

ARTYZEN GRAND LAPA MACAU 澳門雅辰酒店 DISCOVER Good Life Starts Here

AT LEAST SIX STAFF MEMBERS FROM THE PORTUGUESE SCHOOL OF MACAU HAVE FILED COMPLAINTS WITH DSAL FOLLOWING THEIR DISMISSAL

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CHINA, EU ARE OPEN TO TALKS ON PLANS TO HIKE TARIFFS ON CHINESE EVS

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Pakistan Police have arrested 23 people accused of being part of a mob that killed a man suspected of desecrating the Quran, Islam's holy book, officials said yesterday.

Australia plans to outlaw the sale of vapes outside pharmacies from next week under some of the world's toughest restrictions on electronic cigarettes, the health minister said yesterday.



European Union regulators yesterday leveled their first charges under the bloc's new digital competition rulebook, accusing Apple of preventing app makers from pointing users to cheaper options on other venues.

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DEAD BODY FOUND FLOATING OFF COLOANE

Yesterday morning, a body was found floating along the beach on Estrada da Aldeia in Coloane, according to the Judiciary Police (PJ). Authorities confirmed the individual was deceased upon arrival. A post-mortem examination conducted by the authorities revealed the deceased was male, and there were no suspicious injuries or signs of foul play. The identity and age of the deceased remain unknown, and the incident is currently being treated as a case of a body discovery. The cause of death will be determined following a forensic examination.

INFLUENZA CASES SURGE 32% IN MAY

Influenza cases in the region jumped 32% month-over-month in May, according to the Health Bureau (SSM). SSM recorded 2,547 influenza cases; nearly double the 1,190 cases from May 2023. Enterovirus infections also tripled year-over-year, with 973 cases reported. Additionally, scarlet fever cases spiked from eight last May to 286 this May – a 3,475% increase. While COVID-19 related severe respiratory infections decreased 86.4% year-over-year, they rose 30.8% from April. The region also saw increases in tuberculosis, asymptomatic HIV, and one case each of: AIDS, Legionnaires' disease, and imported dengue fever.

RAIN AND THUNDERSTORMS EXPECTED THIS WEEK

Heavy rain and thunderstorms are expected in Macau until today. As a broad trough of low pressure over the central to northern parts of the South China Sea, SMG warn residents that showers and thunderstorms are likely throughout the week. A southerly airstream will bring the wet weather to the Guangdong coast until today. Temperatures are forecast to be extremely high, ranging between 27 degrees and 30 degrees Celsius. Residents are advised to keep cool and stay hydrated. Flooding is also possible, as heavy rainfall of up to 74mm per hour has been recorded in the region.

HK MERCHANTS' REFUSAL TO ACCEPT LOCAL CREDIT CARDS 'NOT ILLEGAL': AMCM

RENATO MARQUES

THE refusal by some merchants in the neighboring region of Hong Kong to accept payments using Macau credit cards is not illegal, the Monetary Authority of Macao (AMCM) told the Times in a response to an inquiry.

In the response, the AMCM explained, "Some overseas online merchants may, subject to their commercial decisions, only accept payments through designated payment channels."

On the line were several reports of local buyers who saw their local credit cards (from different banks and using different networks) being refused by merchants in Hong Kong.

According to AMCM, no issue justifies this refusal besides the merchant policies or commercial decisions that are not linked to the banking system.

Reports received by the Times over a relatively long period noted that some merchants in Hong Kong, namely from the sector of home appliances and electronics as well as some clothing, would not accept local credit cards as payment methods, al-

RENATO MARQUES



though they would accept the Hong Kong ones. In some cases, involving online purchases to be shipped to Macau, some of the retailers requested Macau customers send bank cheques by post or to perform interbank money transfers.

Most of the reports that the Times heard were related to online shopping but there were also a few cases of people reporting refusal of local credit cards in physical stores.

Although AMCM noted that

the decision to refuse some credit cards by stores is not illegal, the authority could not find any justification for such a commercial decision based on any implications for the merchants.

EXCLUSION FROM PAYPAL A DECISION BY THE COMPANY

In the same response, the AMCM also noted that the exclusion of Macau from the payment and money transfer platform PayPal is unilateral and related also to a commercial decision

of the American multinational financial technology company.

On the topic, the AMCM said, "To facilitate online shopping by Macau residents, the AMCM has liaised with PayPal several times, persuading it to accept Macau-issued credit cards. However, whether PayPal finally accepts Macau-issued credit cards depends on its commercial decision."

PayPal is available in over 200 countries and regions, and it accepts 25 currencies.

Among the countries and regions that cannot enjoy this service are Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Cote D'Ivoire (Ivory Coast), Paraguay, Saint Lucia, South Sudan, Sudan, Syria, North Korea, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Ghana, Haiti, Iran, Iraq, Lebanon, Liberia, Libya, Macau, Monaco, Moldova, Montenegro, Myanmar, Pakistan, Timor-Leste, Uzbekistan, and Zimbabwe.

PayPal service is currently available in China, as well as in Hong Kong and Taiwan. In HK only residents over 18 years of age can have a PayPal account, while in the mainland users are required to use their full names in Chinese characters (just like in their IDs) to open an account. No pinyin is allowed. For those non-Chinese nationals residing in China, they must use the name from their passport. Mainland credit as well as debit cards can be added to PayPal accounts.

Another round of gov't insurance now available for SMEs

HOWARD TONG

IN a move to bolster small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), the government has opened another round of applications for catastrophic insurance and subsidies.

Since its launch in 2019, the program has already issued 89 policies worth a total insured amount of MOP13.1 million.

The "Small and Medium Enterprises Catastrophe Property Insurance" and the accompanying "Small and Me-



diump Enterprises Catastrophe Property Insurance Subsidy Scheme" are now accepting applications from June 21 to Dec. 31 of this year. SMEs can purchase catastrophe insurance policies through

five participating local insurance companies, with coverage options ranging from MOP100,000 to MOP500,000.

To ease the financial burden on merchants, the government, through the

Industrial and Commercial Development Fund, will provide eligible SMEs with a 50% premium subsidy, up to a maximum of \$30,000. This means businesses can pay as little as 15% of the standard

premium, depending on their insurance situation.

The catastrophe insurance program was launched in 2019 to address the problem of commercial property losses not covered by insurance during severe weather events, such as typhoons and storm surges, particularly for SMEs in low-lying areas in Macau prone to flooding.

This initiative aims to support local small and medium-sized businesses, which are the backbone of the local economy. By providing affordable catastrophic insurance and subsidies, the government hopes to give these enterprises the financial protection they need to weather any unexpected disasters.

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Functional maritime zoning unveils strategic vision development until 2040

NADIA SHAW

THE Macau Special Administrative Region (MSAR) government published its "Marine Area Plan" in the Official Gazette yesterday, outlining a strategic vision for coordinating urban construction and maritime conservation in the region until 2040.

The MSAR's "Marine Area Plan" aims to promote the management, utilization, and protection of Macau's 85 square kilometer territorial waters over the next two decades.

In the near-term until 2025,

it prioritizes marine health and sustainable management of sea resources for projects supporting local livelihoods and flood mitigation.

This includes restoring degraded mangrove ecosystems, which serve as nursery habitats for marine life and provide natural coastal defenses.

Looking ahead to 2026–40, the plan shifts focus to optimizing the inner harbor and Coloane coastline, accelerating large-scale sea-use projects, and promoting integrated land-sea development, such as the "ecological island" concept. Additionally, the plan allocates certain sea

areas specifically for ecological purposes to support Macau's economic diversification while safeguarding its natural marine life – such as the Chinese white dolphin species. This involves zoning off sensitive marine areas and limiting activities that could degrade or disrupt critical ecological functions.

The plan sets requirements for sea use control, environmental protection, and supporting Macau's integration into the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macau Greater Bay Area and national development.

Experts emphasize the importance of developing coastal pro-

tection systems, increasing public leisure areas along the 76.7km coastline, and protecting natural ecosystems like mangroves.

The overarching aim is to optimize the layout and use of both land and sea spaces in coastal regions, expanding opportunities for marine economic development while protecting the environment.

