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IPIM SUPPORTED MORE THAN 200 INVESTMENT PROPOSALS, CREATING MORE THAN 800 JOBS, THIS YEAR, ACCORDING TO DATA RELEASED BY THE ORGANIZATION

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HAC-SA ADVENTURE FACILITIES TO CAP AT MOP1.4 BILLION: CHEONG

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CEASEFIRE ON SIGHT? HAMAS SAYS CLOSE TO HOSTAGE RELEASE AGREEMENT, ISRAEL TO MEET

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AP PHOTO



Hawaii A Navy plane flying in rainy weather overshot a runway yesterday [Macau time] at a military base in Hawaii and splashed into Kaneohe Bay, but all nine aboard were uninjured, authorities said. The Coast Guard responded, but rescue operations were quickly called off, said Petty Officer Ryan Fisher, a Coast Guard spokesperson. "It sounds like all parties involved were rescued," he said.

AP PHOTO



Israel has recalled its ambassador to South Africa, Eliav Belotserkovsky, back to Jerusalem "for consultations" ahead of a parliamentary vote in the African country to decide the fate of the Israeli embassy. The two countries' diplomatic relations have recently witnessed a rise in tensions over the Israeli war on Gaza. South African President Cyril Ramaphosa previously said his country believes Israel is committing war crimes.

AP PHOTO



USA Despite inflation and memories of past holiday travel meltdowns, millions of people are expected to hit airports and highways in record numbers over the Thanksgiving break. The busiest days to fly will be Tuesday and Wednesday as well as the Sunday after Thanksgiving. AAA forecasts that 55.4 million Americans will travel at least 50 miles from home between next Wednesday and the Sunday after Thanksgiving, with roads likely to be the most clogged on Wednesday.

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SURVEY SHOWS 57% PARENTS ARE STRESSED OVER CHILDREN'S ACADEMIC CONCERNS

A survey from the Sheng Kung Hui Macau Social Services Center has revealed 40% of parents reported feeling tired in the past three months. About 20% reported anxiety and depression. The survey attracted 1,058 respondents and focused on the emotional health of parents with children aged between 3 to 12 in the post-pandemic era from May to September. Forty-eight percent of parents surveyed felt the level of parental support they received was average, and 57% of parents with children aged 6 to 12 believed the sources of parental stress were their children's use of mobile phones and academic problems.

PJ: 22 TICKET SCAMS REPORTED LAST WEEK

Police have received at least 22 scams involving online concert ticket purchases, of which 15 victims were students. According to the Judiciary Police (PJ), the victims knew the risk of being defrauded was extremely high, but still chose to make private transactions by paying upfront and collecting the tickets later. The police said the scammers used online social platforms to falsely claim sold-out tickets for popular concerts were on sale, and promised they would be settled in person after payment. This persuaded victims to transfer money first, but the scammers disappeared once payment was made.

TIMBER FORUM MARKS MACAU'S ACTIVE ROLE IN SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT: SECRETARY LEI

The commencement of the timber forum yesterday marks a milestone in Macau's participation in sustainable development, according to Secretary for Economy and Finance Lei Wai Nong, who highlighted Macau's "active exploration and leading role in the field of sustainable development." The Global Legal and Sustainable Timber Forum 2023 started yesterday, and is expected to attract around 500 participants. Lei said the authorities will continue to strive to build high-quality exhibition platforms and promote cross-field and cross-sector cooperation.

GBA BRANCH OF WORLD METEOROLOGICAL CENTER BEIJING LAUNCHED

The Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area (GBA) branch of the World Meteorological Center (WMC) Beijing was launched earlier this week. Located in the Huangpu District of Guangzhou, the branch will provide weather forecasts for participating countries of the Belt and Road Initiative and build an international exchange and training platform for meteorological technology. "I believe the establishment of the GBA branch will be a good complement to WMC Beijing and help enhance the early warning capabilities of developing countries with more diversified forecasting products and international training," said Petteri Taalas, secretary-general of the World Meteorological Organization (WMO), in a congratulatory letter.

DSSOPT CASE

TSI REDUCES SENTENCES OF LI CANFENG AND OTHER BUSINESSMEN

STAFF REPORTER

THE Court of Second Instance (TSI) has reduced the sentences of those convicted in the public works case involving former directors and several businessmen.

In March, the Court of First Instance (TJB) delivered its decision on the 'Land, Public Works, and Transport Bureau (DSSOPT) Case,' convicting 18 of 21 defendants of several crimes related to corruption, money laundering and involvement in a secret society.

As cited in a TDM report, former DSSOPT director Li Canfeng's sentence was reduced from 24 years to 17 years, while businessman Sio Tak Hong's sentence was reduced from 24 years to 12 years.

Li was found guilty of participating in a secret society, as well as 12 counts of passi-

RENATO MARQUES



ve corruption for an unlawful act; 10 counts of aggravated money laundering; one count of document forgery; and four counts related to providing inaccurate information on his Declaration of Assets and Interests.

Under the Macau Organized Crime Law, a secret society is an organization established to obtain illicit

advantages or benefits and whose existence is demonstrated by an agreement to commit several criminal offences.

Sio, meanwhile, was also found guilty of two counts of active corruption; eight counts of aggravated money laundering, and four counts of document forgery, in addition to his participation in

the secret society.

Other businessmen involved in the case included billionaire property developers Kuan Vai Lam and Ng Lap Seng who were initially sentenced to 18 and 15 years of imprisonment, respectively, for different counts of similar crimes.

Their sentences were also reduced to five years and six months, and four years and six months respectively.

Other suspects involved in the case also saw their sentences reduced, including another property developer Si Tit Sang who saw a reduction from 20 years to eight years.

These businessmen were found to have played roles in the case by offering bribes such as cash and luxury flats, the court ruled.

Meanwhile, the other former DSSOPT director, Jaime Carion, had his sentence of 20 years of imprisonment upheld.

Carion has not yet filed an appeal, according to the report.

He was sentenced to one count of participating in a secret society to commit the crimes, as well as five counts of passive corruption for an unlawful act; and six counts aggravated money laundering.

IPIM investments stood at MOP1.3b to October

IN the first ten months of this year, the Macao Trade and Investment Promotion Institute (IPIM) invested nearly 1.30 billion in investment proposals, exceeding the annual investment amount of 2022.

IPIM data released yesterday showed the institute received 292 new investment proposals and assisted 213 of them, creating 805 jobs.

More than 40% (91 projects) of the assisted investment projects are related to the '1+4' industries, according to the bureau.

During the pandemic from 2020 to 2022, IPIM's Investor's 'One-stop' Service received 820 new investment proposals. The institute provided

assistance for 552 of these proposals, resulting in a cumulative investment of more than MOP 2.1 billion and creating over 1,600 jobs.

4,300 BUSINESS TALKS IN THE FIRST 10 MONTHS

In the MICE events organized/coordinated by IPIM, the bureau boasted that it connected with 392 exhibitors and received 57 investment proposals. 23 projects were successfully implemented.

Covering different industries such as big health, high technology, cultural tourism and trade and environmental protection, the completed investment projects were proposed by investors from Por-

tuguese-speaking countries (PSCs), the Chinese mainland and other places.

To assist enterprises in business expansion, IPIM aims to organize business matching sessions at MICE and trade events that bring together global industry representatives. In the first ten months this year, IPIM facilitated more than 4,300 business collaborations.

