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CONSUMER CONFIDENCE INDEX REACHED A RECORD HIGH DURING THE SECOND QUARTER, ACCORDING TO A SURVEY FROM THE MUST

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LACK OF VISUALS A CHALLENGE FOR SENIOR RESIDENTS IN CHOOSING APARTMENTS

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KYIV MOURNS AS RESCUERS MAKE LAST-DITCH EFFORTS AT CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL HIT BY MISSILE

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AP PHOTO



Philippines At least 27 people, including 19 police and other government personnel, were injured when a large pile of confiscated illegal fireworks exploded in a powerful blast in the southern Philippines, damaging houses, hotels and an international airport, officials said yesterday. Two of the victims of Monday afternoon's explosion were in serious condition in a hospital in the southern port city of Zamboanga, where the mayor ordered an investigation into why the planned controlled destruction of the fireworks by police ordnance experts turned into a massive blast.

AP PHOTO



India's Prime Minister Narendra Modi met President Vladimir Putin in Moscow yesterday, deepening ties between the two nations as Western leaders gathered at a NATO summit in Washington and Russia stepped up attacks in Ukraine with deadly missile strikes. While leaders — including President Joe Biden and Britain's newly elected Prime Minister Keir Starmer — prepared to mark 75 years of the world's biggest security organization.

AP PHOTO



UK Hundreds of newly elected lawmakers trooped excitedly into Parliament yesterday after the U.K.'s transformative election brought a Labour government to power. The halls of the labyrinthine building echoed with excited chatter as the 650 members of the House of Commons gathered — 335 of them arriving for the first time. That compares to 140 new lawmakers after the last election in 2019.

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TAXI ORDER

Community wants Macau to emulate Hong Kong's example by regulating online ride-hailing platforms through licensing - a move that has long been called for

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SURVEY

CONSUMER CONFIDENCE AT AN 'ALL TIME HIGH'

LYNZY VALLES

THE consumer confidence index of the city has reached a record high during the second quarter, indicating a significant boost in consumer optimism regarding economic indicators.

Conducted by the Institute for Sustainable Development (ISD) of the Macau University of Science and Technology (IUSD), the survey results show an overall consumer confidence score of 104.22 for the second quarter of 2024. This marks an increase of 9.25 points, or 9.74%, compared to the previous quarter's score of 94.97. All six sub-indices included in the overall index have increased compared to the previous quarter.

The "Investment in Stocks" sub-index rose to 111.48, up 14.77% from the previous quarter's 97.13, indicating a significant increase in consumer confidence in the stock market. The "Living Standard" sub-index increased



by 12.59% to 105.40, compared to 93.61 in the previous quarter.

Meanwhile, the "Employment" sub-index reached 104.09, up 11.31% from 93.51 in the previous quarter, suggesting greater consumer optimism about their employment prospects. The "Price Level" sub-index climbed

8.07% to 92.97 from 86.03 the previous quarter, reflecting a relatively stable consumer outlook on current and future price trends.

For residential purchases, the sub-index was 94.18 this quarter, up 7.17% from 87.88 in the previous quarter, suggesting that

consumers are slowly becoming more confident in purchasing real estate.

Meanwhile, the survey also revealed that consumers are becoming slightly more optimistic about the local economy as the relevant sub-index increased by nearly 5% to 117.18.

By design, each index score ranges from 0 to 200, with 200 being the highest possible score.

In the latter half of 2024, the worldwide economic landscape is projected to become increasingly complex and challenging, with a diminished growth trajectory for the global economy. Inflation remains a concern, although it is gradually decreasing from previous elevated levels.

The economic expansion and monetary strategies of prominent developed nations have also diverged. Mainland China's economic performance continues to improve, characterized by steady progress in high-quality development, though it also faces challenges like inadequate effective demand and relatively subdued social expectations, according to the IUSD.

Since the fourth quarter of 2008, the Macau University of Science and Technology has been releasing the results of the survey on a quarterly basis.

OPERATION THUNDER 2024

Police apprehend nearly 300 individuals engaging in unlawful behavior

NADIA SHAW

THE Public Security Police Force (PSP) has been carrying out its "Operation Thunder 2024". The taskforce, coordinated by police authorities has been inspecting various establishments for the past four days and has increased patrols in key areas during the same period.

Over the past two days, a total of 91 officers from the Public Security Police Force (PSP) have been deployed across the city to conduct the operation. They have led inspections at numerous internet cafes, gaming centers, and massage

parlors, billiard rooms, and bars in the Macau Peninsula, Taipa and Cotai.

During the operations recently (July 5 to July 8), a total of 291 people (196 men and 95 women) were intercepted and investigated. Among them, five individuals (four men and one woman) were found to be involved in illegal activities, including suspected illegal currency exchange and suspected supply of accommodation. The suspects have been handed over to the relevant departments for further proceedings.

In terms of vehicle inspections, a total of 66 vehicles were



stopped, leading to seven prosecutions. Vehicle inspections were conducted at irregular points to prevent and combat various illegal acts and criminal activities.

The "taskforce uncovered several vehicular violations, including failure to use driving lights, tires not matching the registration certificate, lack of insurance, motorcycles

with less than one year of driving qualification carrying passengers, failure to install identification marks, and improper installation of color lights.

"The police will continue to closely monitor the security situation in Macau and make timely adjustments to our operational deployments," said a spokesperson for the PSP.

PSA

YEUNG MAKES HISTORY FOR MACAU'S SQUASH

RENATO MARQUES

MACAU'S squash player Gigi Yeung made history on finals day at the City of Greater Shepparton International Open (Australia), becoming the first-ever player from Macau to win a PSA (Professional Squash Association) Tour title.

It was the first time that the 23-year-old player from Macau, currently studying and living in the USA, had advanced past the quarter-finals of a PSA Tour event.

Yeung knocked out three seeded players without dropping a game to reach the final.

In the final match, Yeung defeated Norwegian Madeleine Hylland 3-1 (7-11, 13-11, 11-8-11) in 40 minutes, securing her first PSA Tour event victory.

Hylland, who was targeting her third title in her last four events, started strong, winning the first game 7-11. However, Yeung turned things around by winning the second-game tiebreak 13-11. She then gained momentum, closing out the next two games 11-8 and 11-7 to claim the trophy.

In 2017, Yeung won Macau's first medal at the Asian Individual Ju-



nior Championships, after finishing third in the under-17 category. The following year, she reached the quarter-finals at the Hong Kong Junior Open and represented Macau at the World Junior Championships in Chennai, India.

In 2019, she was selected to represent Macau at the World Junior Championships in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

With this win, Yeung climbed 99 positions in the PSA World Tour Rankings, now placing at number 251 in the world.

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A MACAU TIMES PUBLICATIONS LTD PUBLICATION

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For subscription and general issues:

general@macaudailytimes.com | Printed at Welfare Printing Ltd

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PUBLIC HOUSING

Lack of visuals a challenge for senior residents in choosing apartments

LYNZY VALLES & NADIA SHAW

LAWMAKER Wong Kit Cheng has urged the government to provide senior residents with the option of viewing elderly housing units via video to set realistic expectations when selecting flats.

Currently, information about the flats is mainly shared through illustrations, making it challenging for many elderly individuals to visualize the specific layout, view, and proximity to public facilities such as rubbish collection areas and elevators.