At the press conference organized by the DSAMA late last year, director Susana Wong, said the main purpose of the new law is to ensure that the maritime areas comprising 85 square kilometers are part of the public domain and cannot be alienated

or moved to the private domain.

Wong also noted the new law will also establish a clearer evaluation and approval system for the use of those areas by private entities, standardizing these rules and providing broader access to the public of this information and requirements for those interested in making use of them.

With the regime also comes a supervision and sanctioning system for those who fail to comply. It will also stipulate the price to pay for each use, although this information will only be added at a later stage via an administrative regulation.

Government deems beaches unfit for swimming

VICTORIA CHAN

AMID the summer season and to beat the current scorching heat, the city's two public beaches have been deemed unsuitable for swimming due to a significant increase in litter and excessive levels of E. coli bacteria in the water, said the city's Marine and Water Bureau (DSAMA).

In a statement, the bureau said both Hac Sa and Cheoc Van beaches in Coloane have seen a dramatic uptick in trash in recent days. Water quality tests conducted by the Municipal Affairs Bureau (IAM) last week also revealed E. coli concentrations at the beaches exceeded safe limits, leading to the clous-



re of Cheoc Van beach on Sunday as E. coli levels remained above the acceptable threshold.

The DSAMA has brought in additional cleaning staff from the government-con-

tracted Macau Residue System Company (CSR) to address the waste buildup, and authorities also cautioned beachgoers about the risks of hot sand temperatures, which have pre-

viously led to burn injuries among visitors.

The statement noted that poor water quality at Macau's beaches often follows heavy rainfall or other inclement weather in

the region, which can wash large amounts of refuse from the Pearl River estuary onto the city's shores.

"The Marine and Water Bureau is closely monitoring the situation and urges all those planning water activities at Macau's two beaches to pay close attention to the warning flags posted at the respective locations," the statement read.

Rubbish accumulating on Macau's coastlines is a persistent problem, with an estimated four tons of debris – much of it single-use plastic – washing ashore at Hac Sa beach alone each day in April.

Environmentalists attribute the issue to inadequate waste management

and illegal dumping practices in communities along the Pearl River, underscoring the need for a regional approach to tackle the growing pollution crisis.

Cleaning up Macau's polluted beaches remains an ongoing challenge as garbage from throughout the Pearl River delta washes ashore. Swimmers are advised to stay out of the water at both public beaches until pollution levels recede.

The warnings come as the bureau works to monitor the situation and deploy additional resources to address the surge in litter and bacteria contamination at Macau's popular beach destinations, which have been deemed unsuitable for swimming.

MUST SURVEY UNCOVERS PROMISING TRENDS ON EMPLOYEE CONFIDENCE

HOWARD TONG

In a recent survey conducted by the Institute for Sustainable Development (ISD) at Macau University of Science and Technology (MUST), researchers have uncovered promising trends regarding employee confidence and satisfaction in Macau.

Using a 5-point scale, this year's Employee Confidence Index reached 3.04, representing a 4.37% increase from the previous year. Additionally, the Satisfaction Index (SI) saw a 7.94% year-over-year rise, reaching 3.23.

A closer look at the data reveals that confidence in the local labor market increased by single-digit percentages.

The Employee Satisfaction Index's four sub-indices also showed improvements, with Job Stability demonstrating the largest increase of nearly 11%, followed by a 8.05% rise in Job Treatment.

According to Lap Wan Ching, the professor responsible for this study, this year's indices have already returned to 2019 levels, reflecting Macau's societal and economic resilience in the face of recent challenges. The survey was conducted between April 9 and 24, 2024, gathering responses from 806 full-time Macau-based employees.

For the researchers, these findings suggest a positive trajectory for Macau's workforce, as the city continues to recover and normalize operations following the impact of previous disruptions.

Macau's economy has shown strong signs of resurgence in 2024, with the gaming and tourism sectors leading the way.

ECOLOGICAL ISLAND

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT TO DETERMINE IMPACT ON CHINESE WHITE DOLPHINS :DSPA

VICTORIA CHAN

The Environmental Protection Bureau (DSPA) ensures that all possible impacts on the preservation of the Chinese white dolphin species, existing in the waters of the Pearl River Delta, will be assessed in the context of the construction of the controversial ecological island.

In a reply to lawmaker Ron Lam, DSPA director Raymond Tam confirmed that the upcoming phase of the project's environmental impact assessment will include the publication of the consultational text on the "Environmental Impact Assessment Report."

The report will feature findings from the research conducted on Chinese white dolphins. Additionally, details on "environmental mitigation measures" will also be disclosed.

DSPA emphasizes that the initial phase of the environmental impact assessment for the ecological island adhered to the standards outlined in the Environmental Impact Assessment Law of the People's Republic of China (PRC) and the Public Participation Measures in Environmental Impact Assessment.

Tam also addressed the issue of construction waste



management, stating that the use of inert construction and demolition materials for reclamation can only be a supplementary method, and that the government has set up mobile screening facilities at the landfill to prioritize the use of screened and qualified materials.

The construction of the ecological island is seen as a long-term solution to Macau's construction waste problem, "contributing to the city's sustainable urban development."

The bureau director acknowledged the limitations of Macau's natural endowments, geographical location, and

water quality conditions in determining the site selection for the ecological island.

However, Tam emphasized that the current site is the best option after comprehensive consideration.

"The government has emphasized on multiple occasions that the choice of the site for the 'ecological island' is contingent upon various factors including nature, geographic location, water quality conditions, and the current state of exploration and utilization of maritime areas. Consequently, after careful deliberation, the current location has been determined

to possess the highest level of feasibility," Tam said.

The ecological island project drew criticisms from lawmaker and environmental groups.

Earlier this year, there was a call to halt the proposal to put a landfill off the southern coast of Coloane.

In the description of an online petition, the group predicted the landfill will damage marine life, intensify water pollution, and risk the health of aquatic activities practitioners.

More importantly, it will destroy the ecology of Indo-Pacific humpbacked dolphins, he said. The dolphin is a national Tier-1 key protected animal.

The government was also criticized for failing to provide any scientific data to support the "unique necessity" of the project, and no environmental assessments were produced.

The Hong Kong Dolphin Conservation Society has also urged Macau authorities to build construction waste screening and processing facilities instead of an artificial island made from the debris.

In a statement, the group has said the ecological island proposal is not an effective solution to Macau's waste issues.

EPM SAGA

Six staff members dismissed by EPM filed complaints with DSAL

RENATO MARQUES

At least six of the staff members from the Portuguese School of Macau (EPM) have filed complaints with the Labour Affairs Bureau (DSAL) following their dismissal from the school, the public broadcaster TDM reported.

According to the same source, the six staff members include five teachers and one psychologist who are part of a group of 10 staff members who were dismissed by the school at the end of this academic year.



In a previous report, the DSAL urged the school to abide by government

policies and recruit resident workers rather than others who are not resi-

dents of Macau.

When confronted with the issue the Education

and Youth Development Bureau (DESDJ) also noted that the EPM should comply with all regulations regarding the replacement of teachers from the school and take into account all the legal rights of those dismissed.

In the meantime, TDM also confirmed that the 10 new teachers that EPM director Acácio de Brito said to have hired to replace those leaving the institution have not been cleared by the Minister of Education, Science, and Innovation of Portugal (MECI) to come to Macau under a special program for the posting of workers, as this program has been defunct for some time.

As the Times reported, MECI's head Fernando Alexandre had said previously that new teachers would

not be made available to replace those the school management may dismiss. Still, there was doubt about whether this measure applied to the current case, which has now been cleared.

Since MECI does not approve the posting of new teachers from Portugal to Macau, this means that all those coming to teach at the school will not be linked to the Portuguese official system and will be hired locally. This process has happened already for many years with some of the EPM's hirings.

The major difference in this process is that the locally hired teachers' period of employment does not count for career or retirement purposes in Portugal (in case they later decide to return to the country).

