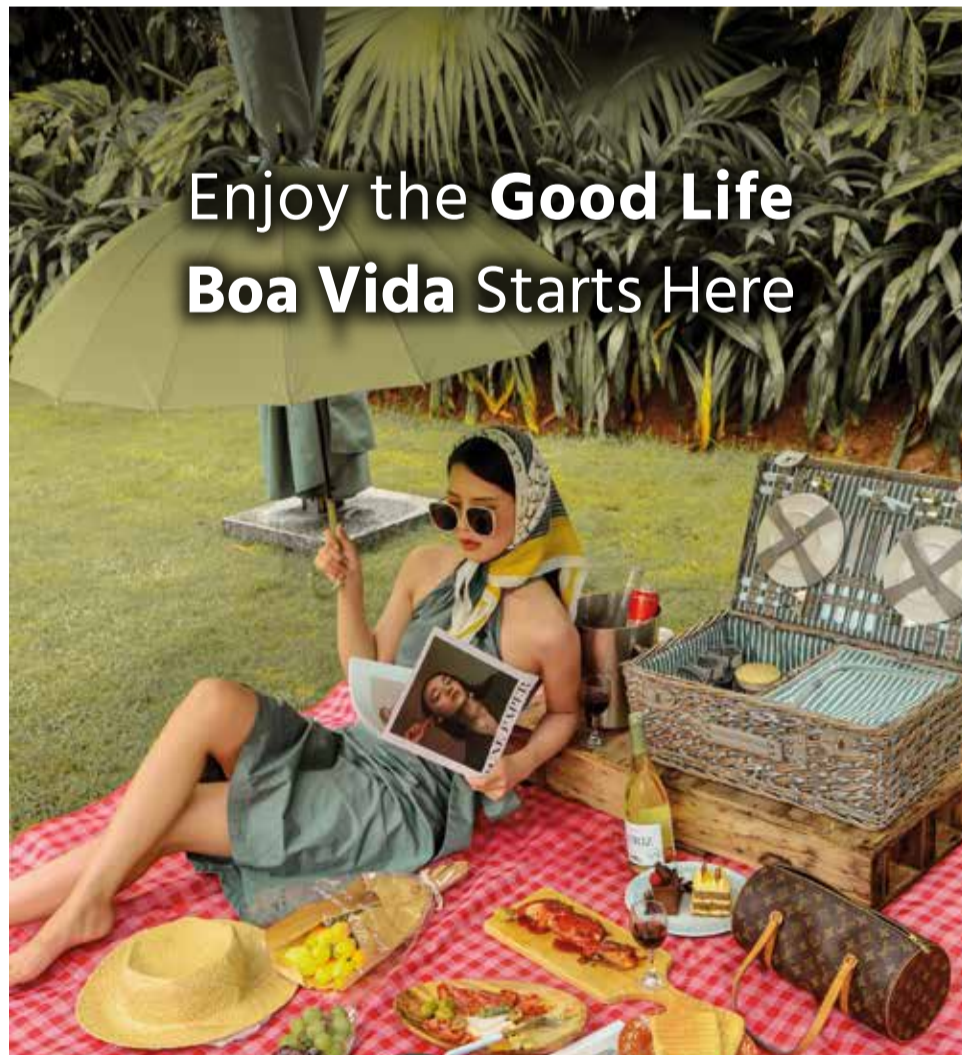
Kim Jong Un is believed to have traveled by air often as a teenager. Since taking office upon his father's death in December 2011, Kim had also occasionally flown inside North Korea. Kim's official

plane is a remodeled version of the Soviet-made IL-62. North Korea calls it "Chammae-1," named after the goshawk, North Korea's national bird.

South Korean media say the plane can fly at a maximum speed of 900 kilometers per hour and carry about 200 people. Its maximum flight range is about 9,200 kilometers but it has reportedly never flown that far. State media said Kim was aboard Chammae-1 when he reviewed air force planes taking part in combat aerobatics contests and inspected construction work in Pyongyang.

Some analysts are skeptical whether Kim's meeting with Putin would happen next week on the sidelines of the Eastern Economic Forum because he and his predecessors have preferred one-on-one summitry when making their rare trips abroad. MDT/AP

AD



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INDIA

Modi uses the G20 summit to advertise his global reach, court voters at home

SHEIKH SAALIQA
NEW DELHI

MAJOR roads in New Delhi are teeming with giant posters and billboards announcing India's presidency of this week's summit of the Group of 20 nations. And one leader's picture — smiling benignly from every traffic circle — stands out from the rest: Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

Modi is also on the front page of major newspapers, and Indian TV channels are flashing his picture, accompanied by the Hindi word "Vishwaguru" — a leader of the world. In public speeches, his ministers are touting him as a steward of a surging India.