Applicants who qualified for the first phase of government apartments for senior residents began selecting accommodation units on Monday.

Prospective applicants arrived at the showroom that morning to participate in the selection process to secure their government apartment. Within the first 15 minutes, starting at 9 a.m., 40 units were selected, most of which were high-rise units facing the park.

By 5 p.m. Monday, 82 applications for unit selection had been completed, including 29 single-person applications and 53 double-person applications, totaling 135 people. Of these, 63 cases were handled online and 19 offline.

Most applicants expressed satisfaction with their apartment, finding these new units more convenient than their previous living situations.

Hon Wai, director of the Social

RENATO MARQUES



Welfare Bureau (IAS), visited the area in the morning and reported that the average selection process took about 10 minutes. Qualified applicants are expected to complete their selections by early November.

The first batch of 759 units is slated for occupancy in October, while the remaining 700 units will not be ready until early 2025.

The bureau reminded applicants to choose a unit within the 90-day period specified in their

official notification letter, and to submit applications on time. The relevant procedures cannot be completed before the designated period.

Lawmaker Wong hopes that after the initial 1,500 flats in the first phase are allocated, the government will promptly allocate the remaining flats to other eligible applicants on the waiting list, and consider providing the same concessionary user fees to subsequent tenants, thereby expanding the scope of benefi-

ciaries.

Wong also urges the government to consider population forecasts and continue assessing the community's long-term need for apartments for the elderly, ensuring that land is allocated to build new units in a timely manner.

This comes as the government has forecasted that by 2041 there will be more than 160,000 people aged 65 or above in Macau, according to its population forecast report.

MACAU HOLDS JOB FAIRS TO FILL OVER 140 VACANCIES

The Labour Affairs Bureau and the Macau Federation of Trade Unions are hosting job fairs from July 16 to July 19, offering 147 vacancies across various industries. The sessions will target various sectors, including the hotel, leisure, and entertainment sectors. The registration period for the job fairs is open from July 10 to July 15 with the sessions taking place from July 16 to July 19 at different venues across Macau. Job seekers are encouraged to register online as soon as possible as places are limited.

YOUTHS LOSE MOP178,000 IN ONLINE JOB-HUNTING SCAM

Six local young people fell victim to an online job-hunting scam, losing a total of MOP178,000, the Judiciary Police reported. From June to July, the victims, two men and four women, responded to messages about job opportunities on social platforms. After contacting the alleged employers, they followed the instructions and entered their personal information on the online electronic payment platform. One female victim was persuaded by customer service staff to increase her guarantee deposit, resulting in a loss of MOP130,000.

Temporary housing in Areia Preta enters final stages

NADIA SHAW

THE temporary housing project on Lot P in Areia Preta is expected to be completed by the end of 2024, providing much-needed transitional accommodation for property owners affected by urban renewal projects in the city.

According to Macau Urban Renewal Limited (MUR), the project, encompassing Lot B and Lot C, will consist of eight residential towers with over 2,800 units and ample parking spaces for cars and motorcycles. The structures of all eight towers were topped out in

December 2023, and fit-out works are currently underway along with the removal of scaffolding from the exterior walls.

To ease traffic flow in the area, the project will add two 24-meter-wide public roads with four-lane two-way carriageways and pedestrian walkways. A ground-level bus interchange, green leisure spaces, and pedestrian precincts will also be included to connect surrounding communities and create a livable environment.

Construction on the Lot P project, at the site of the



failed Pearl Horizon project, began in mid 2021. The project has achieved significant milestones since then, including the completion

of pile foundation works in 2022 and the topping out of the main structures of the eight residential towers in December 2023.

Ming Shun Construction and Property Investment Limited-Tat Cheong Engineering & Construction Company Limited were awarded a MOP1.9 billion contract to build two 41-story residential towers and two 50-story temporary housing towers on one of the lots.

For the other lot, Cheong Kong Construction Company Limited-J&T Construction Company Limited won the MOP1.1 billion bid to construct two 50-story residential towers for temporary housing units.

Additionally, a letter of

intent was signed for China State Construction Engineering to receive MOP4 billion for replacement housing works in Lot A. Con'eer Engineering Limited-China Road and Bridge Corporation-Top Design Consultants also secured a MOP878.6 million contract for the works in Lot B.

The project is expected to be the first destination for residents of the Lao Hon Estate, which is scheduled for renovation works, ensuring that urban renewal projects are carried out smoothly while prioritizing affected residents.

GAMING TAX REVENUE AT MOP45 BILLION

Gaming tax revenue for the first half of the year reached MOP44.7 billion with an execution rate of 53.6%, according to the latest data from the Financial Services Bureau (DSF). In the same period, the city's total revenue amounted to MOP52.7 billion, with an execution rate of 51.6%. Total expenditure was MOP45 billion, reflecting an execution rate of 44.1% between January and June. Under the Investments and Development Expenses of the Administration (PIDDA), investments totaled MOP8.5 billion. The year-end balance stands at MOP7.6 billion.

DSAL, MELCO LAUNCH HOSPITALITY EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

The Labour Affairs Bureau and Melco Resorts introduced the "Melco Resorts & Entertainment Basic Progression Plan - Hotel Operations" yesterday, providing 28 job openings. The plan, designed as a "first hire, then train" initiative, targets Macau residents interested in joining the integrated leisure and tourism services industry. Registration opens today with job vacancies including nine for counter service staff, five for customer service center staff, five for concierge employees, and nine for concierge managers.

GOV'T CALLS FOR EXHIBITORS FOR INVESTMENT FAIR

The 29th Macau International Trade and Investment Fair (MIF) is scheduled to take place from October 16 to 19. The Commerce and Investment Promotion Institute (IPIM) is calling for local companies to apply for a stall at the exhibition area by July 22. Preference will be given to companies that manufacture "Made in Macau" products, Macau brands, and distributors of products from Portuguese-speaking countries.

GUANGZHOU RELAXES MEASURES FOR HOME BUYERS FROM MACAU

Guangzhou has recently relaxed restrictions on home purchases for residents of Macau, Hong Kong and Taiwan. The authorities have stated that there are no limitations on the number of properties that can be acquired with an area exceeding 120 square meters. The new policy, which was introduced by the Guangzhou Municipal Housing and Urban-Rural Development Bureau last week, allows residents from the specified regions to purchase a home in restricted areas if they provide the necessary identity or travel documents. The designated areas have already been identified by the city authorities, with six districts currently classified as such.

TRANSPORT

MACAU ANTICIPATED TO MIRROR HONG KONG'S STEPS IN REGULATING RIDE-HAILING SERVICES

LYNZY VALLES

THE local community is expecting Macau to follow in Hong Kong's footsteps by regulating online ride-hailing platforms through licensing – a move that has long been called for by the Macau community.

In Hong Kong, transport officials sent a document earlier this week to the legislature, asking lawmakers to further consider the proposal, which includes tougher penalties on illegal ride services.

The officials also said they would assess and iron out details such as requirements for obtaining licenses and the number of vehicles permitted on online platforms.

Authorities plan to complete the legislative proposals sometime in 2025.

Similar to Macau, Hong Kong's taxi industry has long resisted online platforms like Uber, seeing them as a threat to their business.

Earlier this week, Hong Kong's transport officials said they hope for a "win-win" situation for the transport industry and passengers through licensing and improved taxi services.