GAMING

Morgan Stanley sees mass gaming revenue decline in Q2

VICTORIA CHAN

MACAU'S casino industry is facing a mixed outlook for the second quarter of 2024, with Morgan Stanley predicting a decline in mass-market gross gaming revenue (GGR) and potential downside to consensus earnings expectations for the operators.

According to the banking group's analysis, Macau's mass-market GGR "could be down 2% to 3% quarter-on-quarter" when the final numbers are in for the second quarter. The analysts expect Macau's GGR for June specifically could narrow by as much as 11% month-on-month, reaching MOP18 billion. This comes after May delivered the best monthly GGR since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic in early 2020.

The assessment is in line with a June 10 report from brokerage CLSA Ltd, which indicated player rebates and other player reinvestment in the Macau casino market had been growing faster, percentage-wise, quarter-on-quarter than market-wide GGR.

In the first quarter of 2024, revenue from mass-market baccarat stood at nearly MOP34.59 billion, up 3.1% sequentially, representing circa 60.3% of market share. Overall, the mass-market segment - including slot machines - accounted for 74.9% of Ma-



VICTORIA CHAN

cau's total casino GGR.

Morgan Stanley observed its research indicated overall Macau GGR was "tracking down 1% to 2% quarter-on-quarter" in the second quarter.

"Consensus expects second-quarter property EBITDA at USD2.1 billion (+2% quarter-on-quarter, -2% quarter-on-quarter on a hold-adjusted basis)," the institution noted, adding that it sees "downside to this number."

The analysts provided specific reads on each of Macau's six casino concessionaires regarding the second quarter. They see the most downside to Sands China's EBITDA due to ongoing construction disruptions at The Londoner Macao, but expect Galaxy Entertainment Group and SJM Holdings to achieve

EBITDA growth of 9% and 8% respectively.

"We remain selective on stocks," Morgan Stanley said. "We prefer Galaxy (share gain) and MGM China (market is being too pessimistic) for 2Q results."

The banking group's assessment comes as the Macau casino market continues to navigate its recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic. While the mass-market segment has been a bright spot, the potential decline in GGR and rising costs could impact the operators' bottom line in the second quarter.

Morgan Stanley's analysis highlights the need for the industry to closely monitor market trends and adapt their strategies accordingly to weather the challenges ahead.

CRIME

PJ warns of multiple scam ads on social media

RENATO MARQUES

THE Judiciary Police (PJ) has issued a warning to the public regarding a large series of fake social media pages impersonating local department stores, gambling corporations, and watch retailers in Macau, to lure users with promotions.

According to the PJ, the pages "falsely claimed that the stores were conducting promotional campaigns that offered limited edition designer handbags and luxury watches at meager prices. These fraudulent pages also used 'sponsored' advertisements to proactively push these posts to a broader range of users, luring them to click on the ads and place orders through the links."

The PJ suspects that the purpose of such ads is to collect personal information to be used for illicit purposes.

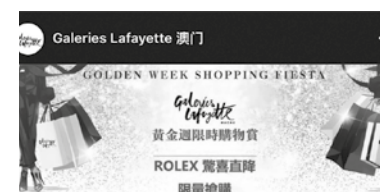
The ads presented luxury goods offered at a small fraction of the market value; in some cases the price to pay was just 1% of the regular product price.

The I.T. Crimes Division Anti-Fraud Coordination Centre of the Macau Judiciary Police is urging residents to take a closer look at the "sponsored" advertisements pushed by online social platforms, as scammers may use fake accounts to purchase ads and commit fraud.

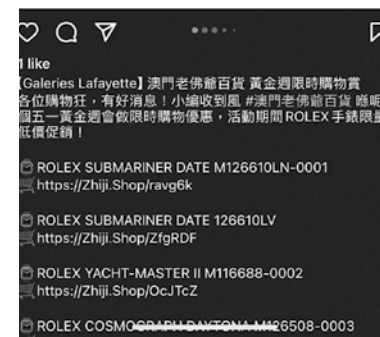
When in doubt, use the PJ's "Anti-Fraud Program" to check the risk index or report information, or call the force hotline at 8800 7777.

Additionally since yesterday, the Times has learned that a similar scam page was making use of the same method of "sponsored" ads on several social media platforms to advertise an alleged news report published by the Times.

The Times hereby states that this is a false report and no interview was ever conducted by the Times with someone named Wu Chun on an alleged topic involving a government bureau. The Times cautions our readers to pay attention to any links that are based anywhere outside our official webpage (www.macaudailytimes.com.mo).



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CORPORATE BITS

Galaxy secures major wins at luxury travel awards



Several luxury hospitality brands under Galaxy Macau were recognized at the prestigious Travel + Leisure Luxury Awards Asia Pacific 2024, winning in various categories.

Galaxy Macau secured the title of "Best Integrated Resorts in Asia Pacific" and boasted the city's "Best Hotel Pools."

Saurabh Mishra of Galaxy Hotel received the "Hotel

General Managers of the year" award for the second consecutive year. Banyan Tree Spa Macau triumphed in the "Hotel Spas in Macau" category.

Meanwhile, Andaz Macau established itself as one of the best hotels in Macau. Banyan Tree Macau proudly secured a place in the "Best Hotels in Macau" category, ranking second. Its Hotel Manager, Joanne Chan, was honored among the top five "Hotel General Managers in Macau." Raffles Macau at Galaxy Macau distinguished itself with the accolade for the "Best Hotel Pools" in Macau category for the first time.

International yoga day celebrated at The Parisian



Over 140 people gathered at The Lawn at The Parisian Macao for Sands Lifestyle's first yoga class in celebration of International Yoga Day on June 22. The complimentary 60-minute Sun-

rise Flow class was jointly organized with Macao and Hong Kong yoga studio Yoga Light. Led by five expert yoga instructors, participants enjoyed the chance to practice hatha yoga

styles and relax both body and mind in the unique outdoor setting.

"Seeing the yoga community, wellness enthusiasts, and health advocates come together to positively influence wellbeing was truly remarkable," said Mariana de Oliveira Dias, executive director of Health and Wellness at Sands China Ltd.

Sands Lifestyle aims to continue hosting exceptional wellness events for the community. Sands Resorts Macao also offers spa treatments focusing on wellness, such as crystal singing bowl meditation at Conrad Macao's Bodhi Spa, leaving guests feeling nourished.

AUTOMOBILE

China, EU are open to talks on plans to hike tariffs on Chinese EVs

ELAINE KURTENBACH,
BANGKOK

CHINA and the European Union are open to holding talks on the EU's recent decision to sharply raise tariffs on imports of Chinese-made electric vehicles, officials from both sides say.

China's Commerce Ministry and Germany's economy minister said over the weekend that each side was willing to hold talks on the issue. Meanwhile, Chinese state media said yesterday that Beijing is pushing for the EU to give up plans to sharply raise provisional tariffs on imports of Chinese-made electric vehicles by July 4.

Escalating a trade dispute over Beijing's subsidies that Brussels worries are hurting European automakers, the EU plans to impose provisional tariffs of 17.4% to 38.1% on EVs from China for four months starting on July 4. That's on top of the 10% duties for all imported EVs. They would apply to vehicles exported to Europe by both Chinese and foreign



AP PHOTO

brands, including Tesla.

The European Commission, the EU's executive arm, said preliminary results from an investigation into Chinese EV subsidies showed the country's battery electric vehicle "value chain" benefits from "unfair subsidiza-

tion" that hurts EU rivals.

Commerce Minister Wang Wentao held a video conference with European Commission Executive Vice President and Trade Commissioner Valdis Dombrovskis, the Chinese Commerce Ministry said in a notice

Saturday on its website.

"The two sides agreed to launch consultations on the EU's anti-subsidy investigation into Chinese electric vehicles," it said.

"The doors are open for discussions. And I hope that this

message was heard," Germany's economy and vice chancellor, Robert Habeck, said Sunday while on a visit to China.

China's Commerce Ministry last week accused the EU of making unreasonable demands in its investigation into imports of Chinese electric vehicles before it announced it was raising tariffs by as much as 38%.

Ministry spokesman He Yadong said the European side had demanded excessive amounts of information from Chinese automakers and then unfairly accused the Chinese companies of failing to cooperate.