It is an unabashed homage to the populist prime minister and staunch Hindu nationalist, who is celebrated by his supporters and by his party as someone who is leading a developing nation of more than 1.4 billion people to a bright new future.

But this advertising blitz also displays the personal ambitions of Modi, who in the past has used the optics of New Delhi's growing geopolitical clout and foreign policy triumphs to consolidate power. Experts say while India's presidency of the summit represents a moment of pride for the country, Modi's government has also used it to market the leader's image and elevate his party's prospects ahead of a national vote scheduled for next year.

"Modi is positioning himself as a global statesman, a global thought leader ... and the voice of a rising India. And all of this, I believe, is designed to feed into the Modi personality cult, which is a very expertly created, very well marketed cult, designed to appeal to a demographic which will be very swayed by these promises of rising India," said Sagarika Ghose, a political analyst.

The Sept. 9-10 summit, which groups the world's 19 wealthiest countries plus



the European Union, is particularly important for Modi ahead of the 2024 election, and a strong show will allow his ruling Hindu nationalist party to project power domestically.

Ahead of the summit, historical monuments, airports and major landmarks are projecting this year's G20 logo — an image of a globe inside a lotus, using the colors of the Indian flag. The opposition says it is no coincidence that the lotus is also the election symbol of Modi's Bharatiya Janata Party.

Indian officials have also conducted events showcasing India's contributions to the world, including yoga and a highly successful government-run digital transactions system. Schools have been told to hold quiz competitions regarding the G20. And Modi himself, during his periodic radio talk show called "Maan Ki Baat," or "Straight from the Heart," said "the month of September is going to witness the potential of India."

Meanwhile, his ministers have made it clear that the prime minister is to be credited for the summit.

"If G20 has come to the country during his (Modi's) time and it is completed with success, then he must get the credit," his powerful home minister, Amit Shah, told a wire service in February.

The rotating presidency of the G20 is mostly symbolic and the summit's success

often depends on a final communique. This time, however, none of the several meetings held in India has yet produced one, with deadlock persisting over wording on Russia's war in Ukraine.

Nonetheless, the Modi government has gone into high gear, promoting India as a bridge to the developing world and arguing it is well-placed to tackle issues of climate change, terrorism and the debt crisis. His administration is also highlighting India's position as a growing power courted by major Western countries, particularly after U.S. President Joe Biden's state visit in June.

Along the way, Modi's government has also presented him as the man responsible for India's economic successes, including its advancements in solar power, digital payments technology and its recent feat of making a successful uncrewed landing near the south polar region of the moon, which is seen by Indians as a major foreign policy triumph.

India's foreign policy has seen significant strides under Modi, but he remains a divisive figure at home, with critics calling him an enabler of assaults on India's democratic and religious freedoms and its independent institutions. And even though his government has managed to finely balance its position on Russia's war

in Ukraine, the resurgent opposition says it has done very little to counter a belligerent China after a border dispute between the two Asian powers led to deadly clashes in 2020.

Still, Modi enjoys massive popularity among his supporters who see him as a leader taking India to the global stage.

"This is the first time the world has come to know that India can take a stand for herself. India will do what is in the interest of India," said Ajay Sahai Jasra, a media professional who is a Modi voter.

Milan Vaishnav, director of the South Asia Program at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, said "the transition that Modi is trying to effect is to turn India into a big and important country," marking an "important shift ... in the nature of domestic politics in India."

"I do think there is a general sense among the populace that India is reclaiming an important leading role on the global stage," Vaishnav said.

Globally, though, this sentiment is quite nascent.

A recent Pew Research Centre survey of over 30,000 people across 24 countries, conducted between February and May, showed 40% saying they lacked confidence in Modi to do the right thing in world affairs, while 37% were confident that he would. **MDT/AP**

this day in history

1992 TROOPS KILL 24 AT ANC RALLY



At least 24 people have been killed and 150 injured when soldiers fired on an African National Congress demonstration on the border of Ciskei in South Africa.

The march was organised to demand an end to the Ciskeian military government of Brigadier Joshua Gqozo and the re-absorption of the so-called black homeland into South Africa.