Conversely, Macau remains hesitant to make such a move.

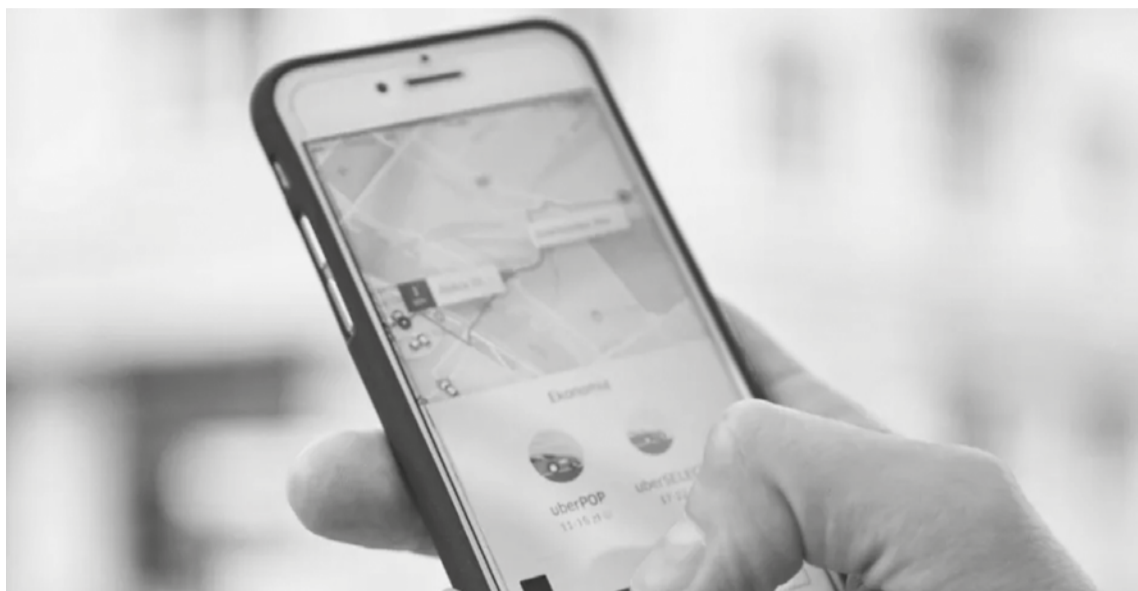
In August last year, Chief Executive Ho Iat Seng stated that the government had reviewed the applicable laws and found that the introduction of ride-hailing platforms would require significant amendment of multiple laws.

António Monteiro, a member of the Macau SAR Central District Community Service Consultative Council, told the Times that as Macau aims to become a smart city, "the need to have a ride-hailing service will create an opportunity for Macau to achieve this objective and be as smart as any regional or international city globally."

This comes amid several calls from tourists, lawmakers, and consultative members for Macau to review its transport regulation.

"We need to sit down and observe the world, which have moved on, with most cities allowing ride-hailing services. But instead we are still here, discussing how best to implement the measures after all these years. It is unacceptable, in my opinion," said Monteiro.

Monteiro noted that if the government proceeds with the



law revision and approval of ride-hailing services, the execution of this must be prompt.

This includes creating partnerships or engaging with companies to develop high-quality ride-hailing services.

"Imagine tourists coming for the upcoming worldwide concerts in the recently announced entertainment space in Cotai, or near a festival in Rua da Felicidade, and we are still facing inefficient taxi services. Who loses after all of this? Macau does," he said.

Uber commenced operations in Macau in October 2015, a year after commencing operations in Hong Kong, drawing both praise and criticism from the community. Demand for the ride-sharing service was tremendous before its entry in the SAR.

However, it was short-lived after facing multiple hurdles from the local government as it faced regulatory pressures.

The ride-hailing app halted operations in July 2017, pausing operations for the second time, noting that the company "fought hard every day to legitimize our Macau operations."

Last month, lawmaker Ron Lam highlighted taxi shortages, particularly during peak hours, as a key issue that could be alleviated by introducing licensed ride-hailing services.

Lam noted that the situation is expected to worsen as hundreds of taxi licenses are set to expire, and the government has only authorized 500 new licenses to begin operations in January 2025.

The inability of foreign tourists to effectively use the local radio taxi app due to limited registration options and poor location services has been raised many times.

Although the city has the MassPlus app, which is the primary platform for booking taxis, the app only allows registration using cell phone numbers from Macau, Hong Kong or mainland China, without the ability for users to enter addresses in English.

Monteiro suggested that a ride-hailing app should have all three languages to cater to the needs of foreign visitors – something the government has been investing in to attract glo-

ternational language: English. We cannot attract international visitors to Macau or ensure that they will want to return otherwise," said Monteiro.

When questioned about whether the introduction of ride-hailing services would have a significant impact on Macau, Monteiro noted that it was also a diversification strategy, aligning with the city's 1+4 development strategy that includes a focus on new technology.

However, this strategy to date appears to be failing in transportation measures, as evidenced through parking meters on the street that only accept "Macau pass" card for payment, without remote payment options.

UBER WELCOMES GOV'T PROPOSAL

Uber welcomed the Hong Kong authorities' move to regulate ride-hailing platforms but also cautioned in a statement that it was "critical for the government to accompany this step with a workable licensing regime."

The statement also said that capping the number of "ride-sharing licenses" could be a blow to many drivers who rely on the platform for flexible earning opportunities.

Hong Kong lawmakers are expected to discuss the government proposals on Friday.

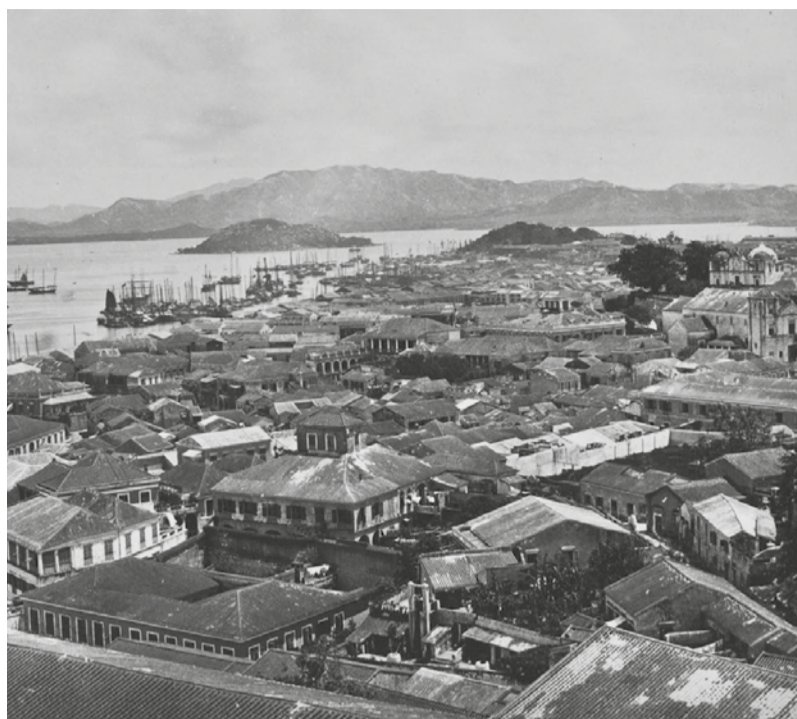
"Imagine tourists coming for the upcoming worldwide concerts in the recently announced entertainment space in Cotai [...] and we are still facing inefficient taxi services. Who loses after all of this? Macau does"

ANTÓNIO MONTEIRO
MEMBER OF THE DISTRICT COMMUNITY SERVICE CONSULTATIVE COUNCIL

bal tourists and reduce dependence on the mainland market.