Beijing said last week that it was opening an anti-dumping investigation into pork exports from Europe. In announcing that, the Commerce Ministry did not mention EV tariffs. But the investigation into various pork products was widely seen as a response to the EU measures on electric cars.

The European side has said it wants to discuss the findings of its investigation with Chinese authorities to find ways to resolve the issues. **MDT/AP**

POLISH President Andrzej Duda met with Chinese leader Xi Jinping yesterday on a visit to Beijing.

At the meeting at the Great Hall of the People accompanied with a full honor guard and 21-gun salute, Duda told Xi that relations between the former Russian-allied nation, which inspired democratic movements with its push for democracy, and China, remain strong.

The Russia-Ukraine conflict was on the agenda for talks, but no remarks on the issue were delivered before journalists were ushered from the vast carpeted meeting room.

"Over the past 75 years since the establishment of diplomatic relations, bilateral relations have maintained steady development, constantly injecting new vitality into the traditional friendship between the two countries." Xi said after the two leaders took their seats while surrounded by aides and security guards.

DIPLOMACY

Leader of NATO member Poland visits China, expecting to talk to Xi about Ukraine

Duda said Poland was hoping for closer commercial relations with China — particularly under Xi's signature "Belt and Road Initiative" to build transport connections and other infrastructure between China, Europe, Southeast Asia and other regions — largely as a response to overcapacity within China's huge manufacturing industries, the need to find foreign markets and expand Beijing's political and economic influence to counter the U.S.-led liberal domestic order.

Poland borders Ukraine and has maintained a hard line against further expansion of Russian aggression, but the grinding conflict has raised questions over how to maintain the country's economic health and

democratic institutions with right-wing political politicians making major gains in this month's European Parliament election.

Duda had said he would talk to Xi about Russian ally Belarus exerting migration pressure on the border with Poland, as a form of hybrid war that also includes cyberattacks.

Duda is also seeking a visa waiver for Poles traveling to China and is looking for possibilities of increasing Poland's exports to the country to balance their trade relations.

State Statistics Poland said that 13.9% of the nation's imports last year were from China, while Polish exports to China were just a fraction of that amount.

Several trade agree-



AP PHOTO

Chinese President Xi Jinping, right and Poland's President Andrzej Duda attend the welcome ceremony at the Great Hall of the People in Beijing, yesterday

ts were signed following the meeting between the two leaders, including on Polish agricultural exports

and educational exchanges.

Duda has further meetings in Beijing and will

fly to the financial hub of Shanghai to attend a Poland-China economic forum. **MDT/AP**

SOUTH KOREA

Fire at a lithium battery factory kills 22, mostly Chinese migrant workers

HYUNG-JIN KIM, SEOUL

A fire likely sparked by exploding lithium batteries swept through a manufacturing factory near South Korea's capital yesterday, killing 22 mostly Chinese migrant workers and injuring eight, officials said.

The fire began after batteries exploded while workers were examining and packaging them on the second floor of the factory in Hwaseong city, just south of Seoul, at around 10:30 a.m., fire officials said, citing a witness. They said they would investigate the cause of the blaze.

The dead included 18 Chinese, two South Koreans and one Laotian, local fire official Kim Jin-young told a televised briefing. He said the nationality of one of the dead couldn't be immediately verified.

In the past few decades, many people from China, including



ethnic Koreans, have migrated to South Korea to seek jobs. Like other foreign migrants from Southeast Asian nations, they often end up in factories or in physically demanding and low-paying jobs shunned by more affluent South Koreans.

Kim said that one factory worker remained out of contact and rescuers continued to search the site. He said that two of the eight injured were in serious

condition.

The fire started at one of the factory buildings owned by a battery manufacturer, Aricell. He said that authorities would investigate whether fire extinguishing systems were at the site and if they worked.

Rechargeable lithium-ion batteries are ubiquitous in consumer goods from laptops to cellphones. They can overheat if damaged, defective or packaged

improperly, leading to fires and explosions and making them a hazard for shipment aboard aircraft.

The video of the incident showed the factory's second floor being engulfed with blaze, about 15 seconds after a small amount of white smoke was seen billowing from a battery, senior fire official Jo Seon-ho told a briefing later yesterday.

Jo, citing the footage, said workers at the site mobilized fire extinguishers but failed to put out the blaze. They later rushed to an area where there was no exit before they likely inhaled toxic smoke and lost their consciousness, he said. The dead foreign workers were daily laborers so they were not likely familiar with the building's internal structure, he added.

Fire officials said a total of 102 people were working at the factory at the time of the fire.

President Yoon Suk Yeol, wea-

ring a safety helmet and a mask, visited the site with other officials. He expressed condolences to the dead people and ordered officials to put in place measures to effectively deal with battery-related fires, according to Yoon's office.

Prime Minister Han Duck-soo, the country's No. 2 official, and Interior and Safety Minister Lee Sang-min also came to the site. Han asked officials to provide government assistance for funeral services and support programs for victims' relatives, according to his office.

Yesterday's blaze is one of the deadliest in South Korea in recent years.

In 2020, a fire at a warehouse being built in Icheon City, south of Seoul, killed 38 construction workers. In 2018, 46 people died after a fire ripped through a small hospital with no sprinkler systems in the southern city of Miryang. In 2008, 40 workers, 12 of them ethnic Koreans with Chinese nationality, died after a fire and accompanying explosions tore through a refrigerated warehouse in Icheon city.

South Korea has struggled for decades to improve safety standards and change widespread attitudes that regard safety as subservient to economic progress and convenience. MDT/AP

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C&C RECEIVED THE 1ST SILVER
"DEIGNAN AWARD"
FOR RESPONSIBLE ENTREPRENEURSHIP
IN MACAU (2023)



IRAN

'Hamster' crypto craze highlights economic malaise ahead of presidential election

JON GAMBRELL & NASSER KARIMI, DUBAI

CAB drivers and bikers tap away furiously on their mobile phones as they wait at red lights in the Iranian capital during an early June heatwave. Some pedestrians in Tehran are doing the same. They all believe they could get rich.

The object of their rapt attention? The "Hamster Kombat" app.

A wider crypto craze aside, the app's rise in Iran highlights a harsher truth facing the Islamic Republic ahead of Friday's presidential election to replace late President Ebrahim Raisi, who died in a helicopter crash in May: an economy hobbled by Western sanctions, stubbornly high inflation and a lack of jobs.

Even as presidential candidates make promises about restoring the country's economy, Iranians, who have been hearing for years about bitcoin, are now piling into this app out of sheer hope it might one day pay off — without knowing much about who is behind it.

"It's a sign of being desperate, honestly," said Amir Rashidi, the director of digital rights and security at the Miaan Group who is an expert on Iran. It's about "trying to hang on to anything you have a tiny hope that might some day turn to something valuable."

Those able to divest from holdings in Iran's beleaguered currency, the rial, have purchased property, art, vehicles, precious metals and other hard assets since the collapse of Tehran's 2015 nuclear deal with world powers.

At the time of the deal, the exchange rate was 32,000 rials to \$1. Today, it's nearing 580,000 rials to the dollar — and many have found the value of their bank accounts, retirement funds and other holdings gouged by years of



rapid depreciation.

Meanwhile, prices of fruits and vegetables have jumped 50% since last year while the price of meat has risen 70%. The cost of a ride in a shared taxi, common in the Iranian capital, has almost doubled. Even rides in Tehran's Metro, still the cheapest option for the city's commuters, are up some 30%.

"Since morning, I had three visitors to my shop, none of them bought anything," said Mohammad Reza Tabrizi, who runs a clothing shop in downtown Tehran. "Most customers prefer buying from peddlers or pre-owned items in other places."

In underground walkways and other areas of the city, peddlers sell nearly anything they can get their hands on. It's this desperate environment that has seen the public's interest in cryptocurrency and mobile games offering coins rise.

The proliferation of smartphones across Iran, as well as the relatively low cost of mobile service compared to other nations, makes accessing apps like "Hamster Kombat" attractive.