The protest - led by ANC secretary-general Cyril Ramaphosa and attended by 50,000 people - began at a stadium in King William's Town, and then headed towards the Ciskeian capital of Bisho.

Brigadier Gqozo had warned he would meet force with even greater force, and his troops and police were on standby at the border.

When the demonstrators tried to cross into Ciskei, soldiers opened fire and continued firing indiscriminately into the crowd for about five minutes.

After two volleys of machine gun fire, the troops also fired rifle grenades into the gathering, spreading fear and panic among the protestors.

It has been reported that four young men were shot in the back as they attempted to run away from the firing.

A statement from Brigadier Gqozo said that his soldiers had been fired upon first and their action was in self-defence.

But a statement from the ANC denied the claims, saying the first shots were fired by the troops.

"At no time were the lives of the Ciskeian troops in danger... No warning was issued, and no attempts were made to disperse the crowd using non-lethal means," it said.

The South African foreign minister, Pik Botha, said that the ANC knew the march would end in violence.

"They knew people would be shot - they wanted people to be shot," he said in a TV interview.

The massacre seems certain to damage the negotiating process in the development of a new multi-racial and democratic constitution for South Africa.

Courtesy BBC News

IN CONTEXT

Ciskei was one of 10 "tribal homelands" to which all blacks were to be assigned so they could not claim to be citizens of South Africa. They were a product of apartheid and only Pretoria recognised them as independent states.

Their removal was one of the ANC's key demands before a new democratic constitution could be created in South Africa.

Negotiations between President de Klerk and the ANC did continue after the massacre, and in April 1994 Nelson Mandela, the head of the ANC, became the first black President of South Africa.

YOUR STARS

ARIES
Mar. 21-Apr. 19
You should get out and meet new people today. You won't be able to keep a secret. Don't be too eager to give a piece of your mind or even your opinion today.

TAURUS
Apr. 20-May. 20
Make sure to arrange in advance to spend quality time together. Your hard work and dedication will pay off, so stick to your guns and do your job well.

GEMINI
May. 21-Jun. 21
Secret enemies may be holding a grudge that you're not even aware of. Visit friends or relatives who have been confirmed. You must be careful not to reveal secrets or get involved in gossip.

CANCER
Jun. 22-Jul. 22
Don't let anyone take credit for a job you did. You can convince others to follow suit. You will accomplish the most in the work environment today.

LEO
Jul. 23-Aug. 22
Do things for them but don't allow them to make unreasonable requests. Listen to a good friend who is truly looking out for your best interests.

VIRGO
Aug. 23-Sep. 22
Rely on yourself and you will look good to superiors. Be sure to get involved in self improvement programs that will bring you in contact with interesting people.

LIBRA
Sep. 23-Oct. 22
You are apt to meet someone special on your journey. You must take care of health problems that have been lingering. You are best to listen for the time being.

SCORPIO
Oct. 23-Nov. 21
If everyone wants to do their own thing, let them. You can accomplish a lot if you direct your thoughts toward starting your own small business on the side.

SAGITTARIUS
Nov. 22-Dec. 21
Do your own thing. You need to make your environment a better place, with more comforts and a better entertainment center. Get promises in writing or you will be disappointed.

CAPRICORN
Dec. 22-Jan. 19
Get on with business. You are in a high cycle where travel, education, and creative endeavors are concerned. Don't allow your lover to take advantage of your good nature.

AQUARIUS
Jan. 20-Feb. 18
Your ability to organize and get everyone together will enhance your popularity and bring interest from potential mates. You will be inclined to make unwise investment choices.

PISCES
Feb. 19-Mar. 20
Relationships will become stronger. Frustrations and limitations could cause anxiety today. Don't hesitate to present your unique ideas.