"If we have 4+1, I would suggest we also have "2+1" for languages. This would encompass catering for the two official languages of Macau plus one in-

MACAU'S LEADING NEWSPAPER



gs," "Everyday Life," "Scenes of the Past," "Celebrating the Return," and "Today's Macau" - the exhibition will pay tribute to Macau's prosperous development over the past 25 years.

In addition to the physical exhibition, the Macau Museum will also launch an on-line virtual reality exhibition on the same theme, allowing the public to visit the exhibition remotely via the museum website. The museum is open daily from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. every day but Mondays, and admission is free for residents and on the 15th of every month.

"This exhibition is a wonderful opportunity for the public to reflect on Macau's remarkable transformation over the past quarter-century," said a spokesperson for the Macau Museum. "We hope visitors will be inspired by the city's progress and proud of its unique cultural heritage."

The "Old Meets New" exhibition is part of Macau's broader celebrations marking the 25th anniversary of its return to China. The city is also hosting a series of student and youth performances, including parades and artistic workshops at various locations around Macau from July 20 to July 25.

EXHIBITION

Time capsule: Macau's 25-year transformation captured in photos

NADIA SHAW

IN celebration of the 25th anniversary of Macau's return to Chinese sovereignty, the Macau Mu-

seum will host a special photography exhibition titled "Old Meets New: A Historical Photo Exhibition Celebrating the 25th Anniversary of Macau's Return to the Motherland"

from July 13 to September 8.

The exhibition opens this Friday at 5:30 p.m. in the museum's lobby and will showcase nearly 120 old and new photographs along with other

artifacts that capture the dramatic changes in Macau's urban landscape and cultural characteristics since the 1999 handover. Divided into five sections - "Historical Buildin-

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Orthopaedic Surgery & Sports Medicine : Dr. Lam Kun Kuan

ENT : Dr. Cheng Zheng Ang

Cardiology : Dr. Jin Chun, Dr. Leong Man Kin

General Medicine : Dr. Ng Kam Hong, Dr. Lam Weng Chio

Dietitian : Chan Lai U Joey

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SUMMIT

To counter China, NATO and its Asian partners are moving closer under US leadership

DIDI TANG, WASHINGTON

IN the third year of the war in Ukraine, NATO is set to deepen relations with its four Indo-Pacific partners, which, although not part of the military alliance, are gaining prominence as Russia and China forge closer ties to counter the United States and the two Koreas support opposing sides of the conflict in Europe.

The leaders of New Zealand, Japan and South Korea for the third year in a row will attend the NATO summit, which started yesterday in Washington, D.C., while Australia will send its deputy prime minister. China will be following the summit closely, worried by the alliance's growing interest beyond Europe and the Western Hemisphere.

"Increasingly, partners in Europe see challenges halfway around the world in Asia as being relevant to them, just as partners in Asia see challenges halfway around the world in Europe as being relevant to them," Secretary of State Antony Blinken said last week at the Brookings Institution.

America's top diplomat said the U.S. has been working to break down barriers between European alliances, Asian

coalitions and other partners worldwide. "That's part of the new landscape, the new geometry that we've put in place."

Countries with shared security concerns are strengthening ties as competition escalates between the United States and China. Washington is trying to curb Beijing's ambition to challenge the U.S.-led world order, which the Chinese government dismisses as a Cold War mentality aimed at containing China's inevitable rise.

On Monday, Beijing responded angrily to unconfirmed reports that NATO and its four Indo-Pacific partners are expected to release a document laying out their relationship and ability to respond jointly to threats from cyberattacks and disinformation.

Lin Jian, a spokesman for the Chinese foreign ministry, accused NATO of "breaching its boundary, expanding its mandate, reaching beyond its defense zone and stoking confrontation."

The war in Ukraine, which has pitted the West against Russia and its friends, has bolstered the argument for closer cooperation between the U.S., Europe and their Asian allies. "Ukraine of today may be East Asia of tomorrow," Japanese

Prime Minister Fumio Kishida told the U.S. Congress in April.

The U.S. and South Korea accused Pyongyang of supplying Russia with ammunition, while Russian President Vladimir Putin visited North Korea last month and signed a pact with leader Kim Jong Un that envisions mutual military assistance.

South Korea and Japan, meanwhile, are sending military supplies and aid to Ukraine. The U.S. also says China is providing Russia with machine tools, microelectronics and other technology that allow it to make weapons to use against Ukraine.

South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol will bring to Washington "a strong message regarding the military cooperation between Russia and North Korea and discuss ways to enhance cooperation among NATO allies and Indo-Pacific partners," his principal deputy national security adviser, Kim Tae-hyo, told reporters Friday.

New Zealand Prime Minister Christopher Luxon said discussions would "focus on our collective efforts to support the rules-based system."

The partnership does not make NATO a direct player in

the Indo-Pacific but allows it to coordinate with the four partners on issues of mutual concern, said Mirna Galic, senior policy analyst on China and East Asia at the U.S. Institute of Peace. For example, she wrote in an analysis, they can share information and align on actions such as sanctions and aid delivery but do not intervene in military crises outside of their own regions.

The NATO summit will allow the United States and its European and Indo-Pacific allies to push back against China, Russia, North Korea and Iran, according to Luis Simon, director of the Centre for Security Diplomacy and Strategy at Vrije Universiteit Brussel.

"The fact that the Euro-Atlantic and Indo-Pacific alliances are structured around a clear anchor — U.S. military power — makes them more cohesive and gives them a strategic edge as compared to the sort of interlocking partnerships that bind China, Russia, Iran, and North Korea," Simon wrote in a commentary last week on War On the Rocks, a defense and foreign affairs website.

Beijing is worried by NATO's pivot to the east, said Zhu Feng, dean of the School of International Studies at Nanjing Uni-

versity in eastern China. Beijing has insisted that NATO not interfere in security affairs in the Indo-Pacific and that it should change its view of China as a strategic adversary.

"NATO should consider China as a positive force for the regional peace and stability and for global security," Zhu said. "We also hope the Ukraine war can end as soon as possible ... and we have rejected a return to the triangular relation with Russia and North Korea."

"In today's volatile and fragile world, Europe, the U.S. and China should strengthen global and regional cooperation," Zhu said.

NATO and China had little conflict until tensions grew between Beijing and Washington in 2019, the same year the NATO summit in London raised China as a "challenge" that "we need to address together as an alliance." Two years later, NATO upgraded China to a "systemic challenge" and said Beijing was "cooperating militarily with Russia."

After Russia invaded Ukraine in 2022, leaders of Japan, South Korea, Australia and New Zealand attended a NATO summit for the first time, where statements noted the geopolitical challenges China poses. Beijing accused NATO of "cooperating with the U.S. government for an all-around suppression of China."

Now, Beijing is worried that Washington is forming a NATO-like alliance in the Indo-Pacific.