The app is accessed through the messaging app Telegram, which remains popular in Iran despite efforts by the authorities trying to block access to it. It functions like an incremental or a "clicker" game — users repeatedly click on an object or complete repetitive tasks to earn points.

In "Hamster Kombat,"

users believe they may be able to access a purported cryptocurrency associated with the game that's still not traded publicly.

In an email, individuals describing themselves as the game's developers declined to answer questions about their identities or business plans, but insisted they were "not offering any cryptocurrency in the game."

"We are educating our audience about crypto through gaming mechanics," the email claimed.

Still, the game resembles another app that did offer Iranians cryptocurrency in the past — and it seems that just the promise of what could be free money can drive some Iranians to distraction.

Jokes online show one man tapping on a gravestone as if it were a mobile phone. Another uses a massage gun to rapidly punch a Hamster on the screen.

But the public's fascination with the game has also drawn the attention of authorities.

Rear Adm. Habibollah Sayyari, the deputy chief of Iran's military, described the app as part of the West's "soft war" against Iran's theocracy ahead of the election.

"One of the features of the soft war by the enemy is the 'Hamster' game," Sayyari said, according to the state-run IRNA news agency. He theorized that the "enemy" is popularizing the game so that people would be distracted and not "pay atten-

tion to plans of presidential candidates."

"Then (the people) fail to choose the best candidates," Sayyari said. Hard-line pundits in Iran have voiced similar opinions.

The daily JameJam, published by Iran's state television, also warned the ever-increasing interest in the game was a sign of "the dream of becoming rich overnight and gaining wealth without effort." It said those playing range from "builders, mechanics and refrigerator repairmen to colleagues and classmates in university."

"A society that instead of working and trying to succeed and earn money turns to such games and looks for shortcuts and windfalls gradually loses the culture of effort and entrepreneurship and moves towards convenience," the newspaper said, without acknowledging that the country's economic woes were potentially driving the interest in the app.

The app has even drawn the attention of a 97-year-old Shiite religious scholar, Ayatollah Nasser Makarem Shirazi, who is known for his fatwas declaring things "haram," or "forbidden," from his office in the holy city of Qom, Iran's center of Shiite learning, packed with religious schools and revered shrines.

Calling cryptocurrency "the source of many abuses," Shirazi said people shouldn't use the "Hamster Kombat" app or others like it involving bitcoin.

Iran isn't alone in having concerns about the game.

Authorities in Ukraine, locked in a devastating war with Iranian-armed Russia since Moscow's 2022 invasion, warned that users' data remains stored in Russia and could potentially put them at risk.

Then there's the wider risk of malware exposure as consumers in Iran often cannot purchase new software legally or even access legitimate app stores. They also face the risk of state-sponsored hackers targeting them for their political views.

Meanwhile, as Iran's election campaign goes on, presidential candidates are using Instagram, X and Telegram — all services previously banned by the theocracy after rounds of nationwide protests.

"As long as you are able to pay the price, everything is available," said Rashidi, the Iran expert. **MDT/AP**

this day in history



1950 UN CONDEMNS NORTH KOREAN INVASION



North Korea has invaded South Korea at several points along the two countries' joint border.

The United Nations Security Council (UNSC) has denounced North Korea's actions as a breach of the peace and has called for an immediate ceasefire.

The United States President Harry S Truman has gone a step further and urged western nations to go out to Korea and help repel the communist invasion.

"By their actions in Korea, communist leaders have demonstrated their contempt for the basic moral principles on which the United Nations is founded," he said.

The invasion took the international community by surprise, even though the American Economic Co-operation Administration has its biggest mission — about 2,000 staff — in South Korea.

The seven-power commission of the United Nations in Korea (Uncok) confirmed North Korean troops crossed the border — known as the 38th parallel — in 11 places after artillery bombardments were reported in South Korea at 0400 local time.

Uncok has identified northern forces in the Ongjin peninsula and the north-western town of Kaesong and northerly town of Chunchon and landings on the east coast around Skagnung, almost 40 miles from the border.

Their statement also contained details of machine-gun attacks by four 'Yak' aircraft on military and civilian airfields outside the South Korean capital Seoul, destroying aircraft and jeeps and setting fire to petrol tanks.

President Syngman Rhee of South Korea — who denied early rumours of war — told Uncok at least 36 North Korean tanks and armoured cars had been counted on their way to Seoul by the shortest routes.

The North Korean wireless station, in the capital Pyongyang, justified the invasion saying communist forces were counter-attacking against border incursions by the South Koreans in the early hours of the morning and reported a state of war shortly after noon local time.

After an emergency meeting with his cabinet South Korea's foreign minister Ben Limb urged the people of the republic to resist the "dastardly attack".

The UN Security Council met at Lake Success, Detroit after the Korean Ambassador John Myung Changan sent an urgent petition to the State Department in Washington.

Korea has been divided since the Japanese withdrawal at the end of World War II left the USSR occupying the area north of the 38th parallel and the US to the south.

Courtesy BBC News

IN CONTEXT

For the first time the UN asked broadcasters — including the BBC and Voice of America — to transmit the UN ceasefire resolution to North Korea.

The republican government fled Seoul and the following day America offered military aid — including air and sea support — to South Korea.

On 28 June North Korean troops entered the capital and took control. The UN invoked military sanctions shortly afterwards.

President Truman and his government interpreted the invasion as Russian-backed communist aggression.

The USSR and North Korean authorities claimed they were responding to attacks from the republican south.

The war cost about two million lives.

Fighting did not stop until 1953 with the signing of the armistice on 27 July.

But a peace deal has never been reached. American troops remain stationed in the de-militarized zone on and around the 38th parallel separating North and South Korea.

MACAU'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

YOUR STARS

ARIES
Mar. 21-Apr. 19

Reconnect with friends. Organize team efforts and group projects. Haste makes waste. Find out what's wanted and needed. Broaden your understanding. Invent possibilities.

TAURUS
Apr. 20-May. 20

Your work is attracting the attention of someone you respect. Don't over-commit. You can't do everything; get help. Stay on task to make deadlines.

GEMINI
May. 21-Jun. 21

Expand your territory. Get into an adventurous phase. It doesn't need to be expensive. Try exotic flavors, ideas and perspectives. Learn something new.

CANCER
Jun. 22-Jul. 22

A lack of funds could threaten your plans. You won't need to defer gratification forever. Think twice before borrowing. Save for the future.

LEO
Jul. 23-Aug. 22

Collaboration requires patience. Don't push someone who's not ready. Advance shared commitments for a common goal. Support each other.

VIRGO
Aug. 23-Sep. 22

Slow to finish faster. Practice physical routines without overdoing it. Assumptions get challenged. For new results, say something new. Exercise builds energy and strength.

LIBRA
Sep. 23-Oct. 22

Prioritize family, fun and romance. Relax and avoid confrontation or trouble. Creative ideas abound. Keep it simple. Let others know what your heart wants.

SCORPIO
Oct. 23-Nov. 21

Home and family take priority. Relax and devote yourself to one thing at a time. Do a special favor for a loved one.

SAGITTARIUS
Nov. 22-Dec. 21

Take note. A formidable barrier blocks the path. You can see what wasn't working. Communication gets farther than action. Research and write your discoveries.

CAPRICORN
Dec. 22-Jan. 19

More income is possible, but don't get pushy. Avoid spontaneous expenses or knee-jerk reactions. Stick to the budget and wait for developments. Stay in communication.

AQUARIUS
Jan. 20-Feb. 18

You're strong and getting stronger. Slow to avoid accidents or mistakes. Guard against impulsiveness or overindulging. Self-discipline now saves trouble later. Follow your own drum.

PISCES
Feb. 19-Mar. 20

Review plans and revise to adapt for current circumstances. Avoid risky business. Get productive behind closed doors. Meditation soothes and reduces stress. Rest and recharge.