The Born Loser by Chip Sansom



SUDOKU

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

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

WEATHER

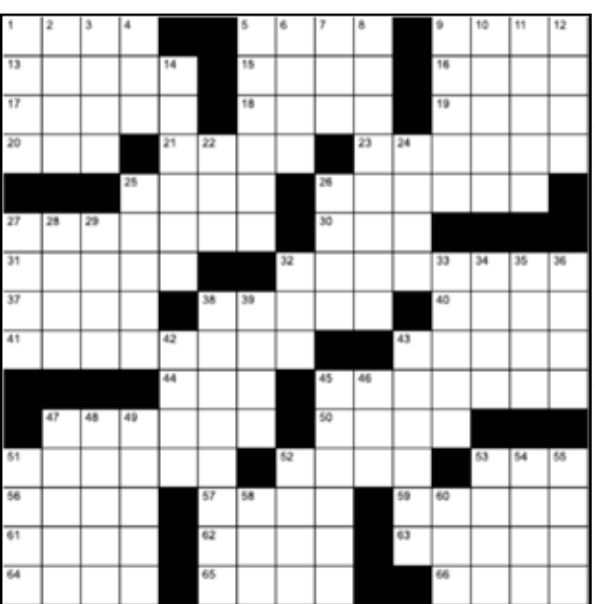
	MIN	MAX	CONDITION
CHINA			
Beijing	22	32	cloudy
Changchun	17	31	fine
Chengdu	23	32	cloudy
Chongqing	27	36	fine
Fuzhou	23	29	rain
Guangzhou	24	29	rain
Guiyang	17	27	cloudy
Haikou	26	33	thunderstorms
Hangzhou	24	31	rain
Harbin	17	29	fine
Hefei	22	32	fine
Nanjing	23	31	cloudy
Shanghai	25	31	fine
Taipei	26	28	rain
Wuhan	24	34	fine
Hong Kong	27	30	rain
WORLD			
Moscow	9	17	overcast
Frankfurt	14	30	fine
Paris	20	34	fine
London	18	32	fine
New York	24	34	overcast

CROSSWORDS

ACROSS 1- Beaver creations; 5- Cask wood; 8- Boxer Max; 12- One of the Baldwins; 13- Old French expression meaning "goodbye"; 15- High hair style; 16- Long ago; 17- Swellings; 18- Whirl; 19- Art of writing in shorthand; 22- Mens ___ (criminal intent); 23- Proverb ending?; 24- Monetary unit of Spain; 26- Stem; 29- Debt that remains unpaid; 31- Dip in liquid; 32- Pending; 34- Become liable for; 36- Token taker; 38- Boarded; 40- Lean; 41- Bowling alley button; 43- Tree with red flowers; 45- Bambi's aunt; 46- Skunk feature; 48- Beyond; 50- Like Nash's lama; 51- French article; 52- Gal of song; 54- Musing; 61- Stuff; 63- Water wheel; 64- Draft classification; 65- Kofi ___ Annan; 66- One way to play; 67- Deli side; 68- Antlered animal; 69- Night bird; 70- Clanton foe;

DOWN 1- 24 hour periods; 2- Bunches; 3- Nothing more than; 4- Attractive route; 5- Redolence; 6- Verdi opera; 7- Retain; 8- Student's conveyance; 9- Draws near; 10- Singer Adams; 11- Author Jaffe; 13- Fishing; 14- Doorkeeper; 20- Island of Hawaii; 21- Cosmonaut Gagarin; 25- 1996 Tony-winning musical; 26- Actor's parts; 27- Office of Peter, James, and John; 28- Fur scarf; 29- Hilo hi; 30- Debris; 31- Georgia, once; Abbr.; 33- Follower's suffix; 35- Genetic messenger; 37- Small gull; 39- Kind of medicine; 42- Bound; 44- Disaster ___; 47- Backup procedure; 49- Seep through, biologically; 52- Great quantity; 53- Commedia dell' ___; 55- It's used to walk the dog; 56- Took a blood sample; 57- Unit of currency in Iran and Yemen; 58- To Live and Die ___; 59- In the neighborhood; 60- Stare in awe; 62- Damage;

Yesterday's solution



Crossword puzzles provided by BestCrosswords.com

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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	
Commission Against Corruption (CCAC) 28326 300	
IAM 28 387 333	
Tourism 28 333 000	
Airport 59 888 88	

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Paul Giamatti and Da'Vine Joy Randolph (right) on the set of their film "The Holdovers"

FILM

ALEXANDER PAYNE MAKES 'EM LIKE THEY USED TO: FALL MOVIE PREVIEW

JAKE COYLE, NEW YORK

THE great films of the 1970s have long loomed in the imagination of filmmakers raised during one of the most fertile periods of American movies. But Alexander Payne wanted to take it a step further.

Payne's latest film, "The Holdovers," isn't just set in 1970, it seeks to imbibe the humanistic spirit of films like "The Last Detail," "Harold and Maude," "The Landlord" and "Paper Moon" — all movies he screened for his cast and crew.

"We were very fully making a '70s movie," Payne says, recently speaking by phone from his desk in Omaha, Nebraska.