LOCAL FIRMS IN HENGQIN

Since the establishment of the administrative authority of the Guangdong-Macao In-Depth Co-operation Zone in Hengqin in September 2021, the government has been working on promoting Ma-

cao-Hengqin investment to attract international resources.

IPIM launched the "Cross-border Business Registration Services in the Cooperation Zone" to assist Macau enterprises in registering their businesses in the Cooperation Zone.

As of the end of October 2023, IPIM had completed 37 business registrations for Macau investors.

Additionally, IPIM has received 44 investment projects referred by the Cooperation Zone and has assisted 16 to establish Macau operations.

Support was also provided to 155 enterprises and institutions, rendering assistance 238 times through the IPIM's 'China-PSC Business Compass' services in the first ten months of this year. Several projects included the introduction of PSC wine products into mainland chain stores using Macau as an entry point. LV

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Modern finance is underway, AMCM says

RENATO MARQUES

ONE of the four pillars selected by the central government for Macau's future development and economic diversification, the so-called '1+4,' is the development of modern finance through a range of financial services to be available in Macau.

The Macau Monetary Authority (AMCM) has committed to improving financial legislation and regulation, updating the financial infrastructure and deepening cross-border financial cooperation.

According to AMCM, improvements to the market environment have diversified Macau's financial institutions and promoted new financial sectors such as the bond market, wealth management and financial leasing.

The authority's 2022 statistics show the financial sector's contribution to the gross value added (GVA) of economic activity was 17.2%, up 10.3% compared to 6.9% in 2019.

At the end of the third quarter (Q3), the financial sector's total assets in Macau reached 2.69 billion patacas, an increase of 24.2% compared to the end of 2019.

The same authority also noted that this year alone, two new types of financial institution were authorized to commence operations in Macau, following the authorization of several financial institutions to start their activities last year.



RENATO MARQUES

BOND MARKET AS THE MAIN FOCUS

One of the main focuses has been the acceleration of tangible and intangible bond market infrastructures.

In 2023, the Ministry of Finance of the People's Republic of China carried out the third issuance of national bonds in Macau, as well as supporting the People's Government of Guangdong Province in the third issuance of its bonds in Macau.

Until the end of October this year, 343 bonds were issued or listed in Macau, with an amount

equivalent to 525.2 billion patacas.

The bonds include sovereign bonds, provincial government bonds, corporate bonds, green bonds, financial bonds and capital supplement bonds.

With the revision of the 'Legal Regime of the Financial System,' which came into force on Nov. 1, the registration regime for the public issuance of bonds in Macau has been officially implemented. AMCM has said it is now conducting an exhaustive analysis and review of the guidelines and administrative procedures related to bond ac-

tivity, and has already launched the first round of consultations with the sector on Macau's Securities Law.

Improvements are also being made to the Central Securities Depository (CSD) system to connect it with the international deposit system and attract more international investors.

The main purpose is to gradually improve the different legal regimes, system mechanisms and support measures so these can increase the confidence of participants in the Macau bond market and strengthen market competitiveness.

WEALTH MANAGEMENT IN COOPERATION ZONE

Another area of focus is the wealth management sector, a sector in which AMCM is said to have collaborated with the financial authorities of the In-depth Cooperation Zone for the creation of measures to facilitate the establishment of private fund management companies in Macau that are also qualified in the Cooperation Zone.

The AMCM is also reinforcing the promotion of fund management activities through a review of the Funds Law and preparing guidelines on the performance of the functions of trust fiduciaries, to complement the enforcement of trusts law. At the same time, AMCM said it is also seeking new measures to attract asset management companies to establish themselves in Macau.

INNOVATION AND DIGITAL CURRENCY

Innovation and technology for financial services are also within scope, with AMCM recalling that the newly approved 'Legal Regime for Monetary Issuance' anticipates the possibility of digital currency as legal tender. The regime also provides for temporary licenses for financial innovation and allows qualified entities with controllable risks to carry out financial activities on an experimental basis through technological or operational innovation, to promote financial technological innovation.

POLICY ADDRESS 2024

Hac-Sa adventure facilities to cap at MOP1.4 billion for construction

ANTHONY LAM

THE Secretary for Administration and Justice, André Cheong, has assured the parliament the construction cost of the Hac-Sa adventure facilities will not exceed MOP1.4 billion.

Cheong was at the parliament for a question session Monday where lawmaker Ma Io Fong asked about the adventure park's detailed planning and budget.

He said public consensus broadly supported the project, with discussions mainly centered on the budget. He pledged the government would strive to cap the project at the stipulated price and try to reduce the costs incurred.



The current budget is an initial estimate from the design company, he added.

Discussions about the project have been held with youth associations, univer-

sities and schools, Cheong said, and participants have offered constructive opinions about the management, operation and transport to and from the propo-

sed facility.

In this year's Policy Address, the facility was budgeted at MOP230 million. When Ma asked about the discrepancy between the

initial budget and the current estimate, the secretary stated that review and adjustments will be made to facilitate its budget application.

He said the future park will be adventure-oriented and will not be constructed in an exorbitant fashion.

On Ma's question about pipelines and transportation, Cheong said pipelines would be a large portion of the construction cost.

Transport will be confirmed after completion of a general design, Cheong added.

Previously, the government said water drainage at the adventure park would be carefully designed given its proximity to the seashore, to mitigate the risk of flooding.

On another project, the sports park in Fai Chi Kei, an overhaul of the former Canidrome site is undergoing design consolidation.

The proposed 74,000

square meter park is handled by a taskforce jointly composed of the construction bureaus, the municipal bureaus and the transport bureau.

Cheong was also asked about the plaza near Qing-mao Border Checkpoint and upgrades to the Sun Yat-sen Memorial Park. He said progress has slowed as the LRT East Line may pass through the areas, so further study is required.

On questions about removing fences in community gardens, Cheong said the government is undertaking this work at the Carlos D'Assumpção Park in ZAPE. Insights from this experience will be collated to inform decisions about whether to potentially extend similar efforts to other parks and gardens. The government will also upgrade security management to deter people from sleeping in parks and gardens overnight.

POLICY ADDRESS 2024

GOVERNMENT TO ADDRESS UNDERPERFORMING CIVIL SERVANTS

ANTHONY LAM

THE Secretary for Administration and Justice, André Cheong, believes the issue of underperforming civil servants can be addressed via performance appraisal.

At a recent parliamentary session, lawmaker Becky Song raised concerns about the approach of some civil servants, including a tendency to avoid making mistakes by doing minimal work or exhibiting laziness. She said allowing underperformance to go uncorrected would cause a handful of diligent workers in each department to become overloaded, while others were disengaged.

Acknowledging this situation, Cheong said most civil servants were hardworking and law-abiding, as the last three years of disease control and prevention measures proved. However, others tended to fulfil only basic responsibilities.

"These civil servants meet their basic responsibilities and do not oppose management. However, they tend not to contribute above and beyond to their work," Cheong said. "In this case, they can't be dismissed [because they have not made mistakes]."

However, the senior official believes civil service workplace attitudes can and must change from top to bottom, meaning supervisors must discourage this attitude. Cheong believes the appraisal system can help modify this culture.



Several lawmakers asked about the implementation of an accountability system for civil servants. Cheong affirmed the importance of investigations into serious flaws and issues (a requirement at law) but noted the need for flexibility.

He cautioned against an overly punitive approach, such as demotions for minor errors or transgressions, because that could deter civil servants from taking risks at the expense of building a diligent and responsible team.