The Born Loser by Chip Sanson



SUDOKU

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

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

WEATHER

	MIN	MAX	CONDITION
CHINA			
Beijing	20	35	fine
Changchun	12	26	cloudy
Chengdu	21	32	rain
Chongqing	23	25	rain
Fuzhou	27	35	cloudy
Guangzhou	25	31	rain
Guiyang	18	22	showers
Haikou	27	34	thunderstorms
Hangzhou	20	23	rain
Harbin	13	24	thunderstorms
Hefei	21	27	overcast
Nanjing	23	26	thunderstorms
Shanghai	22	24	rain
Taipei	25	32	rain
Wuhan	22	27	showers
Hong Kong	29	32	thunderstorms
WORLD			
Moscow	14	23	cloudy
Frankfurt	17	29	sunny
Paris	19	30	sunny
London	16	23	sunny
New York	24	32	sunny

CROSSWORDS

ACROSS 1- Internet writing system that popularized "pwn3d" and "n00b"; 5- Prehistoric chisel-like tool; 10- Start the kitty; 14- Projecting columns at end of wall; 15- Evade; 16- Capital on the Aare; 17- Course listing; 18- Lend ___ (listen); 19- Mtn. stat; 20- Talk big; 21- Capital of Tennessee; 23- Short flight; 25- ___ the fields we go...; 26- Comment at the bottom of a page; 31- Cut off; 35- Clerk on "The Simpsons"; 36- Martini garnish; 38- Fathers; 40- Pull abruptly; 42- Tennis champ Chris; 44- Seniors' org.; 45- Spanish hero; 47- Pungent bulb; 49- ___ Paulo; 50- Family car; 52- Dregs; 54- Scot's cap; 56- Half of MCI; 57- Twosided; 62- Racetrack boundary; 66- Shampoo additive; 67- Goodnight girl of song; 68- Change the decor; 69- ___ good example; 70- More mature; 71- White-centered cookie; 72- Love letters; 73- Tree houses; 74- Horse color;

DOWN 1- Gyro meat; 2- Cabinet dept.; 3- Sicilian spewer; 4- Instructed; 5- Skinny kid?; 6- Forearm bone; 7- Regrets; 8- Boise's state; 9- The communication system of the body; 10- Cain's victim; 11- 1994 Jodie Foster film; 12- Branch location; 13- Ltr. holder; 22- Angers; 24- Singer Yoko; 26- Actress Dunaway; 27- October birthstones; 28- Pound part; 29- VCR alternative; 30- 2, 4, 6, 8, etc.; 32- By way of; 33- Delete; 34- Aired again; 37- Sandusky's lake; 39- Dick and Jane's dog; 41- Josh; 43- Young children; 46- Group of individual facts; 48- Nada; 51- Country; 53- Reflecting surface; 55- Actress Oberon; 57- Exploded; 58- Tiny amount; 59- Security problem; 60- Cincinnati team; 61- Work without ___; 63- Dynamic beginning; 64- Conception; 65- Crazy as a ___; 66- Horse-like animal, term of insult;

Yesterday's solution

Crossword puzzles provided by BestCrosswords.com

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

Emergency calls 999	Taxi 28 939 939 / 2828 3283
Fire department 28 572 222	Water Supply - Report 2822 0088
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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Jade Garden
HKD 11,880,000 4 bed 3 bath

HUNGARY 1, SCOTLAND 0

EURO 2024 | REVIEW

HUNGARY SNATCHES WIN OVER SCOTLAND TO LEAVE IT WITH CHANCE OF MAKING LAST 16

A dramatic stoppage-time goal saw Hungary beat Scotland 1-0 at the European Championship early yesterday (Macau time) to wreck its opponent's hopes of reaching the knockout stage of a major tournament for the first time in its history.

Late substitute Kevin Csoboth scored his first international goal in the 10th minute of stoppage time as Hungary secured third spot in Group A, behind first-place Germany and Switzerland.

The match was overshadowed by a serious-looking injury to Barnabás Varga midway through the second half. The Hungary forward was taken to hospital and will likely need an operation after fracturing several bones in his face.

Varga will take no part in the rest of the tournament should Hungary's three points be enough to reach the round of 16 at Euro 2024 as one of the four best third-place teams — which it might not know until Wednesday when the final round of group games finishes.

"It was terrible. Was a terrible moment to see Barnabás like that," Hungary midfielder Roland Sallai said. "Fortunately, he's in a much better condition ... We cross our fingers for him, that he can return quickly."

"Naturally, it was a terrible incident. Of course, we were fighting for him in the remaining 15-20 minutes, and we would have liked to win for him and we were very happy we could achieve that. And yes, this we dedicate to him."

The whole stadium looked on in concern after Varga collided with Scotland goalkeeper Angus Gunn.



Hungary's coach Marco Rossi celebrates with players at the end of a Group A match between Scotland and Hungary at the Euro 2024 soccer tournament in Stuttgart, Germany

His teammates held up blankets to shield the player as he was tended to by medical staff and both sets of fans applauded when Varga was stretchered off after a delay of around 10 minutes.

Germany topped the group after a late goal saw it rescue a 1-1 draw against Switzerland.

Scotland was eliminated after finishing last in the group, with just one point from a draw against Switzerland. It was humiliated 5-1 by Germany in the Euro 2024 opener.

The Scottish players were furious as they had penalty appeals

waved away late on when Stuart Armstrong was sent crashing to the ground by Willi Orbán but Argentinian referee Facundo Tello played on.

"100% penalty. Somebody somewhere has to explain to me why that's not a penalty," Scotland coach Steve Clarke said. "It's 100%. And like I say, it's a one-goal game, we get a penalty, can be a different night. I've got other words, but I'm not going to use them."

"European competition might have been better to have a European referee, but we had European

VAR. And maybe the referee didn't see the challenge clearly on the pitch so what's the purpose of the VAR if they're not going to come in on something like that. It was a penalty."

Despite both teams needing the win in Stuttgart, chances were few and far between.

Scotland was dominating possession but not doing much with it and struggling to break Hungary down.

But Hungary started to get a foothold in the match and almost took the lead four minutes from the

break, although the flag might have gone up for offside had Orbán's header — from a clever Dominik Szoboszlai free kick — not hit the crossbar and gone out for a goal kick.

Scotland ended the half with 64% possession but no attempts on goal whatsoever. Hungary had five.

Clarke's side finally had a shot in the 53rd but Ché Adams curled his effort way over the bar.

Csoboth was brought on in the 86th minute and he almost had an immediate impact as he hit the far post from a tight angle.

Both goalkeepers had to make saves in a chaotic 10 minutes of stoppage time before Csoboth snatched the win.

Csoboth started the counterattack and, with Scotland outnumbered, picked out an unmarked Roland Sallai before sprinting into the area to receive the return pass and slot into the near corner, sparking wild celebrations among the Hungary players and fans.

The Scotland players fell to the ground in disappointment.

"Tonight and for a long time we have to get over this," Scotland captain Andy Robertson told the BBC. "It's a tough one. It's devastating. All the lads are absolutely gutted. I will say thank you to all the supporters; sorry for letting you all down." MDT/AP

EURO 2024

Kylian Mbappé is getting used to his new mask, teammate says

FRANCE captain Kylian Mbappé is getting used to wearing his new protective mask ahead of a return to play at Euro 2024 against Poland today, his teammate Aurélien Tchouaméni said.

Mbappé sat out France's 0-0 draw with the Netherlands on Friday after breaking his nose in the team's opening 1-0 win over Austria and has been fitted with a protective mask as the injury heals.

"It's no secret that he's really looking forward to the next game, and as far as the mask is concerned, he's starting to get used to it," Tchouaméni said Sunday.

"Obviously he would have preferred to play without it, but I think if you ask the doctor, he's



not going to give him the choice. It's not going to change anything for him, we know he'll be ready

as soon as he's on the pitch, and he's going to bring us a lot." MDT/AP

SCOREBOARD

Germany	5	1	Scotland
Hungary	1	3	Switzerland
Spain	3	0	Croatia
Italy	2	1	Albania
Poland	1	2	Netherlands
Slovenia	1	1	Denmark
Serbia	0	1	England
Romania	3	0	Ukraine
Belgium	0	1	Slovakia
Austria	0	1	France
Turkey	3	1	Georgia
Portugal	2	1	Czech Republic
Croatia	2	2	Albania
Germany	2	0	Hungary
Scotland	1	1	Switzerland
Slovenia	1	1	Serbia
Denmark	1	1	England
Spain	1	0	Italy
Slovakia	1	2	Ukraine
Poland	1	3	Austria
Netherlands	0	0	France
Georgia	1	1	Czech Republic
Turkey	0	3	Portugal
Belgium	2	0	Romania
Switzerland	1	1	Germany
Scotland	0	1	Hungary

EURO 2024 | REVIEW

Germany gets late goal to draw 1-1 with Switzerland and finish top of group

GRAHAM DUNBAR,
FRANKFURT

THEY all jumped for the ball in a frantic late push for the goal that would save Germany from its first loss at the European Championship, against an impressive Switzerland team.