Payne, 62, shot "The Holdovers," set at a New England boarding school, largely with filmmaking equipment and camera lenses from that period. He mixed it in mono. "We were trying to play the exercise of: We are in 1970 making this movie," he says.

"The Holdovers," which Focus Features will release Oct. 27 and expand on Nov. 10, is Payne's first film in six years and it's one of his best. Payne, the filmmaker of "Election," "Sideways" and "The Descendants," has long made "the kind of films they don't make anymore": smart, funny, melancholic

dramas for adults. And yet he's kept making them. After decades of making contemporary films that in some way evoke a '70s sensibility of cinema, he's finally made the genuine article.

"I was just trying to replicate the experience of the movies I love as much as possible," says Payne. "I don't think it makes the movie quaint. I hope it lends it the warmth of nostalgia, the warmth of a lost time, maybe even some traces of memory."

"The Holdovers" reunites Payne with Paul Giamatti nearly two decades after the actor's memorable, merlot-loathing breakthrough performance in "Sideways." This time, Giamatti plays a curmudgeonly Barton Academy classics teacher named Paul Hunham tasked to stay at school with a handful of kids without family plans over the Christmas break.

The set-up could be broad: a gang of outcasts and troublemakers sneaking joints while the widely loathed Hunham chases them down the halls. And while there is some of that, Payne pares the group down to Hunham, Angus (Dominic Sessa), a bright student who's one mishap away from being sent to a lesser school (and thus likely to Vietnam) and Mary (Da'Vi-

ne Joy Randolph), a grieving school cook whose son has recently died in the war.

Something remarkably tender and stirring follows. Digging into each character's life, "The Holdovers" ruminates on privilege in class and race, while steadily building an anti-authoritarian streak for the much-espoused supposedly high-minded ideals of Barton.

If Giamatti's "Sideways" character — a lonely unpublished writer with a manuscript no one wants to read — was in need of a road trip to jostle him out of a rut, his Hunham is likewise due for some self-reflection and maybe a little encouragement.

For Payne, it was a long-overdue reunion.

"I wanted to work with that guy again for 20 years," he says. "I was waiting for the right thing — and created it. I told (screenwriter) David Hemingson: 'We're writing for Paul Giamatti. That's who we're writing for.'"

"He's just the best actor," adds Payne. "He's the finest actor. Not casting aspersions on others, I just think there's nothing he cannot do."

When Payne screened "The Holdovers" for buyers at last year's Toronto International Film Festival, it prompted heated interest. Focus snapped it

up for \$30 million — far more than is typical — a sign of the indie distributor's belief in the movie as a crowd-pleaser and an awards contender. The three lead actors are likely to be in the Oscar mix.

But while Giamatti and Randolph are well-known performers, Cessa is appearing in his first film. After sifting through some 800 submissions, Payne felt like he still hadn't found someone to play Angus. He and the casting director decided to call up the schools they were going to be shooting in to see if their drama departments had anyone to recommend.

"One of the schools we were going to be shooting was Deerfield Academy in Western Massachusetts. We called up the drama teacher who said, 'Oh, yes, we have quite a few who would be happy to try out for your little movie.' And Dominic was one of them."

Cessa was a senior when he shot "The Holdovers." He hadn't acted in front of a camera before, though you'd be hard-pressed to tell by the naturalness of his presence on screen.

"What you see is some people are born with it. You see all these people in New York taking classes on film acting. This guy can just do it," Payne says. "I learned a long time ago that the

best actors are also the best technically. From day one, man, this guy could hit his marks and do his dialogue backward and forward. He's built to do it. And then you see him go toe-for-toe with Paul Giamatti, give him a run for his money."

Payne's last film was his biggest budget gambit: "Downsizing," a sci-fi satire of an overpopulated Earth in which people can be made miniature. After "Downsizing" struggled at the box office and found mixed reviews, Payne dabbled in a number of projects (he had been attached to direct, among others, "The Menu" and "Landscapers"), but "The Holdovers" is the one that stuck.

It started for him years earlier after seeing a similarly plotted 1930s French film by Marcel Pagnol called "Merlusse." Payne, who had written all of his films except "Nebraska," didn't feel he had the right personal experience. (He attended an all-boys Jesuit day school in Omaha, Nebraska.) Instead he turned to Hemingson and "beveled the edges" of the witty and soulful script he turned in.