In the coming year, the government will review laws and regulations governing civil servants' obligations and work ethic to provide greater clarity. During the review, proposals will also be made to improve appointment criteria

by adding the requirement of specific accreditation through specialized training.

Training will also be provided to civil servants, targeting misconduct and corruption. Laws and regulations will be reviewed to close loopholes as well, the secretary added.

Laws will also be updated to meet UN anti-corruption provisions, and civil servants may be subject to criminal prosecution based on the severity of their transgressions.

Lawmaker Pang Chuan asked about the appraisal system for public entities. Ng Wai Han, director of Public Administration and Civil Services Bureau (SAFP), said a dedicated committee had appraised 49 public entities. Sug-

gested enhancements have been distributed to the entities, which must use the feedback to plan improvements.

The director said 25 of 114 people had been promoted to superintendent positions, after completing leadership training. The training program has been co-organized by the SAFP and the University of Macau since 2020.

The fifth iteration of the training program, currently on offer, has been restructured. This year's program was initiated in response to problems identified, which were discussed during the course. The proposed solutions are to be implemented in training attendees' workplaces.

This year's training has 25 participants and is set to end on Jan.

15, 2024.

The number of civil servants was also discussed at the parliament session. During the early phase of the Covid-19 pandemic, the Chief Executive restricted the number of civil servants to 38,000.

Currently, the city has 34,286 civil servants, a decrease from 35,101 in April 2020 according to Cheong.

Despite the cap, Cheong said the head of the government has discretion to increase the workforce following requests from the relevant departments.

The purpose of this discretion is to avoid overloading departments that have more responsibilities. However, public entities are encouraged to utilize the 'horizontal relocation mechanism,' which facilitates the reappointment of civil servants to same-level positions in other departments or bureaus, to ease workforce shortages.

The review of special careers in the civil service needs to be conducted with sensitivity, considering the need for balance and fairness. The government's aim is to decrease the number of special careers to improve internal mobility among civil servants.

To date, the government has reformed 26 bureaus or entities. It is confident in capping the number of bureaus or entities at 75, currently standing at 73 across the government. Five task forces, such as the Financial Intelligence Office and the Cotai hospital preparatory office, have already or are due to undergo changes.

The Personal Data Protection Office and Public Assets Supervision Planning Office have been transformed into permanent entities, without undergoing name changes.

CRIME

Physician and clinic staff sentenced for unlawful aesthetic surgeries

RENATO MARQUES

THE Court of Final Appeal (TUI) has upheld the sentences of a physician and seven other private clinic staff members, the Office of the President of TUI has noted in a press statement.

The case involved the performance of several plastic surgery procedures for aesthetic purposes, which neither the clinic nor the staff were licensed to conduct.

According to the TUI statement, citing findings from the court case, the clinic started operating on

Feb. 27, 2013. From April 2013, the clinic began offering liposuction surgery and fat transplant breast augmentation services.

In 2015 and 2016, the clinic hired staff members to provide these services and administer anesthesia, despite none of the staff possessing the required licenses from the Health Bureau (SSM) to provide nursing services.

During the investigation, it was also discovered the clinic was concealing the conduct of unlicensed activities via forged documents and providing false information to the SSM.

After the SSM discovered the situation in September 2017, the clinic was ordered to suspend operations for 90 days. This suspension was extended Dec. 28 of the same year.

However, the physician continued to provide services at the same clinic in breach of the suspension order.

The Public Prosecutions Office (MP) filed charges against the eight defendants and the Criminal Court of the Court of First Instance (TJB) adjudicated the case.

The court found sufficient evidence that the ei-

ght defendants committed crimes of usurpation of duties as well as several other charges related to the delivery of forged documents, and providing false information to the SSM.

Based on the weight of evidence and witness testimony, the TJB found the physician guilty of crimes of usurpation of functions, forgery of documents and disobedience. The physician was sentenced to prison sentences of one year and three months, one year and six months, and six months, respectively for each crime.

The physician was sus-



pending for three years upon the condition of paying a MOP200,000 contribution to the Macau government within six months from the date of the final ruling.

Other staff members were sentenced to pri-

son terms ranging from 7 months to 1 year, and suspended for 2 years upon the condition of paying a MOP30,000 contribution to the Macau government within six months from the final ruling.

GAMING

Las Vegas union hotel workers ratify Caesars contract

RIO YAMAT, LAS VEGAS

LAS Vegas hotel union workers voted overwhelmingly yesterday [Macau time] to approve their contract agreement with casino giant Caesars Entertainment, signaling an end to lengthy labor disputes that had brought the threat of a historic strike to the Strip.

The Culinary Workers Union announced on X, the platform formerly known as Twitter, that 99% of the vote favored the new five-year deal.

"BEST CONTRACT EVER! Congratulations to 10,000 hospitality workers!," the post said.

The union is expected to also approve its proposed contracts with Wynn Resorts and MGM Resorts International, the Strip's largest employer, later this week.

The breakthrough deals were tentatively reached earlier this month, just hours before the union had threatened a massive walkout at 18 hotel-casinos on the Strip, including Bellagio, Paris Las Vegas, MGM Grand and Caesars Palace.



AP FILE PHOTO

In a statement, Ted Pappageorge, the union's chief negotiator, said the workers had been willing to take a cut in pay if the union had gone on strike. He said they sacrificed their free time over seven months of negotiations to help secure historic pay raises and other major wins, including housekeeping workload reductions and improved job security amid advancements in technology.

"Nothing was promised or guaranteed, and thousands of workers who participated in rallies, protests, civil disobedience, picketing, surveys, picket sign making, strike vote, and delegations inside the properties sacrificed to win a better future for themselves and our families," said Pappageorge, himself a former union hospitality worker who went on strike in 1991 with 500 other employees at

the now-shuttered New Frontier Hotel and Casino in downtown Las Vegas.

It became one of the longest strikes in U.S. history, stretching more than six years. The union said all the strikers returned to their jobs afterward with back pay and benefits.

Now, Pappageorge said the union has won a 32% pay increase for its members over five years,

with workers receiving a 10% bump in pay during the first year of their new contract. He said that totals about \$2 billion from the casino companies by the end of the contract.

The contracts cover more than 35,000 employees at properties along the Strip that are owned or operated by Caesars, MGM Resorts and Wynn Resorts.

By the end of the contract, Pappageorge said, union workers will be earning on average \$35 hourly, including benefits. Union workers currently make about \$26 hourly with benefits.

Pappageorge thanked the casino companies in his statement "for doing the right thing and investing in the frontline workers who make the entire industry run successfully."

In separate statements released when the deals were reached, the companies said the contracts recognize the union workers for their contributions to the companies' success, with historic pay raises and opportunities for growth tied to plans to bring more union jobs to the Strip.

A strike by employees of all three companies would have been historic, both for its size and timing.

The union — the largest in Nevada with about 60,000 members statewide — had threatened to go on strike less than a week before Formula 1 was set to debut its new race course on the Strip. MDT/AP

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O prazo de apresentação das candidaturas termina em 2023.12.27

Os interessados que preenchem os requisitos de candidatura a habitação económica podem candidatar-se a todos os concursos, devendo apresentar apenas um boletim de candidatura a cada concurso.

Declaração de Rendimento

Deve ser declarado o **total dos rendimentos** auferidos no período compreendido **entre Setembro de 2022 e Agosto de 2023**, incluindo os rendimentos do trabalho e não-proveniente do trabalho, auferidos em Macau e no exterior.