Chinese Senior Col. Cao Yanzhong, a researcher at China's Institute of War Studies, asked U.S. Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin last month whether the U.S. was trying to create an Asian version of NATO by emphasizing partnerships and alliances. They include a U.S. grouping with Britain and Australia; another with Australia, India and Japan; and one with Japan and South Korea.

"What implications do you think the strengthening of the U.S. alliance system in the Asia-Pacific will have on this region's security and stability?" Cao asked at the Shangri-la Dialogue security summit in Singapore.

Austin replied that the U.S. was simply working with "like-minded countries with similar values and a common vision of a free and open Indo-Pacific."

Beijing has its own conclusion.

"The real intent of the U.S. Indo-Pacific strategy is to integrate all small circles into a big circle as the Asian version of NATO in order to maintain the hegemony as led by the United States," Chinese Lt. Gen. Jing Jianfeng said at the forum.

MDT/AP

INDONESIA

Rescuers search for dozens buried by a landslide that killed at least 23 people

RESCUE workers dug through tons of mud and rubble yesterday as they searched for dozens of missing people after a landslide hit an unauthorized gold mining area on Indonesia's Sulawesi island, killing at least 23 people.

More than 100 villagers were digging for grains of gold on Sunday in the remote and hilly village of Bone Bolango when tons of mud plunged down the surrounding hills and buried their makeshift camps, said Heriyanto, head of the provincial Search and Rescue Office.

Rescuers recovered more bodies yesterday in the devastated hamlet where the gold mine is located.

"Improved weather allowed us to recover more bodies," said Heriyanto, who goes by a single name like many Indonesians.

According to his office, 66 villagers managed to escape from the landslide, 23 were pulled out alive by rescuers, including 18 with injuries, and 23 bodies were recovered, including three women and a 4-year-old boy. About 35 others were missing, it said.

National Disaster Management Agency spokesperson Abdul Muhari said torrential rains that have pounded the mountainous district since Saturday triggered the landslide and broke an embankment, causing floods



up to the roofs of houses in five villages in Bone Bolango, which is part of a mountainous district in Gorontalo province. Nearly 300 houses were affected and more than 1,000 people fled for safety.

Authorities deployed more

than 200 rescuers, including police and military personnel, with heavy equipment to search for the dead and missing in a rescue operation that has been hampered by heavy rains, unstable soil, and rugged, forested terrain, said Afifuddin Ilahude, a local rescue

official.

"With many missing and some remote areas still unreachable, the death toll is likely to rise," Ilahude said, adding that sniffer dogs were being mobilized in the search.

Videos released by the National

Search and Rescue Agency show rescue personnel using farm tools and their bare hands to pull a mud-caked body from the thick mud and placing it in a black bag to take away for burial.

Monsoon rains cause frequent landslides and flash floods in Indonesia, an archipelago nation of more than 17,000 islands where millions of people live in mountainous areas or near floodplains.

Informal mining operations are common in Indonesia, providing a tenuous livelihood to thousands who labor in conditions with a high risk of serious injury or death. Landslides, flooding and collapses of tunnels are just some of the hazards facing miners. Much of gold ore processing involves highly toxic mercury and cyanide and workers frequently use little or no protection.

The country's last major mining-related accident occurred in April 2022, when a landslide crashed onto an illegal traditional gold mine in North Sumatra's Mandailing Natal district, killing 12 women who were looking for gold.

In February 2019, a makeshift wooden structure in an illegal gold mine in North Sulawesi province collapsed due to shifting soil and the large number of mining holes. More than 40 people were buried and died. **MDT/AP**

Australia appoints special envoy to confront a rise in antisemitism across the country

ROD MCGUIRK,
MELBOURNE

THE Australian government named a special envoy yesterday to confront a rise in antisemitism across the country since the Israel-Hamas war began.

A similar envoy will soon be appointed to challenge Islamophobia in Australia and both will promote social cohesion, Prime Minister Anthony Albanese told reporters at the Sydney Jewish Museum.

Albanese's own Sydney office has been targeted with pro-Palestinian graffiti as rival activists clash over the Israeli-Hamas war in

Australian cities and university campuses.

Albanese appointed Jillian Segal, a Sydney lawyer and business executive, to be "special envoy to combat antisemitism in Australia" for three years. She will consult with community groups and report back to Albanese and Multicultural Affairs Minister Andrew Giles.

Segal called statistics on antisemitism in Australia "shocking." Reports of antisemitism spiked 700% immediately after Hamas militants sparked the war in Gaza by attacking Israel on Oct. 7, and are still running 400% to 500% higher than before the conflict, she said.



The reports include Jewish-owned businesses being boycotted and van-

dalized as well as Jewish artists being excluded or subjected to social media

shadow bans that restrict their visibility on platforms, Segal said.

"Unfortunately there is no single answer to the perennial problem of antisemitism," she said.

"But the creation of this role shows a determination by the government to confront this evil and to ensure that it does not erode the goodness that exists in our society," she added.

Albanese said a graffiti attack that marked his inner-Sydney office as a Hamas target in December was being taken seriously and acted upon.

He also condemned last month's vandalism with spray paint at the Austra-

lian National Korean War Memorial and the Australian Vietnam Forces National Memorial in the national capital, Canberra.

"I have spoken with members of the Jewish community here, in Melbourne, right around Australia, who have not felt safe, members of the Jewish community whose children are worried about wearing their school uniform in our capital cities," Albanese said. "That's not acceptable. Not acceptable, ever. And certainly not in Australia in 2024."

"What we need to do is to make sure that the conflict that is occurring in the Middle East that has caused a great deal of grief for the Jewish community, for members of the Islamic and Palestinian communities — Australians overwhelmingly do not want conflict brought here," Albanese added. **MDT/AP**

US

Trump returns to campaign trail amid calls for Biden to withdraw

ADRIANA GOMEZ LICON,
MIAMI

PRESIDENT Donald Trump is getting back on the campaign trail, rallying voters in his home state at his flagship golf resort in a celebratory mood as Democrats face tough calls over President Joe Biden's reelection chances.

Trump is nearing a deadline to announce his running mate but appears in no rush as much of the attention is still centered on questions about Biden's ability to govern for another four-year term. Some Democrats have started calling for Biden to step down as their presumptive nominee following his dismal debate performance last month.

Both Biden, 81, and Trump, 78, are at least two decades older than most American presidents have been, according to the Pew Research Center, which said the median age for all U.S. presidents on their first inauguration is 55 years old. But that has not stopped Trump from arguing he is stronger than Bi-



Republican presidential candidate former President Donald Trump speaks at a campaign rally, June 22, 2024, at Temple University in Philadelphia

den, who repeatedly stumbled, paused and could not complete sentences at times during the June 27 debate. Trump was criticized by Democrats for making false statements during the debate about the Jan. 6, 2021, riot at the U.S. Capitol and suggesting immigrants entering the U.S. illegally were taking so-called "Black jobs" and "Hispanic jobs."

In an interview Monday with Fox News Channel's Sean Hannity, Trump said he thought Biden "might very well stay in" the race. "Nobody wants to give that up that way," Trump added. "He is going to feel badly about himself for a long time.

It's hard to give it up that way, the way where they're trying to force him out."

In the Miami suburb of Doral, Trump will underscore his strong support in a former battleground state that has now shifted toward the GOP. U.S. Sen. Marco Rubio, a Miami native and one of the contenders for the vice presidential post, will be attending the rally along with other Florida politicians.