But as long-term and '70s-oriented as making "The Holdovers" was, it struck Payne as a contemporary story, too. "Trump years and Nixon years," he says.

"Gravity led me and my collaborators to 1970 for some reason. I can't necessarily articulate it," Payne says. "It's obviously not a message film or any crap like that. As Marx would say, all films are political films." **MDT/AP**

BASKETBALL WORLD CUP

Germany holds off Latvia and will next play the USA in the semifinals

TIM REYNOLDS, MANILA

GERMANY will play the United States in the semifinals of the Basketball World Cup, a rematch of an exhibition matchup from earlier this summer where the Americans needed a big rally to win.

Franz Wagner scored 16 points and Germany — the last unbeaten team left in the World Cup — held off Latvia 81-79 in a quarterfinal game yesterday, pulling away in the fourth quarter of what had been a back-and-forth matchup for the first 30 minutes.

Next up: The U.S. on Friday for a spot in Sunday's gold medal game. The U.S. beat Germany 99-91 on Aug. 20 in Abu Dhabi, rallying from a 16-point second-half deficit and needing an 18-0 run down the stretch to take control.

That game was a scrimmage, meaningless, the final tune-up before the World Cup.



Friday's game will be very, very different.

"We set ourselves high goals

and it's going to be a challenge," Germany's Johannes Thiemann said. "But with those

goals in mind, we have to beat teams like the U.S. And hopefully we're able to do that."

Andreas Obst scored 13 for Germany (6-0), which survived on a night where Dennis Schroder was 4 for 26 from the floor and scored nine points.

Arturs Zagars scored 24 and Davis Bertans scored 20 for Latvia (4-2).

"All I want to say is that I'm extremely proud of this team, battling every single game," said Bertans, who took a deep 3-pointer for the lead with about 5 seconds left — then watched it hit the rim and bounce away.

With the win, Germany is assured of no worse than its second-best finish in basketball's top two international events — the World Cup and the Olympics. The Germans were third in the 2002 world championships, an event now called the World Cup, and have never placed better than seventh at an Olympics.

Latvia — which has been without the injured Kristaps Porzingis — can still finish as high as fifth in its first World Cup appearance. It'll play Italy in Thursday's consolation playoffs, then play for either fifth- or seventh-place on Saturday.

"They're the best team in Europe nobody talks about," Germany coach Gordie Herbert said of Latvia. "And they're missing a couple guys, too. They play great basketball, team basketball. They shoot it, well-coached, I give them a lot of credit."

The Americans rolled past Italy 100-63 in the quarterfinals on Tuesday. They took yesterday off, using part of the day to visit the Manila American Cemetery and Memorial — even taking part in a brief ceremony to commemorate the thousands of World War II soldiers who are buried or memorialized there.

They'll resume practice today, fully aware of the challenge Germany presented them with about three weeks ago.

"I just beat Latvia. Germany's in the semifinal of the World Cup," Germany's Moritz Wagner said. "Don't ask me about the USA. I'm going to enjoy this and then I'm going to think about the USA tomorrow." **MDT/AP**

AD

CEM NOTICE

Temporary traffic arrangements for traffic lights suspension due to power transformation work

To cooperate with CEM's power transformation work, the traffic lights at the junction of Avenida do Almirante Lacerda and Avenida do Ouvidor Arriaga, the junction of Avenida do Almirante Lacerda and Avenida do Coronel Mesquita, and the junction of Avenida do Ouvidor Arriaga and Estrada de Coelho do Amaral will be suspended on 8 September (Friday) from 9:30 am to 1:30 pm. Please be aware of the arrangements.



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OPINION

Multipolar World

Jorge Costa Oliveira



'THERE IS GREAT DISORDER UNDER HEAVEN, THE SITUATION IS EXCELLENT.'

For decades, China has experienced a serious imbalance in its real estate sector. "Houses are for living in, not for speculation," said Chinese President Xi Jinping in 2017. However, stagnant national stock markets and bank deposits yielding trifle interest, made savings flow into real estate investments. Only this leadership restructured the real estate sector in 2020.

For decades, banks provided credit generously to real estate development companies and large SOE, often without proper credit risk analysis. Additionally, government directives were often given to facilitate credit as a macroeconomic policy tool. Only in 2016-2017 were harsh instructions issued that there would be consequences for bank credit poor management.

For decades, provincial governments and their agencies financed themselves through land sales and concessions to major real estate developers, becoming entirely dependent on these revenues.