Declaração de Património

Deve ser declarado o **valor obtido até 31 de Agosto de 2023**, incluindo os activos dentro e fora de Macau, nomeadamente imóveis, contas bancárias e investimentos de valor superior a 5 000 patacas, entre outros.

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At meeting attended by Xi and Putin, Ramaphosa accuses Israel and Hamas of violating law

GERALD IMRAY, CAPE TOWN

SOUTH African President Cyril Ramaphosa accused Israel of war crimes and acts “tantamount to genocide” in Gaza during a virtual meeting of leaders of developing countries including Russia’s Vladimir Putin and China’s Xi Jinping late yesterday. Ramaphosa also condemned Hamas for its attack on Israeli civilians that sparked the conflict and said both sides were guilty of violating international law.

“The collective punishment of Palestinian civilians through the unlawful use of force by Israel is a war crime,” Ramaphosa said at the start of the meeting of leaders and top diplomats from the BRICS bloc of countries. “The deliberate denial of medicine, fuel, food and water to the residents of Gaza is tantamount to genocide.”

“In its attacks on civilians and by taking hostages, Hamas has also violated international law and must be held accountable for these actions,” Ramaphosa said.

Also joining the meeting were officials from BRICS members Brazil and India, and from Saudi Arabia, Argentina, Egypt, Ethiopia, Iran and the United Arab Emirates, which are set to join the bloc in January.

Ramaphosa chaired the “ex-

AP PHOTO



South African President Cyril Ramaphosa

traordinary meeting” and made the opening remarks because of South Africa’s position as current chair of BRICS.

Putin said in his address that there was a “humanitarian catastrophe” unfolding in Gaza, but blamed the crisis on what he called failed diplomacy by the United States.

“All these events, in fact, are a direct consequence of the U.S. desire to monopolize mediation functions in the Palestinian-Israeli settlement,” Putin said. He

called for a cease-fire in Gaza, the freeing of hostages and the evacuation of civilians from the Gaza Strip.

Putin’s comments were in line with Russia’s cautious approach to the Israel-Hamas war. He proposed last month that Moscow could mediate in the conflict due to its relationships with both Israel and the Palestinians, and has previously blamed the war on failed U.S. efforts.

Putin has condemned the Oct. 7 attack by Hamas militants

on towns in southern Israel that sparked Israel’s offensive in Gaza, now in its seventh week, while warning Israel over its response and against blockading the Gaza Strip.

Russia and China are leading voices in BRICS, which has largely cast itself in recent years as standing against the perceived dominance of the West in global affairs. But it has struggled to adopt united policies or positions on many issues because of the differing priorities of the five

current members.

The meeting came a day after China’s top diplomat hosted the foreign ministers of Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Jordan, the Palestinian Authority and Indonesia in Beijing, their first stop on a tour of U.N. Security Council permanent members. The meeting underlined China’s longstanding support for the Palestinians and its growing geopolitical influence.

India, which also wants to be seen as a leader of the developing world, has long walked a tightrope between Israel and the Palestinians and historically has close ties to both.

South Africa has been fiercely critical of Israel over the war in Gaza and had already filed a request with the International Criminal Court to investigate it over alleged war crimes. South Africa has for years compared Israel’s policies in Gaza and the West Bank with the apartheid regime of racial segregation.

South Africa’s Parliament is to vote on a motion today [Macau time] to shut down the Israeli Embassy and sever diplomatic ties with the country over the war. Israel on Monday recalled its ambassador to South Africa for discussions.

At yesterday’s meeting, Ramaphosa called for the International Criminal Court to “urgently” initiate prosecutions against those responsible for what he termed war crimes on both sides. He said South Africa also wants to see an immediate cease-fire in Gaza, the opening of humanitarian corridors, the release of civilian hostages, dialogue between Israel and the Palestinians and the deployment of a U.N. force to monitor a cease-fire. **MDT/AP**

SCIENCE

Newborn cloned cat is all Chinese

CHINA’S first cat clone from somatic cells using domestic equipment and reagents was born on Sunday in Qingdao, Shandong province, proving that the country has established a self-sufficient cloning process, according to researchers.

The cat, an orange male weighing 141 grams, was birthed by a surrogate female after a 69-day pregnancy.

Researchers from Qingdao Agricultural University partnered with Qingdao PanGene Technologies Co on the project.

Zhao Minghui, an associate professor in the university’s college of life sciences, said that pre-

COURTESY CHINA DAILY



A newborn cloned kitten drinks milk from its surrogate mother

vious animal cloning processes had relied heavily

on imports from the United States and facilities

provided by Japanese and European suppliers.

“The birth of the new cat proved that China has a complete industrial chain in the field of animal cloning,” Zhao said.

The research, which began in 2020, faced challenges involving imported reagents during pig cloning attempts. Over time, the team successfully transitioned to domestic reagents, with additional support from a partner in Guangzhou, Guangdong province, to enhance their experimental facilities.

From the end of October to the beginning of November this year, the team succeeded in cloning 20 pigs of a local breed using homegrown equipment and reagents.

“Cloning cat somatic cells demanded more resources in terms of facilities, reagents and materials compared with pig

cells,” Zhao said.

Yuan Bao, a professor at Jilin University and president of Jinlin Association for Laboratory Animal Sciences, said the success in cloning a cat was not only a big breakthrough in Chinese animal cloning technology but also represented advancement in high-end equipment manufacturing, precision machining and chemical engineering in China.

The achievement will boost confidence in domestic equipment, reagents and material suppliers and help generate more high-end homegrown products in the biomedical sector, Yuan said.

He said these will be more widely applied and will enhance China’s position and influence globally. **CHINA DAILY**

NORTH KOREA

Kim will try again to launch a military spy satellite in coming days

MARI YAMAGUCHI & HYUNG-JIN KIM, TOKYO

NORTH Korea told Japan yesterday that it will launch a satellite in the coming days in violation of U.N. resolutions, its apparent third attempt to fire a military spy satellite that drew immediate rebukes from its neighbors.

North Korea is eager to operate spy satellites to deal with what it calls escalating U.S.-led military threats. But its two previous attempts to place a spy satellite into orbit earlier this year ended in failure due to technical issues.

Japan's coast guard said North Korea notified Tokyo of its plan to launch a satellite sometime between Wednesday and Nov. 30.

The notice identified three maritime zones where debris from the rocket carrying the satellite may fall. Two are in the waters between the Korean Peninsula and China and the third in the Philippine Sea, Japanese coast guard spokesperson Kazuo Ogawa said.

Ogawa said the areas are the same as the ones North Korea identified for its failed satellite launches in May and August, implying the third attempt would have a similar flight path. North Korea has given Japan the launch information because Japan's coast guard coordinates and distributes maritime safety information in East Asia.

The North's notification came a day after rival South Korea warned it to cancel its launch or face con-



Objects salvaged by South Korea's military that are presumed to be parts of the North Korean space-launch vehicle that crashed into sea, last June

sequences. South Korea's military suggested Seoul would suspend a 2018 inter-Korean agreement to reduce tensions and resume front-line aerial surveillance and live-firing drills in response to a North Korean satellite launch.

U.N. Security Council resolutions ban any satellite launches by North Korea because they are seen as a cover for testing its missile technology. North Korea says it needs a space-based surveillance system to better monitor its rivals, but South Korea says the North's launches are also designed to enhance its long-range missile program.