Defender Nico Schlotterbeck leaped up, next to the even more imposing center-back Antonio Rüdiger, who reached highest of all. In front of them both was substitute Niclas Füllkrug.

The German trio was circled by three Swiss opponents trying to protect a 1-0 lead two minutes into stoppage time. Six pairs of feet off the ground in unison, straining to be the one to head the ball.

It was Füllkrug who won the contest, guiding the ball crossed from another substitute David Raum back across Switzerland goalkeeper Yann Sommer into the top corner of the net. The match ended 1-1.

"We risked a lot in this phase because we could have conceded a second goal," Germany coach Julian Nagelsmann said about throwing his defenders into attack. "Who doesn't dare to risk, doesn't get to draw."

Germany had already advanced to the round of 16 before kickoff Sunday, but a draw felt like a win in the circumstances and kept the momentum of impressive wins against Scotland and Hungary.

"When you see how the Germans celebrated their

goal that says everything," said Switzerland captain Granit Xhaka, named player of the match.

Switzerland impressed while protecting a 28th-minute goal from Dan Ndoye's clever volleyed shot, and chasing a bigger lead. A second goal was denied by a marginal offside ruling against Ruben Vargas and a fine save by Manuel Neuer from Xhaka's shot.

The point for each team ensured Germany finished top and Switzerland second in Group A. Hungary took third place in the standings with an even later stoppage-time goal to beat Scotland 1-0 in Stuttgart.

Germany now goes to Dortmund for a round of 16 game Saturday against the runner-up in Group C. That opponent can be any of the four teams — England, Slovenia, Denmark or Serbia — playing their final round of Group C games on Tuesday.

Nagelsmann acknowledged Germany's opponent might not like having two fewer days of rest, though added: "We have to prepare for four teams, they only have to prepare for one team."

Switzerland heads to the Olympic Stadium in Berlin to open the round of 16 on Saturday against the runner-up in Group B, likely Italy or Croatia. They meet Monday in their decisive group game.

Coach Murat Yakin suggested Switzerland had earned the right to make a higher-ranked opponent concerned about his unbeaten team.

"I think we have a certain standing which we worked hard for. We're on a good path," Yakin said, "without a defeat, with a very good style of play. We like being the dark horse."

Switzerland's goal was made in Bologna, the upstart Italian club that has qualified for its first Champions League entry next season.

Ndoye timed his run to meet a floated pass across the goalmouth from his Bologna teammate Remo Freuler. The attack began when Fabian Rieder, making his first start since the 2022 World Cup, won the ball in the German half and then fed Freuler.

A video review had denied Germany taking the lead in the 17th. Robert Andrich's long-range shot bounced up and over the dive of Sommer, but the VAR team alerted Italian referee Daniele Orsato to an earlier foul in the goalmouth by Jamal Musiala.

The much-criticized Waldstadion playing surface behaved better Sunday and the roof stayed closed to protect it though no more rain is forecast for at least five days.

The turf cut up during both previous Euro 2024 games in Frankfurt. It has seemed not to bed in properly since being laid in November after the stadium hosted two NFL games.

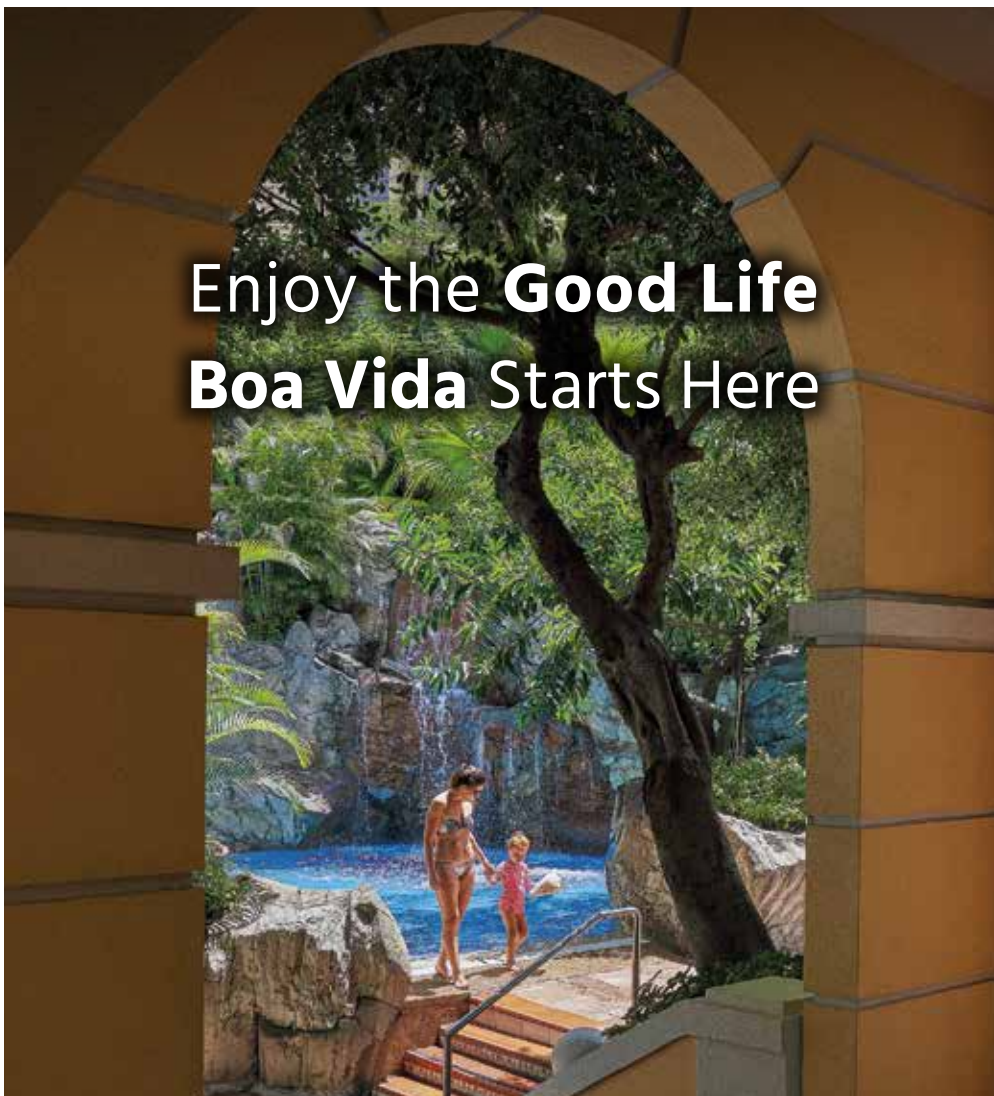
Frankfurt will host two more games, finishing with a round of 16 match that will include Group F winner Portugal perhaps facing Hungary, which faces a three-day wait to learn its fate. **MDT/AP**



Germany's Niclas Füllkrug, center



AD



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UPCOMING GAMES

	Date	Time	Home	Away	ODDS
Wed	Jun 26	0:00	France	Poland	H 1.32, D 6.1, A 11
		0:00	Netherlands	Austria	H 2.25, D 3.25, A 3.85
		03:00	Denmark	Serbia	H 2.32, D 3.6, A 3.25
		03:00	England	Slovenia	H 1.38, D 5, A 10

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OPINION

China Daily
 Editorial, China Daily

**EU'S EV TARIFFS WILL
 SABOTAGE ITS AMBITION
 TO BE THE LEADER OF THE
 GREEN TRANSITION**

Following an investigation that concluded the Chinese electric vehicle industry "benefits from unfair subsidization", the European Commission has announced it is to impose additional tariffs of 17.4 percent to 38.1 percent on Chinese EV imports.