For decades, significant investments were made in critical infrastructure of all kinds that transformed China and laid the foundation for unparalleled economic development.

For decades, corruption was rampant to the point that the fight against corruption became the Chinese Communist Party's (CCP) primary battle, especially after Xi, prompted by an article in Bloomberg (June 29, 2012) about his family's wealth, initiated a historic clean-up that continues to this day.

For decades, massive migration from rural areas to cities created problems of family reunification and social issues for hundreds of millions of citizens.

For decades, there was an assumption of an endless "industrial reserve army" made up of internal migrants. Even after demographers warned of the inevitable population reduction, with low fertility rates due to the one-child policy and social changes that led couples and women to prefer having fewer children, this being exacerbated by the rapid aging of the population and demographic shifts. The limit was changed to two children and later to three, but the change in mentality had already taken place.

For decades, growth was primarily driven by the private sector, responsible for 87% of urban employment, 88% of exports, and 65% of fixed asset investment. The private sector, for various reasons (losses due to COVID-19 restrictions, emphasis on "common prosperity," crackdown on digital and education companies), now has less confidence, resulting in increased savings and reduced investment and consumption. Campaigns against the private sector have ended, but the damage to private companies' confidence will take time to repair.

For decades, the Chinese government significantly invested in military weaponry and equipment, in line with the national economic growth, and also in response to the perception of the US as a threat (and vice versa). However, the magnitude of military growth and its assertiveness in the South China Sea have alarmed neighboring countries and beyond.

The past decade has seen China openly compete with the US for global supremacy. However, China still heavily relies on foreign investment and technology, resources largely coming from the US and Europe, destinations for more than 50% of Chinese exports.

In the last decade, we have also witnessed a concentration of power within the CCP and the subjugation of everything and everyone to the Party, as well as the consolidation of power in its Secretary-General, with the removal of the two-term limit.

After decades of unprecedented economic growth, a slowdown now seems inevitable. If the slowdown is severe, it could jeopardize the informal social contract between the CCP and the Chinese population – political power monopoly in exchange for continuous prosperity.

Storms and "tempestuous seas," as Xi has recently mentioned, seem to be on the horizon. To paraphrase Mao Zedong: "There is great disorder under heaven." Let us hope that the Chinese leadership has the ability to turn the situation into an "excellent" one.

AFRICA CLIMATE SUMMIT LINKS 'UNFAIR' DEBT BURDEN WITH CALLS TO MAKE CONTINENT'S GREEN ASSETS PAY OFF

THE BUZZ

Climate change is "relentlessly eating away" at Africa's economic progress and it's time to have a global conversation about a carbon tax on polluters, Kenya's president declared yesterday [Macau time] as the first Africa Climate Summit got underway.

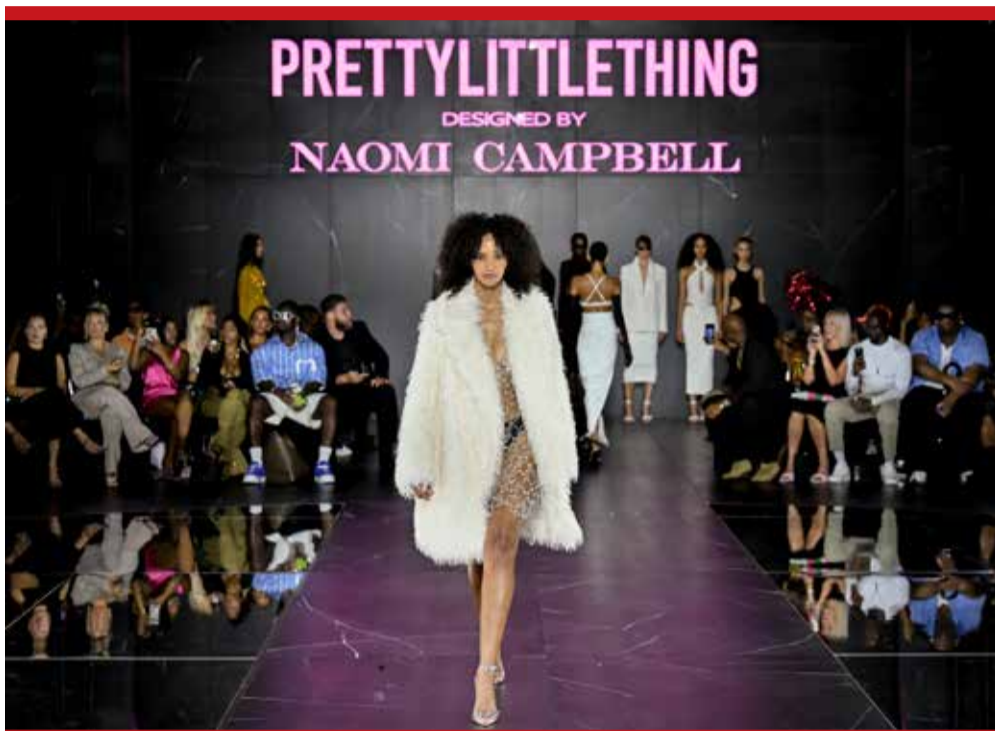
"Those who produce the garbage refuse to pay their bills," President William Ruto, a host of the summit, said to an audience that included senior officials from China, the United States and the European Union — some of the world's largest emitters of greenhouse gases.