Since last year, North Korea has carried out about 100 missile tests as part of its efforts to modernize its arsenal of nuclear-capable weapons targeting the United States and its allies. Many foreign experts say the North still has the few remaining technological hurdles to

overcome to possess functioning nuclear-tipped missiles.

Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida asked officials to coordinate with other countries to ask North Korea to cancel its launch. He said Japanese destroyers carrying Aegis-class radars and PAC-3 missile defense systems on Okinawa have been activated to stand by in case of an unexpected development.

"Even if the purpose is to launch a satellite, if ballistic missile technology is used, it is a violation of the United Nations Security Council resolutions, and this is a matter that greatly affects the safety of the people," Kishida said.

During trilateral phone talks, senior officials from Japan, South Korea and the U.S. affirmed their cooperation to "strongly request North Korea to cancel" its launch plan, according to Japan's Foreign Ministry. South Korea's Foreign Ministry separately urged North

Korea to withdraw the launch plan immediately, saying that Seoul will sternly deal with "an illegal provocation by North Korea" in close coordination with Washington and Tokyo.

After the second launch failure, North Korea had vowed a third attempt would take place in October, but failed to follow through. South Korean officials said the delay was likely because North Korea is receiving Russian technology assistance.

North Korea and Russia are pushing to expand their relationships in the face of separate confrontations with the West — North Korea over its nuclear ambitions and Russia over its invasion of Ukraine.

Foreign governments and experts say North Korea is seeking Russian technologies to enhance its nuclear and other military capabilities in return for supplying conventional arms to support Rus-

sia's war efforts in Ukraine. Such transfer would violate U.N. Security Council resolutions that ban any weapons trading to and from North Korea.

"I will just say that our position is very clear, which is that Russia should not supply North Korea with technology that would violate United Nations Security Council resolutions," U.S. State Department spokesman Matthew Miller said Monday. "North Korea should not supply Russia with arms that it can use to prosecute its war of aggression against Ukraine."

Both Russia and North Korea dismissed the alleged weapon transfer deal as baseless. But when North Korean leader Kim Jong Un travelled to Russia in September, President Vladimir Putin told state media that his country would help North Korea build satellites.

In the first launch attempt, the North Korean rocket carrying the satellite plunged into the ocean soon after liftoff. North Korean authorities said the rocket lost thrust after the separation of its first and second stages. After the second launch failure, North Korea said there was an error in the emergency blasting system during the third-stage flight.

South Korea retrieved debris from the first launch and said the satellite wasn't advanced enough to perform military reconnaissance. But some civilian experts said the North Korean satellite was still likely capable of detecting big targets like warships so it could be militarily useful for the North. **MDT/AP**

SOUTH KOREA-UK

President Yoon to talk trade, technology and defense on state visit

THE leaders of Britain and South Korea will seek to strengthen trade and defense ties between their countries during a state visit to the U.K. by President Yoon Suk Yeol.

Yoon landed at Stansted Airport near London yesterday [Macau time]. Britain hopes his formal three-day visit will help cement an "Indo-Pacific tilt" in its foreign and trade policy.

During that time, the president will be treated to both royal and diplo-

matic pomp, including a ceremonial welcome with military honours, an opportunity to address Parliament and a state banquet hosted by King Charles III at Buckingham Palace.

He's also scheduled to hold talks with Prime Minister Rishi Sunak focused on trade, technology and defense. The two countries will officially launch talks on an "upgraded" free trade agreement to replace their current deal, which lar-



South Korea's President Yoon Suk Yeol and first lady Kim Keon Hee, arrive at Stansted Airport

gely replicates the arrangements the U.K. had before it left the European Union.

Britain has launched trade talks with several countries since leaving the EU in 2020, thou-

gh it has finalized deals only with Australia and New Zealand. The U.K. also has joined the Comprehensive and Progressive Trans-Pacific Partnership, or CPTPP, an Asia-Pacific trade bloc that includes Japan and 10 other nations.

Sunak and Yoon are expected to sign an agreement covering cooperation in defense and technology, including artificial intelligence. Britain hosted the first international AI Safety Summit this month, and South Korea intends to hold a follow-up event next year.

Britain also plans to invest in South Korean semiconductor manufacturing as part of inter-

national efforts to diversify the supply of the key computer components. Many of the advanced chips are produced in Taiwan, and the coronavirus pandemic and an increasingly assertive China have heightened concerns about future supply.

The two leaders are also set to boost defense cooperation, including joint naval patrols to enforce U.N. sanctions on North Korea.

Sunak said agreements made during Yoon's visit would "drive investment, boost trade and build a friendship that not only supports global stability, but protects our interests and lasts the test of time." **MDT/AP**

AP PHOTO



Black smoke rises from an Israeli airstrike on the outskirts of Aita al-Shaab, a Lebanese border village with Israel

ISRAEL-HAMAS WAR

Hamas officials say hostage agreement could be reached soon

SENIOR Hamas officials said yesterday that an agreement could be reached soon in which the militant group would release hostages and Israel would free Palestinian prisoners.

Israel, the United States and Qatar, which mediates with Hamas, have been negotiating for weeks over a hostage release that would be paired with a temporary cease-fire in Gaza and the entry of more humanitarian aid. Similar predictions of a hostage agreement in recent weeks have proven premature.

Israel's army is widening its operations across northern Gaza, where they battled Palestinian militants yesterday in the densely populated Jabaliya refugee camp, the territory's largest.

The military said forces are "preparing the battlefield" in the Jabaliya area, just north of Gaza City, and have killed dozens of militants in recent days. Troops discovered three tunnel shafts where fighters were hiding and destroyed rocket launchers, it said.

It wasn't possible to independently confirm details of the fighting. A strike on

a nearby hospital killed 12 people on Monday as Israeli troops and tanks battled militants outside its gates.

Israel says Hamas uses civilians and hospitals as shields, while critics say Israel's siege and relentless aerial bombardment amount to collective punishment of the territory's 2.3 million Palestinians after Hamas' Oct. 7 rampage into southern Israel.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's office has announced meetings of three key decision-making bodies late yesterday to discuss "the issue of the release of hostages."

A statement released by Netanyahu's office said the special war Cabinet will convene at 6 p.m. (early today, Macau time), followed by meetings of the broader Security Cabinet and then the full Cabinet.

It gave no further details, but the various bodies are required to approve important government decisions.

The meetings come as Hamas officials say a deal could be reached soon on a cease-fire and swap of Palestinian prisoners for hostages held

by the Islamic militant group in Gaza.

"On the return of the hostages, we are making progress," Netanyahu said in a meeting with Israeli soldiers. "I don't think it's worth saying too much, not even at this moment, but I hope there will be good news soon."

Meanwhile, an Israeli drone strike in southern Lebanon has killed four members of the militant Palestinian group Hamas, a Palestinian official and a Lebanese security official said.

The strike yesterday occurred in the village of Chaatiyeh near the Mediterranean coast, according to the officials, who spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to reveal military information.

Lebanon's state-run National News Agency confirmed that four people were killed in a vehicle but did not give any further details.

The Palestinian official said the four were members of the Qassam Brigades, Hamas' military wing. The Lebanese security official said the four were members of Hamas, without saying if they were from the military wing.

The Israeli military did not comment on the strike.

Hamas has a large presence in Lebanon, which is home to tens of thousands of Palestinians, many of them living in the country's 12 refugee camps.