Kevin Cabrera, a Miami-Dade County commissioner who was Florida state director for Trump's 2020 reelection campaign and is set to speak at the rally, said to expect an "overwhelming show of unity."

"The rally will display our unified front, showcasing a stark contrast to the Democrats, who are lost and fighting with each other over Biden's health and ability to continue," Cabrera said.

The presumptive GOP nominee will also touch on Biden's handling of immigration and the economy, highlighting the rise in home prices and goods. Trump will also talk about how Florida is affected by the increasing arrivals of immigrants as the final destination for many people illegally crossing the U.S.-Mexico border.

The leadership crisis among Democrats has perhaps given Trump a reason to wait for his VP announcement so as to not draw attention away from Biden's woes. Senior advisers and key allies say they still don't know whom Trump will choose as his running mate, and many believe the choice is still in flux.

Speaking on MSNBC Monday, Biden criticized Trump for not having held events since the debate and suggested he had been "riding around in his golf cart." **MDT/AP**

this day in history



1943 WESTERN ALLIES INVADE SICILY

The armed forces of Britain, the United States and Canada have landed on the Mediterranean island of Sicily.



It is the first major landing of British troops on European soil since the fall of Crete two years ago.

Initial resistance has been surprisingly weak against British forces with little anti-aircraft fire and no enemy naval intervention. However, the US forces faced a tougher fight on their beaches.

The Times reports Allied air forces acted in close co-operation with naval and ground forces.

Late last night airborne troops in parachutes and gliders - many of whom fought in North Africa - were dropped over the island.

American paratroops were the first to land at 2110 under the command of Colonel John Cerny, who said a whole battalion had been dropped in one area alone. They were followed by British airborne troops two hours later.

There is little news about them at the moment but all the aircraft carrying them returned to base in North Africa safely.

Meanwhile hundreds of ships of all sizes sailed across from North Africa carrying thousands of troops, weapons, armoured vehicles and heavy artillery.

The invasion fleet was described by one pilot as stretching across 40 miles of water consisting of huge barges and merchant ships escorted by destroyers.

At about 0300 local time today the British and Canadian troops were brought ashore at Pachino, near Cape Passero on the south-east coast of the south-eastern tip of Sicily.

Americans arrived three hours later near Gela to the west of the British beaches.

The Canadians had to cope with fairly choppy seas in the area of their operations but the British were protected by the bay at Passero and were able to land their equipment ashore fairly easily.

They did encounter some heavy sniping from coastal defences but have made swift progress inland.

Over the past month Sicilian airfields have been attacked to weaken air power on the ground and prevent the arrival of reinforcements.

Courtesy BBC News

PUTIN'S WAR

Kyiv mourns as rescuers make last-ditch efforts at children's hospital hit by Russian missile

RESCUE operations stretched into a second day at a major Kyiv children's hospital struck by a Russian missile, Ukraine President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said yesterday, adding that 38 people were killed and almost 200 injured in an intense daytime barrage that smashed into cities across the country.

Zelenskyy said on the social platform X that 64 people were hospitalized in the capital as well as 28 in Kryvyi Rih and six in Dnipro — both in central Ukraine.

It was Russia's hea-

viest bombardment of Kyiv in almost four months and one of the deadliest of the war, hitting seven of the city's 10 districts. The strike on the Okhmatdyt children's hospital, which interrupted open-heart surgery and forced young cancer patients to take their treatments outdoors, drew an international outcry.

Kyiv city administrators declared yesterday an official day of mourning. Entertainment events were prohibited and flags lowered in the capital.



Russia denied responsibility for the hospital strike, insisting it doesn't attack civilian targets in Ukraine despite abundant evidence to

the contrary, including Associated Press reporting.

Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov on Tuesday repeated that posi-

tion, pointing to a Russian Defense Ministry statement that blamed a Ukrainian air defense missile for partially destroying the hospital.

The Russian onslaught Monday came on the eve of a NATO summit in Washington where alliance countries are expected to pledge new military and economic support for Ukraine.

Russian President Vladimir Putin, meanwhile, was hosting India's Prime Minister Narendra Modi in Moscow.

Zelenskyy was deeply critical of Modi's visit, saying on X late Monday: "It is a huge disappointment and a devastating blow to peace efforts to see the leader of the world's largest democracy hug the world's most bloody criminal in Moscow on such a day." **MDT/AP**

IN CONTEXT

In reality, the airborne drops faced huge problems including Allied ships shooting at Allied planes.

But once ashore the Allies advanced north and west and controlled a quarter of the island within three days. The German General Hans Hube took charge of the Italian forces soon after the invasion, withdrew to a defensive line across the north-east of the island and organised an orderly withdrawal.

The American 7th Army under US General Patton made swift progress north-west as the Italians and Germans retreated arriving in the capital, Palermo, on 22 July.

Faced with tough German resistance in mountainous terrain, General Sir Bernard Montgomery's 8th Army - consisting of British and Canadian troops - made slow progress towards Catania midway up the east coast. They finally arrived on 5 August.

General Patton entered Messina on 17 August, a few hours ahead of Montgomery. By this stage 70,000 Italian and 39,000 German troops had been evacuated to the Italian mainland. The campaign was in effect a draw. The liberation of Sicily marked the first time part of the home territories of the Axis powers had been captured and precipitated the fall of Fascist leader Benito Mussolini.

He was ousted on 25 July by Italian King Victor Emmanuel in favour of Marshal Pietro Badoglio who eventually signed an armistice with the Allies on 3 September.

MACAU'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

YOUR STARS



ARIES

Mar. 21-Apr. 19

It's getting easier to advance. Nurture your health and wellness. Take physical action to fulfill a dream. Push your performance to new heights.



TAURUS

Apr. 20-May. 20

Prioritize fun, creativity and laughter. Reconnect with nature. Embrace a fantasy or dream. Make a romantic wish. Show up for someone you love.



GEMINI

May. 21-Jun. 21

Enjoy the comforts of home. Prepare for some fun together. Cook up something delicious for family and friends. Have folks over to celebrate.



CANCER

Jun. 22-Jul. 22

Investigate a fascinating subject. Use imagination. Ask probing questions. Clarify intentions and goals. Explain a complicated theory. Write and share an inspiring story.



LEO

Jul. 23-Aug. 22

You can get the resources you need. Focus to realize a vision. Find creative ways to cut costs or reduce waste. Produce profitable results.



VIRGO

Aug. 23-Sep. 22

You're strong, creative and attractive. Energize a personal dream. Start getting serious. Avoid distractions. Take charge. Make changes for the better. You're empowered.



LIBRA

Sep. 23-Oct. 22

Rest and recharge. Find a peaceful sanctuary to let your mind wander. Invent aspirations and plans. Savor private rituals. Get lost in a beautiful view.



SCORPIO

Oct. 23-Nov. 21

Share what you're learning. Social connections open valuable doors. Exchange news, resources and comfort. Pull together to address a common challenge. Collaborate with friends.



SAGITTARIUS

Nov. 22-Dec. 21

Follow a professional hunch. Develop satisfying projects. Provide excellent work. Consider long-range plans. Your status is on the rise. Imagine inspiring possibilities.



CAPRICORN

Dec. 22-Jan. 19

Let your imagination be your guide. Studies flourish. Exploration invites you out. Cross or visit a body of water. Change is in the air.