Industry insiders say that the tariffs will hardly frustrate the momentum of Chinese-made EVs in the European market, or help their local counterparts compete, and some take them as being a bargaining chip for a better deal in subsequent negotiations with China.

Yet even if the pending tariffs do not translate into debilitating damage to Chinese EV manufacturers, they indicate a very harmful turn in European policies. They betray the European Union's long-standing commitment to free trade, and signal its resort to interventionist, protectionist tools.

Although Brussels has so far sounded like it does have reservations about Washington's enthusiasm for a trade assault, its latest move targeting the Chinese EV industry could, if not managed well, be the first shots in what would be a damaging trade war between China and the EU.

Beijing is opposed to any form of trade war. With the trade tit-for-tat with Washington still ongoing, the last thing it wants is another trade war with one of its most important trading partners. Beijing has no major geopolitical conflict with Brussels. For decades, bilateral political relations have been generally fine and stable; and economic and trade ties between China and the EU have thrived.

The planned punitive tariffs, however, risk reversing that trend and hurting both economies badly, especially at a time when both economies are struggling to get firing on all cylinders again. The Chinese and European economies are interwoven so broadly and deeply that when one side gets hurt, both do. This at least in part explains why both Chinese and European carmakers participating in a closed-door meeting on Tuesday voiced opposition to Brussels' proposal of higher tariffs. That meeting convened by the Chinese Commerce Ministry reportedly featured four Chinese and six European automakers as well as related chambers of commerce, industry associations and research institutions. In the discussions, the representatives of some Chinese enterprises reportedly called for the government to take "the harshest measures" against the European side. The idea mooted was to raise import tariffs for high-displacement European vehicles to 25 percent, which they argued was consistent both with World Trade Organization rules and the country's low-carbon development goals. But such a retaliatory move would not be conducive to resolving the trade concerns bothering the two sides.

Yet if Brussels goes ahead with its tariffs, it will indeed leave Beijing no option but to retaliate. In a statement, the Commerce Ministry vowed to take "all necessary measures to firmly defend the legitimate rights and interests of Chinese companies". German Chancellor Olaf Scholz has voiced his concerns about the EU Commission's move, arguing protectionism "ultimately just makes everything more expensive and everyone poorer". "We do not close our market to foreign companies because we do not want that for our companies either," he said on Saturday.

All European automakers present at the Commerce Ministry meeting expressed opposition to the impending tariffs, and expressed their hopes for China and Europe to engage in negotiations as soon as possible, so as to avoid an escalation of the bilateral trade frictions.

The same day, Vice-Premier Ding Xuexiang conveyed such concerns to European Commission Executive Vice-President Maros Sefcovic at the fifth EU-China High-Level Environment and Climate Dialogue in Brussels. The tariffs are "typical protectionism," he said, "which is not conducive to the EU's green transition, and detrimental to the overall situation of global cooperation on climate response".

[Abridged]

A railroad bridge collapsed during flooding in the Midwestern U.S. that has led to water rescues, evacuations and at least one death and has brought additional misery during a vast and stubborn heat wave.

The bridge connecting North Sioux City, South Dakota, with Sioux City, Iowa, collapsed into the Big Sioux River yesterday (Macau time), an emergency manager said. Images from local media showed a large span of the steel bridge partially underwater as floodwaters rushed over it.

Some of the trusses collapsed, Jason Westcott, an emergen-

cy manager in Union County, South Dakota, told KCAU-TV. There were no reports of injuries from the collapse.

The bridge's owner, BNSF Railway, had stopped operating it as a precaution during the flooding, spokesperson Kendall Sloan said. Trains are being rerouted.

Floodwaters have risen over days of heavy rain in South Dakota, Iowa, Minnesota and Nebraska. More rain is forecast, and many streams may not crest until later this week as the floodwaters slowly drain to the Missouri and Mississippi rivers.



ISRAEL

**SOME VISITORS
 HAVE A NEW STOP
 ON THEIR TOURS:
 HAMAS' DESTRUCTION
 IN THE SOUTH**

MELANIE LIDMAN,
 KIBBUTZ NIR OZ

A new kind of tourism has emerged in Israel in the months since Hamas' Oct. 7 attack. For celebrities, politicians, influencers and others, no trip is complete without a somber visit to the devastated south that absorbed the brunt of the assault near the border with Gaza.

Jerry Seinfeld, Elon Musk, Michael Douglas, former presidential candidate Nikki Haley, and Ivanka Trump and Jared Kushner are a few who have visited, at times posing for photos in front of burned-out homes. Many Israelis, including soldiers and security officials, are also visiting on organized trips.

"It's our personal story, but it's also the story of all of the state of Israel," said Irit Lahav, spokeswoman for Kibbutz Nir Oz, who gives many of the tours.

A quarter of the approximately 400 Nir Oz residents fell victim to the attack. Hamas militants killed more than 20 and kidnapped over 80. In the dining hall, a wall of post office boxes is plastered with stickers — red for killed, black for kidnapped,

blue for released.

While it's uncomfortable to open the community to visitors, she said it's important for people to "come here and smell the burned smell of death, to imagine your friends or parents here."

Hamas militants killed around 1,200 people as they rampaged through southern Israel, and kidnapped around 250. Health officials in Hamas-run Gaza say more than 37,000 Palestinians have been killed in the war that followed.

Prior to Oct. 7, Lahav ran a tourism company. Now she has turned those itinerary-building skills to the kibbutz where she grew up. Her tour includes the spot in the fence where Hamas militants stormed the kibbutz, along with small details that humanize the scale of destruction, like the candy eggs that melted when the general store was torched.

Many of the kibbutzim and towns that experienced the worst destruction are closed to the public, accessible only via organized tours like those for dignitaries or celebrities, or by invitation from a resident.

Nir Oz decided that the guides must be residents. Rena Bazar, who

lives with most of the community in temporary housing elsewhere, is among those giving tours.

At first, it was difficult to return to Nir Oz. She didn't like the idea of strangers on the lawns and in the dining hall with its bullet-riddled windows. But eventually, she understood the importance of helping visitors understand not just what happened, but also what life had been like before Oct. 7.

"I want to make it less about the combat and more about the personal stories of people who were there," Bazar said.

For visiting dignitaries and VIPs, trips to Israel have long included stops at famous religious or cultural sites, such as the Western Wall, Masada, the Sea of Galilee or the Church of the Holy Sepulcher, and the national Holocaust memorial, Yad Vashem. The visits to the battered kibbutzim and border towns are the latest way to build support and solidarity with Israel's allies abroad.

Other parts of southern Israel are open to the public and encouraging visitors — both foreigners and Israelis from elsewhere. MDT/AP



Russia's southern region of Dagestan held the first of three days of mourning yesterday following a rampage by Islamic militants who killed 19 people, most of them police, and attacked houses of worship in apparently coordinated assaults in two cities. Sunday's violence was the latest that officials blamed on Islamic extremists in the predominantly Muslim region in the North Caucasus, as well as the deadliest in Russia since March, when gunmen opened fire at a concert in suburban Moscow, killing 145 people.



Saudi Arabia More than 1,300 people died during this year's Hajj pilgrimage as the faithful faced extreme high temperatures at Islamic holy sites in the desert kingdom. Saudi authorities announced Sunday. Saudi Health Minister Fahd bin Abdulrahman Al-Jalajel said that 83% of the 1,301 fatalities were unauthorized pilgrims who walked long distances in soaring temperatures to perform the Hajj rituals in and around the holy city of Mecca.



USA The federal judge presiding over the classified documents prosecution of Donald Trump is hearing arguments yesterday on whether to bar the former president from public comments that prosecutors say could endanger the lives of FBI agents working on the case. Special counsel Jack Smith's team says the restrictions are necessary in light of Trump's false comments that the FBI agents who searched his Mar-a-Lago estate in August 2022 for classified documents were out to kill him and his family.