An Israeli strike in southern Lebanon killed two journalists for Beirut-based Al-Mayadeen TV who were reporting on violence along the tense Lebanon-Israel border, Lebanese Information Minister Ziad Makary and the station said yesterday.

The Pan-Arab Al-Mayadeen TV identified the journalists as correspondent Farah Omar and cameraman Rabih Maamari.

The station, which is politically allied with the militant Hezbollah group, said the journalists were killed in an Israeli airstrike.

The Israeli military said it was looking into the reports.

Last week, the Israeli government blocked Al-Mayadeen TV from broadcasting in Israel.

The state-run National News Agency said Israel's military struck the outskirts of Teir Harfa and the nearby village of Majdal Zoun.

More than 12,700 Palestinians — two-thirds of them women and minors — have been killed since the war began, according to Palestinian health authorities, who do not differentiate between civilian and militant deaths. About 4,000 people are reported missing.

Some 1,200 people have been killed in Israel, mostly during the Oct. 7 attack, and around 240 were taken captive by militants. **MDT/AP**

this day in history

1963 KENNEDY SHOT DEAD IN DALLAS

AP PHOTO



The President of the United States has been assassinated by a gunman in Dallas, Texas.

John F Kennedy was hit in the head and throat when three shots were fired at his open-topped car.

The presidential motorcade was travelling through the main business area of the city.

Texas Governor John Connally was also seriously injured when one of the unknown sniper's bullets hit him in the back.

The men were accompanied by their wives, who were both uninjured.

Vice-president Lyndon Johnson - who was following in a different car - has been sworn in as the new US leader.

The presidential party was driving from Dallas airport to the city centre when witnesses said shots were fired from the window of a building overlooking the road.

The president collapsed into Jackie Kennedy's arms, who was heard to cry "Oh no". Seconds later Governor Connally was also hit.

Dallas Times Herald photographer Bob Jackson was in the motorcade close behind the Democrat leader's car and heard the shots as it entered Dealey Plaza.

"As I looked up I saw a rifle being pulled back from a window - it might have been resting on the windowsill - I didn't see a man," he said.

Mr Kennedy's limousine was driven at speed to Parklands Hospital immediately after the shooting.

The president was alive when he was admitted, but died at 1400 local time (1900 GMT) - 35 minutes after being shot.

Police and Secret Service agents stormed the School Book Depository building moments after the shots were fired and recovered a rifle with a telescopic sight, said to be the assassination weapon.

The mood of shock in the US was echoed by Senator Mike Mansfield in an emergency forum of the senate.

"This is terrible - I cannot find words," he said.

Courtesy BBC News

IN CONTEXT

A little under an hour after the shooting, a policeman approached Lee Harvey Oswald, believing he recognised his description.

The policeman was shot dead. Oswald was arrested almost immediately under suspicion of murder. Shortly afterwards, he was also charged with the assassination of President Kennedy.

The suspect was never tried as he was shot dead himself two days later by nightclub owner Jack Ruby. The Warren Report, commissioned to investigate the president's death, concluded he had been killed by shots fired by Mr Oswald from the School Book Depository building.

But conspiracy enthusiasts quickly turned the assassination into one of the most disputed events in modern history, with theories ranging from claims it was an elaborately staged suicide to the driver being the murderer.

MACAU'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

YOUR STARS

ARIES
Mar. 21-Apr. 19
Take some time out. Pleasure trips will be a form of healing for your emotional state of mind. Problems with skin, bones, or teeth may mess up your schedule.

TAURUS
Apr. 20-May. 20
You can ask for favors but don't take them for granted. Good day for romance. Concentrate on your job. Sudden romantic encounters will set your head spinning.

GEMINI
May. 21-Jun. 21
It won't take much to upset your lover. Don't be too quick to blame others for your bad mood. Take the time to help those less fortunate.

CANCER
Jun. 22-Jul. 22
Make plans to mix business with pleasure. Dinner with clients or business associates should be successful. You may want to invest in something that will grow in value.

LEO
Jul. 23-Aug. 22
You may want to get a little extra rest. You are prone to infections and fevers. Home improvement projects will go well if you delegate work to all your family members.

VIRGO
Aug. 23-Sep. 22
You can enjoy social events and meet new potential mates; however, avoid being lavish. Jealousy may be a contributing factor to your emotional ups and downs.

LIBRA
Sep. 23-Oct. 22
You can ferret out secret information if you just listen to what others have to say. You can handle situations that require contact with institutions or large corporations.

SCORPIO
Oct. 23-Nov. 21
You'll find travel or involvement in large groups gratifying. This is a great day to beautify your living quarters or to entertain at home. You may find travel to be most rewarding.

SAGITTARIUS
Nov. 22-Dec. 21
Take advantage of your attributes and lure the mate of your choice. Mingle with those who have similar interests, and you should be able to start something.

CAPRICORN
Dec. 22-Jan. 19
Spend time by yourself to avoid any conflicts with family members. Disappointments are likely if your mate embarrasses you in front of friends. I

AQUARIUS
Jan. 20-Feb. 18
Don't make any rash decisions that may affect friendships. Difficulties will result if you have to deal with controversial groups today.

PISCES
Feb. 19-Mar. 20
You could make extra cash through creative hobbies. You have made an accurate assessment of the situation and have come up with ideas that will save money.

The Born Loser by Chip Sanson



SUDOKU

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

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

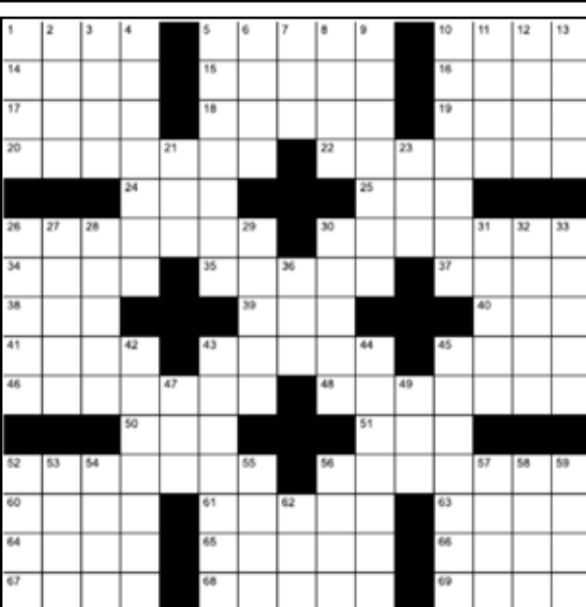
WEATHER

	MIN	MAX	CONDITION
CHINA			
Beijing	2	16	cloudy
Changchun	-2	3	snow
Chengdu	12	21	overcast
Chongqing	11	18	overcast
Fuzhou	14	27	fine
Guangzhou	12	26	fine
Guiyang	11	16	rain
Haikou	21	27	cloudy
Hangzhou	7	22	cloudy
Harbin	-9	-2	snow
Hefei	6	22	cloudy
Nanjing	9	22	overcast
Shanghai	13	22	fine
Taipei	17	25	cloudy
Wuhan	8	22	cloudy
Hong Kong	21	26	cloudy
WORLD			
Moscow	-9	-6	overcast
Frankfurt	1	4	overcast
Paris	5	9	overcast
London	9	11	cloudy
New York	8	16	rain