AQUARIUS

Jan. 20-Feb. 18

Financial illusions fade; stick to facts. Don't fall for a trick. Share dreams with someone who can help achieve them. Collaborate for mutual benefit.

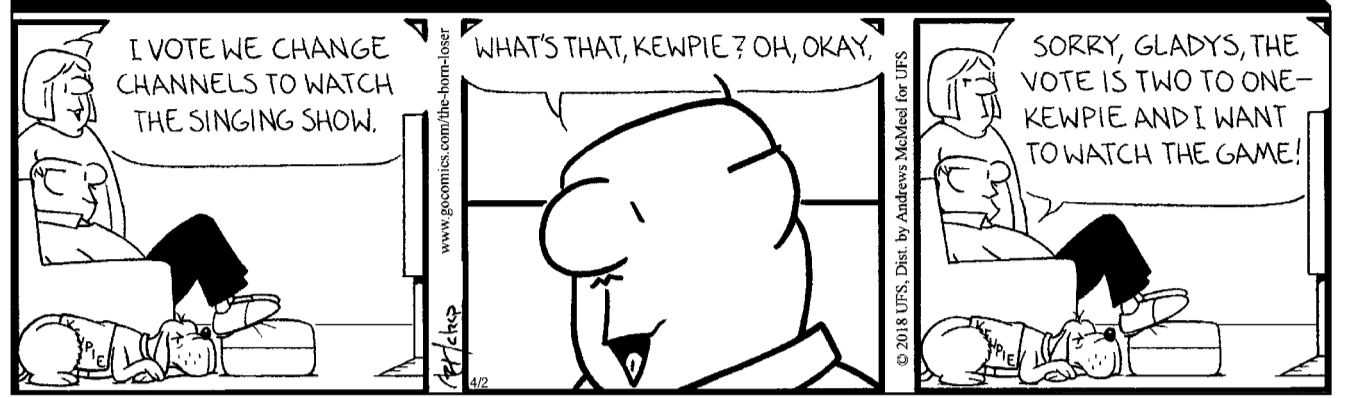


PISCES

Feb. 19-Mar. 20

Connect with someone who gets it. Discard new possibilities and long-desired objectives. Clever ideas are abundant. Indulge fantasies. Share goals. Stand for each other.

The Born Loser by Chip Sansom



SUDOKU

EASY

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

EASY+

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

MEDIUM

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		9		5	2
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	8	6	1		
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		9	3		
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8			7	5	

HARD

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7	1		4		
			5	8	
	3				
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	6			5	

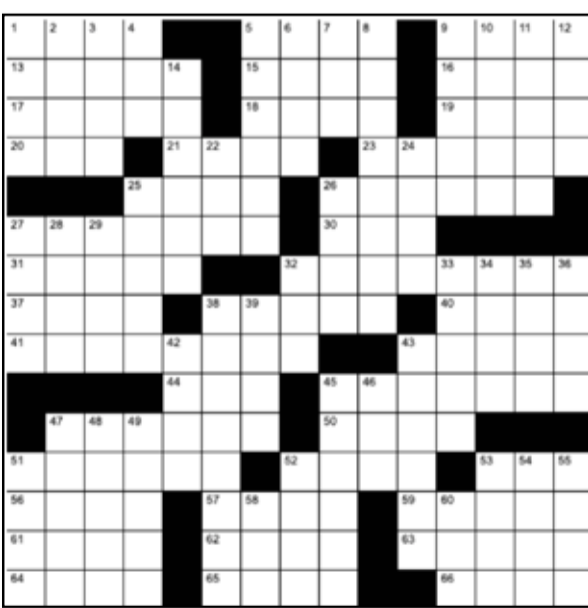
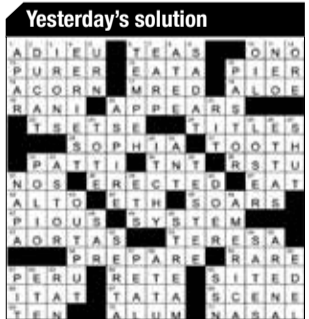
WEATHER

	MIN	MAX	CONDITION
CHINA			
Beijing	23	33	cloudy
Changchun	16	30	fine
Chengdu	24	29	overcast
Chongqing	26	31	rain
Fuzhou	26	38	cloudy
Guangzhou	27	36	cloudy
Guiyang	23	29	cloudy
Haikou	26	35	thunderstorms
Hangzhou	28	36	fine
Harbin	18	28	fine
Hefei	25	27	rain
Nanjing	26	28	rain
Shanghai	28	32	rain
Taipei	26	31	rain
Wuhan	25	30	cloudy
Hong Kong	29	33	showers
WORLD			
Moscow	15	27	cloudy
Frankfurt	17	26	showers
Paris	17	26	cloudy
London	13	22	cloudy
New York	24	31	cloudy

CROSSWORDS

ACROSS 1- Slippery ___ eel; 5- Waterproof cover; 9- Leveling wedge; 13- Goes it alone; 15- At any time; 16- Stable mate; 17- Shallow circular dish; 18- Comic Rudner; 19- Prolific author; briefly; 20- Sun. speech; 21- Mtn. stat; 23- Crownlike object; 25- Computer programs, for short; 26- Inflammation of the ear; 27- Emblem; 30- French diarist; 31- Snooped (around); 32- Illness; 37- Talon; 38- Express a viewpoint; 40- Winglike parts; 41- Tries; 43- Act badly; 44- PBS benefactor; 45- Broadened; 47- Thespian; 50- In the middle of; 51- Moon of Jupiter; 52- Med school subj.; 53- Blood-typing letters; 56- Hebrew month; 57- Walked; 59- Alleviates; 61- Windshield option; 62- ___ kleine Nachtmusik; 63- Hand tool; 64- Canonized Fr. women; 65- Active one; 66- Western pact;

DOWN 1- Dangerous snakes; 2- Boot bottom; 3- Banned apple spray; 4- ___ a chance!; 5- Mother of Calcutta; 6- Tel ___; 7- Not emp.; 8- Custom; 9- Stylish; 10- Capital of Vietnam; 11- Wrinkle removers; 12- Actress Suvari; 14- Oozed; 22- CD precursors; 24- Hog sound; 25- ___ there yet?; 26- Getting ___ years; 27- Machu Picchu resident; 28- Shed feathers; 29- Jr's exam; 32- Lisa, to Bart, briefly; 33- Identified; 34- North Carolina university; 35- Overfill; 36- Highly ranked competitor in sporting events; 38- Performed surgery; 39- School orgs; 42- Queue before Q; 43- Prepared for publication; 45- Roam; 46- "___ Believer" (Monkees hit); 47- Examine account books; 48- Machine for lifting heavy loads; 49- Legal wrongs; 51- Chows down; 52- First-class; 53- The most heavily populated continent on Earth; 54- Waist band; 55- Capital of Norway; 58- ___ Grande; 60- Royal son of comics;



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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Jade Garden
HKD 11,880,000 4 bed 3 bath

AD

PARIS 2024

AT THE PARIS OLYMPICS, IT WILL NO LONGER BE PERSONAL FOR UKRAINE'S ATHLETES. THIS TIME, IT'S WAR

HANNA ARHIROVA &
JOHN LEICESTER, KYIV

FOR Ukrainian hurdler Anna Ryzhykova, each stride on the Paris Olympic track will have meaning far beyond the time she clocks.