The rapidly growing African continent of more than 1.3 billion

people is losing 5% to 15% of its gross domestic product growth every year to the widespread impacts of climate change, according to Ruto. It's a source of deep frustration in the resource-rich region that contributes by far the least to global warming.

He and other leaders urged reforms to the global financial structures that have left African nations paying about five times more to borrow money than others, worsening the debt crisis for many. Africa has more than 30 of the world's most indebted countries, Kenya's Cabinet secretary for the environment, Soi-pan Tuya, said.

AP PHOTO



NAOMI CAMPBELL STRUTS THE RUNWAY IN SHIMMERY SILVER IN NEW FAST FASHION COLLAB

JOHN CARUCCI & EVAN AGOSTINI, NEW YORK

NAOMI Campbell was a vision in shiny metallic silver as she took the runway with her trademark supermodel swagger to display her collaboration with PrettyLittleThing, the fast fashion brand.

The runway show at Cipriani Broadway in lower Manhattan, kicking off New York Fashion Week, featured a cascade of models in figure-hugging designs embedded with crys-

tals or made of sparkly metallics, many with plunging necklines. But the highlight was Campbell herself, age 53, who closed the show in a sleek, clinging silver gown, her long tresses swaying behind her.

The former supermodel worked on the collection with two emerging designers — Victor Anate, based in Nigeria, and New York-based, Jamaican-born designer Edvin Thompson, of the Theophilio label, both of whom accompanied her on the runway for a bow.

Lest anyone think strutting the runway has become easy for the pioneering supermodel with decades of experience, Campbell said it was "nerve-wracking to do that walk — on every level." But she added in an interview that she was deeply proud of how the collaboration came together. "This is what I wanted," she said.

Campbell deflected criticism that she was ignoring the issue of sustainability by partnering with a fast fashion brand. But she added: "It's a journey of change. Sustainability will come. It will have to."

Guests at the show included actors Tommy Dorfman, Emily Ratajkowski and Julia Fox.

"I'm expecting sexy and confident and powerful," Dorfman said before the show. "I always think it's great when amazing artists, like Naomi, can come on board and give her creative vision to a brand, and we all get to benefit from it."

Campbell acknowledged that walking with her high-profile friends present felt intimidating. "I'm always nervous when I walk," she said. "But I was extra, extra extra nervous today." MDT/AP

AP PHOTO



AP PHOTO



France Interpol is turning 100 with a mixed legacy — as a misconstrued crime-fighting organization, a network that merges police data from authoritarian states and democracies, and a global adviser on how to handle criminal trends. Secretary-General Jürgen Stock has said he believes all police officers ultimately have the same goal: stopping criminals. The challenge, he said, is that Interpol brings 195 very different countries into a network of databases of crimes and wanted fugitives.

AP PHOTO



Turkey The death toll from severe rainstorms that lashed parts of Turkey, Greece, and Bulgaria increased to 11 yesterday after rescue teams in the three neighboring countries recovered four more bodies. A flash flood at a campsite in northwestern Turkey near the border with Bulgaria killed at least four people — with two found dead yesterday — and carried away bungalow homes. Rescuers were still searching for two people reported missing at the campsite.

AP PHOTO



Climate change Earth has sweltered through its hottest Northern Hemisphere summer ever measured, with a record warm August capping a season of brutal and deadly temperatures, according to the World Meteorological Organization. Last month was not only the hottest August scientists ever recorded by far with modern equipment, it was also the second hottest month measured, behind only July 2023. WMO and the European climate service Copernicus announced yesterday.