CROSSWORDS

ACROSS 1- Capital city of Peru; 5- Razor sharpener; 10- Second letter of the Greek alphabet; 14- Madam, I'm ___; 15- Connect with; 16- Enthusiastic vigor and liveliness; 17- Earthen pot; 18- Macaroni shape; 19- Blockhead; 20- Convulsion; 22- Building; 24- Roadhouse; 25- Important time; 26- Part of speech; 30- Add more ice?; 34- Kind of cod; 35- Unordered; 37- Up ___ good; 38- Grab a bite; 39- Posed; 40- Hit sign; 41- Somewhat; 43- Condescend; 45- Son of Seth; 46- Modern humans; 48- Outline; 50- Tempe sch.; 51- Stumblebum; 52- Ring locale; 56- Tenth month of the year; 60- "Twittering Machine" artist; 61- Pretty girl; 63- It may be landed; 64- Util. bill; 65- Eat away; 66- Dixie Chicks, e.g.; 67- Riverbank component; 68- Gave a measured amount; 69- Mariners can sail on seven of these;

DOWN 1- Neighbor of Cambodia; 2- Goofing off; 3- Timbuktu's land; 4- Astonishing; 5- Breastbone; 6- Mah-jongg piece; 7- Yank's foe; 8- Oklahoma Native; 9- Like talc or volcanic ash; 10- Confined to the berth; 11- "The Time Machine" race; 12- Bath powder; 13- Poker stake; 21- Numero ___; 23- Cholera; 26- Entreaties; 27- Lasso; 28- Scheduled; 29- Bird homes; 30- Camera setting; 31- Anwar's successor; 32- Matriculate; 33- Snare; 36- ___ Paulo, Brazil; 42- Argot; 43- Slighted; 44- Move forward; 45- Endeavors; 47- That, in Tijuana; 49- Porridge plant; 52- Supplements, with "out"; 53- ___ want for Christmas...; 54- Rod's partner; 55- Architect Saarinen; 56- Shoppe sign word; 57- Drill a hole; 58- "On the Waterfront" director Kazan; 59- Classic autos; 62- ___ Lobos;



Crossword puzzles provided by BestCrosswords.com

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

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



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AD

RUGBY ACADEMY

FAST AND FURIOUS BATS IN HONG KONG

DONALD SHAW, MDT,
HONG KONG

SUNDAY saw another display of fast, furious and successful rugby from local club Macau Bats at the latest Hong Kong mini-rugby festival, which was hosted by Sandy Bay Rugby club at Kings Park.

The Macau Bats teams were determined to build on their previous successes and keen to record another set of good results. The U8s got the show underway and clocked up an impressive 4-1 win over HKFC, this was followed by a close 3-2 win over Tuen Wan and a couple of 2-0 victories over Police and the Flying Kukris to finish with a 100% record.

The U7s played an entertaining game against USRC Tigers before going down 3-4 in a free scoring game which highlighted the team's defensive frailty. However, subsequent wins over Police (3-1); Shatin Shapei (4-1) and

HKFC (3-1) demonstrated that it was quickly fixed as they returned to winning ways.

The U9s got off to a great start with a resounding 8-0 win against Shatin Shapei, however they quickly returned to earth when they lost 1-5 against a very good HKFC side. The team then showed good resilience to bounce back with wins over Sandy Bay (7-1) and Tin Shui Wan Eagles (3-1).

The U11s had performed well in the first festival and got off to a strong start with a 5-1 win over Tuen Min Sharks, this was followed by further wins over Causeway Bay Monkeys (4-0); Shatin Shapei (4-1) and Tsuen Wan (4-1). As a result of this strong showing the team will be promoted to the top division for the next festival.

The U10s and U12s joined forces with Tuen Chung Buffaloes, the U10s defended stoutly to keep Sandy Bay out before scoring a breakaway try to win 1-0. This was followed by a good



3-1 win over Tin Shui Wan Eagles and a narrow 0-1 defeat by HKFC before a thrilling 3-3 draw with Tsuen Wan, with the Bats rallying from 1-3 down to earn a

share of the spoils.

The U12s started their campaign with a good 2-2 draw against Flying Kukris and followed it up with fine wins over HKFC (4-

3) and Shatin Shapei (3-1) before a narrow loss to Sandy Bay (2-3).

All in all, another strong set of performances from all the Macau teams.

AD

生活藝術雜誌 LIVING & ARTS MAGAZINE

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MMA

The Professional Fighters League has purchased rival MMA company Bellator

DAN GELSTON

THE Professional Fighters League has purchased rival MMA company Bellator from Paramount Global in its boldest attempt yet to make a dent in the industry leader, the UFC.

PFL did not disclose financial terms in yesterday's announcement.

"This really makes PFL now a global powerhouse and poised to become a co-leader," in MMA, PFL Chairman Donn Davis told The Associated Press. "The first five years of the company, our mission was to be the No. 2 company in MMA and we achieved that. We now set a new goal. How do we become the co-leader?"

The deal was aided in part by Saudi Arabia's recent purchase into PFL. The purchase was relatively modest — \$100 million according to the Financial Times — but even in a minority role, Saudi-backed SRJ Sports Investments ensured mixed-martial arts events will take place in that country.



Two-time Olympic gold medalist Kayla Harrison

"Their vision is the same as our vision, to become a co-leader in MMA," Davis said. "Their economic and financial support is helpful for us to be able to achieve this. The Bellator fighter roster is fantastic. But we have to reinvigorate the Bellator business and, with our capital, we'll be able to do that."

While the PFL has a unique MMA competition format that includes a regular season, a postseason and a championship event, the Bellator brand will continue in a series of one-off cards in 2024. PFL will launch the "Bellator International Champions Series" next year.

The Champions Series was expected to consist of eight fight events.

PFL absorbed a Bellator roster that included name fighters such as Cris "Cyborg" Justino, Sergio Pettis and Patricio "Pitbull" Freire.

Davis said the company first approached Paramount about a deal in January. Bellator now becomes one of five live fight franchises of the Professional Fighters League: PFL League Season, PFL PPV Super Fights, PFL Challenger Series, PFL International Leagues, and Bellator.

PFL also planned to stage a PFL Champions vs. Bellator Champions card in 2024 that would include champions in all seven weight classes.

PFL completes its season Nov. 24 at The Anthem in Washington, D.C., in a card headlined by the return of two-time Olympic gold medalist Kayla Harrison.

Bellator ran its final card Friday night under the Paramount umbrella on Showtime. There are no other immediate shows planned until next year. Davis

also did not reveal the fate of Bellator's media rights.

Paramount has a minority stake in PFL. It was not immediately clear if Bellator President Scott Coker would remain involved with the company.

"We respect Scott and we respect his long-time leadership in MMA," Davis said. "We have opportunities for Scott and the entire Bellator team to join us. We'll be making announcements in the coming weeks after our championship about that."

UFC, which sold for \$4 billion in 2016, certainly isn't anywhere close to ceding its spot as the global MMA leader. White openly scoffed at UFC 295 at the idea of ever co-promoting a card with PFL.

PFL, whose cards are carried on ESPN platforms, has former UFC heavyweight champion Francis Ngannou and YouTube influencer and celebrity fighter Jake Paul on its roster.

Davis said two PFL pay-per-view events are planned in 2024 with Ngannou and Paul each scheduled to headline one of those cards. **MDT/AP**

AD



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OPINION

China Daily
 Editorial, China Daily

**HOSTING OF TALKS,
 A SINCERE ENDEAVOR
 TO HELP DRAW UP A
 ROAD MAP TO PEACE**

Innocent people are being killed every day in Gaza, and major countries in the world need to do something to stop the humanitarian crisis there.

From the start of the conflict, China has called for a cease-fire, and urged concerted international efforts to secure one. It has also sent its Middle East envoy to do mediation work to that effect.

China has always insisted that negotiation is the only way to bring an end to the cycle of violence. It believes that the two-state solution is the most eligible way for a just settlement of the Palestinian question.

Palestinian people must be given the right to establish a nation of their own. To materialize the two-state solution requires efforts of the major countries and the main players in the Middle East. China is doing what it can in this regard.

Given the complicated relations among Arab and Islamic nations, China has tried hard in recent years to mediate among some Islamic countries that have long been at odds with each other. China believes that reconciliation among Arab and Islamic nations is a necessary step toward lasting peace in the Middle East and Central Asia.

The reestablishment of diplomatic relations between Iran and Saudi Arabia has verified the worthiness of China's endeavors to push for lasting peace in the Middle East.

Its latest initiative is the hosting of the foreign ministers of some Arab and Islamic countries on Monday and Tuesday to discuss ways to try and at least realize a cease-fire in Gaza and then restore negotiations between Israel and Palestine for a just settlement of the Palestinian question.

Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi held talks in Beijing with the foreign ministers of Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Indonesia and Palestine, the deputy prime minister of Jordan and the secretary-general of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation.

The current violence in Gaza that has lasted for more than a month has led to a humanitarian crisis because of Israeli military forces' indiscriminate attacks on Palestinian facilities. With the conflict ongoing against Hamas, Israel is also fighting Hezbollah on its northern border and bombing Syrian targets too. The spillover of the conflict is already happening. There is a danger of the conflict igniting a war on a much larger scale in the Middle East.

By hosting talks among the representatives of these major Arab and Islamic countries and the secretary-general of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, China hopes to work out a feasible way to prevent an escalation of the conflict and promote greater efforts to push for a cease-fire. China also hopes that a road map will be worked out in the near future for the materialization of the two-state solution.

It is to be hoped that talks can produce positive outcomes.

A CANADIAN MINING COMPANY CENTRAL TO PANAMA PROTESTS SAYS IT MAY HAVE TO SUSPEND OPERATIONS

THE BUZZ

The Canadian mining company whose contract with Panama's government has triggered weeks of protests said yesterday [Macau time] that it has reduced operations and soon may have to suspend them due to a blockade of its mine's power plant.

Minera Panama, the local subsidiary of First Quantum Minerals, said in a statement that small boats had blocked its port in Colon province, preventing supplies from reaching the copper mine.

"If the illegal actions continue impeding the necessary supplies to operate the power plant, the company will reduce the remaining processing train this week and will temporarily suspend produc-

tion," the statement said.

Last week, naval police reported that a ship carrying coal decided to turn back rather than dock in the mine's port due to "hostility from a group of protesters who from their boats threw rocks and blunt homemade objects" before being dispersed by authorities.

Panama has been roiled by weeks of massive street protests and highway blockades as citizens worried about the impact on the environment pressure the government to revoke the contract.

The protesters, a broad coalition of Panamanians, fear the mine's impact on nature and especially on the water supply.

AP PHOTO



MUSK'S X SUES MEDIA MATTERS OVER ITS REPORT ON ADS NEXT TO HATE GROUPS' POSTS

BARBARA ORTUTAY

ELN Musk's social media company X filed a lawsuit against liberal advocacy group Media Matters for America yesterday [Macau time], saying it manufactured a report to show advertisers' posts alongside neo-Nazi and white nationalist posts in order to "drive advertisers from the platform and destroy X Corp."

Media Matters, a Washington, D.C.-based non-profit, called the lawsuit "frivolous."

Advertisers have been fleeing the site formerly known as Twitter over concerns about their ads showing up next to pro-Nazi content — and hate speech on the site in general — while billionaire owner Musk has inflamed tensions with his own posts endorsing an antisemitic conspiracy theory.

IBM, NBCUniversal and its parent company Comcast said last week that they stopped advertising on X after the Media Matters report said their ads were appearing alongside material praising Nazis. It was a fresh setback as the platform tries to win back big brands and their ad dollars, X's main source of revenue.

The Media Matters report pointed to ads from

Apple and Oracle that also were placed next to antisemitic material on X. On Friday, it said it also found ads from Amazon, NBA Mexico, NBCUniversal and others next to white nationalist hashtags.

But San Francisco-based X says in its complaint filed in federal court in Fort Worth, Texas, that Media Matters "knowingly and maliciously" portrayed ads next to hateful material "as if they were what typical X users experience on the platform."

X's complaint claims that Media Matters manipulated algorithms on the platform to create images of advertisers' paid posts next to racist, incendiary content. The juxtapositions, according to the complaint, were "manufactured, inorganic and extraordinarily rare."

It says Media Matters did this by using X accounts that just followed X users known to produce "extreme fringe content" and accounts owned by X's major advertisers. This, the complaint says, led to a feed aimed at producing side-by-side placements that Media Matters could then screen shot in an effort to alienate X's advertisers.

Media Matters said that it stands by its reporting and expects to prevail in court.

"This is a frivolous lawsuit meant to bully X's critics into silence," the non-profit's president, Angelo Carusone, said in a prepared statement.

Meanwhile, Texas Attorney General Ken Paxton announced his office is launching an investigation into Media Matters for possible fraudulent activity related to the group's report.

Advertisers have been skittish on X since Musk's takeover more than a year ago.

Musk has also sparked outcry this month with his own posts responding to a user who accused Jews of hating white people and professing indifference to antisemitism. "You have said the actual truth," Musk tweeted in a reply last week.

Musk has faced accusations of tolerating antisemitic messages on the platform since purchasing it last year, and the content on X has gained increased scrutiny since the war between Israel and Hamas began.

X CEO Linda Yaccarino said the company's "point of view has always been very clear that discrimination by everyone should STOP across the board."

"I think that's something we can and should all agree on," she wrote on the platform last week. **MDT/AP**

AP PHOTO



France A faded and cracked felt bicorne hat worn by Napoléon Bonaparte sold for \$2.1 million at an auction last weekend of the French emperor's belongings. Yes, \$2.1 million. The signature broad, black hat — one of a handful still in existence that Napoléon wore when he ruled 19th-century France and waged war in Europe — was initially valued at 600,000 to 800,000 euros. It was the centerpiece of an auction in Fontainebleau of memorabilia collected by a French industrialist who died last year.

AP PHOTO



Spain After having maintained her innocence for nearly five years, pop star Shakira struck a last-minute deal on the opening day of her tax fraud trial in Barcelona to avoid the risk of going to prison. Shakira told the presiding magistrate, José Manuel del Amo, yesterday [Macau time] that she accepted the agreement reached with prosecutors. She answered "yes" to confirm her acknowledgment of six counts of failing to pay the Spanish government 14.5 million euros in taxes between 2012 and 2014.

AP PHOTO



Albanian opposition lawmakers disrupted the Parliament's session again to protest what they say is increasingly authoritarian rule by the governing Socialists. Democratic lawmakers lit flares and piled chairs on top of each other in the middle of the hall the minute Prime Minister Edi Rama took his seat to vote on next year's budget. A cordon of bodyguards stopped opposition lawmakers from getting near the seats of the Cabinet. The left-wing Socialists, who hold 73 seats in the 140-seat Parliament, made a quick vote in principle and closed the session in 5 minutes.