Her competitions are no longer strictly an individual battle, but war on a different front. Her goal is not just gold, but also to rivet global attention on her country's fight for survival against Russia.

"You're not doing it for yourself anymore," she says. "Winning a medal just for yourself, being a champion, realizing your ambitions — it's inappropriate."

But the broader war is making it increasingly difficult for Ukraine, once a post-Soviet sports power, to get those headline-capturing medals, an Associated Press analysis found.

Skater Oksana Baiul won Ukraine's first Olympic gold, at the 1994 Winter Games, just three years after Ukraine declared independence. The medal ceremony in Lillehammer, Norway, was delayed while organizers hunted for a recording of Ukraine's anthem, finally securing one from the Ukrainian team.

Pole vault star Sergei Bubka and the boxing Klitschko brothers — Vitali and Wladimir, the Olympic super-heavyweight champion in 1996 — were among other athletes who put the new nation on sport's map. At the Summer Games, Ukraine outperformed every former Soviet or Eastern bloc state — except Russia and, in 2000, Romania — and through to London in 2012, always finished among the top 13 nations, ranked by total medals won.

Ukrainian performances began dipping after 2014. Russia's illegal annexation of Crimea that year was followed by eight years of armed conflict in eastern Ukraine, where Moscow backed armed separatists before unleashing its even deadlier full-scale invasion in 2022 to subdue the whole country.

Ukraine's haul of 11 medals at the 2016 Rio Games was its smallest as an independent nation and it tumbled to a low of 22nd in the country rankings. Ukraine recovered to 16th at the pandemic-delayed Olympics in Tokyo in 2021 but just one of its 19 medals was gold — another new low.

AP PHOTO



Hurdler Anna Ryzhykova trains at the sports center in Kyiv, Ukraine on Monday, Jan. 8, 2024

Part of the explanation is that fighting takes lives and resources. Just as important is the psychological burden the war imposes on athletes.

While honing their bodies and skills for Paris, they have wrestled with their consciences. Athletes have had to explain to themselves and others why they are still competing when soldiers are dying and lives being ripped apart. Some are emerging from the journey with their priorities reordered and armed with new motivation to fight, through sport, for the broader national cause.

"Our victories are to draw attention to Ukraine," Ryzhykova says.

She ran on Ukraine's bronze medal-winning 400-meter relay team in the London Olympics in 2012, and placed 5th in her specialty in Tokyo, the 400-meter hurdles. Any medals she earns this summer will be for her country in a very real sense.

"Attention is drawn to you only when you win, when you perform, when you are on the podium," she said in an AP in-

terview. "The higher you are, the more attention you attract."

A SPORTS POWER BEING DESTROYED

More than 500 sports facilities have been destroyed since the war began in February 2022. That was the year Russian missiles hit the Lokomotiv sports center in Kharkiv, Ukraine's second-largest city, depriving Ukrainian artistic swimmers of the training venue they used before winning the team bronze medal in Tokyo. The gleaming "Neptune" aquatic center in Mariupol was bombed in the Russian siege of that devastated port city and now the city is

raid sirens that blare over his hometown, Kropyvnytskyi in central Ukraine, so they don't interrupt his training. Still, after particularly deadly Russian attacks that regularly hit the country, Doroshchuk says he's been forced to look inside himself, questioning whether it's morally right that he's "just training" when other men are defending front lines.

"I think everyone has these kinds of thoughts," he said. "Many people among those whom I know are fighting, and some were killed."

Across Ukraine, air raids often derail training.

"You sit in the bomb shelter for an hour, then come out for 15 minutes and start warming up and moving again. The alarm goes

off again, and you go back to the bomb shelter," Ryzhykova says. She mostly trains abroad as a result.

Sports in mourning
Among Ukraine's many tens of thousands of dead and injured are athletes, coaches and others in sports organizations

who together helped Ukraine to stand on its own as a sporting nation after it broke free of the former Soviet sports machine.

Some of the athletes killed might have had a shot of qualifying for Paris. Some of the coaches had been nurturing future generations.

Ryzhykova lost a mentor who helped ignite her passion for sports. Coach Valentyn Vozniuk and his wife, Iryna Tymoshenko, were among 46 people killed by a supersonic missile that slammed into an apartment building in Dnipro in 2023.

Vozniuk, who was 75, led the Dnipro sports school where Ryzhykova started track and field and where she still trains on trips home.

"He was always very cheerful, a happy person who did everything to make children come, enjoy, and stay," she recalls.

She worries the war will accelerate a downward spiral for Ukrainian sport. "Few children are coming for training now, many have left," she notes.

"There are times when depression and a feeling of not wanting to do anything set in," she says. "And when you're at a training camp and read the news about a massive rocket attack, you worry about all your relatives and loved ones."

FACING RUSSIA IN PARIS

In Paris, Ukrainian athletes will endure another ordeal: the likelihood of crossing paths with competitors from Russia and ally Belarus.

The International Olympic Committee barred the two nations from team sports in Paris but didn't bend to Ukrainian pleas for their complete exclusion.

Instead, Russians and Belarusians who pass a two-step vetting procedure will compete individually as neutrals. They must not have publicly supported the invasion or be affiliated with military or state security agencies.

The IOC has said dozens of Russian and Belarusian athletes qualify.

Ryzhykova struggles with the prospect of face-to-face encounters.

"I can't even imagine this anger," she says. "How to restrain oneself, how to look at them."

Her priority remains Ukraine and keeping its losses and sacrifices in the spotlight.

"We cannot be without a position, be on the sidelines — because we are opinion leaders. And we have to be a support for our people," Ryzhykova says.

"It will be challenging at this Olympics because there is no room for defeat or injury," she adds. "It's tough to cope with, but it's both motivation and responsibility." **MDT/AP**

Ukrainian athletes will endure another ordeal: the likelihood of crossing paths with competitors from Russia and ally Belarus

under occupation. That ruined the plans of diver Stanislav Olyferchuk to use it as his Olympic training base for Paris.

High jumper Oleh Doroshchuk, aged 23 and one of Ukraine's brightest prospects in Olympic track and field in Paris, has learned to ignore aid

EURO 2024 | PREVIEW

England plays the Netherlands aiming for back-to-back European finals

STEVE DOUGLAS & JAMES ELLINGWORTH, DORTMUND

ENGLAND can reach back-to-back European Championship finals when it meets the Netherlands in Dortmund in the second semifinal. The winner plays Spain or France in the upcoming final. Kickoff is at 3 a.m. (Macau time).

Here's what to know about the match.

MATCH FACTS

— Both teams conceded the opening goal in their quarterfinals before coming back to win, with England beating Switzerland in a penalty shootout after a 1-1 draw and the Netherlands winning 2-1 against Turkey.

— After a win on penalties in his 100th game in charge of England, manager Gareth Southgate defending his often-cautious tactics as the kind of "streetwise" style successful teams use. The backlash from England fans, including some

who threw plastic cups at him after a group-stage game, is "quite difficult" to deal with, he added.

— The Netherlands will be by far the highest-ranked team England has faced after group games with Serbia, Denmark and Slovenia, followed by knockout games with Slovakia and Switzerland.

TEAM NEWS

— England has relied on the right-footed Kieran Trippier at left wing back, but his tendency to cut inside has meant England has made little use of the left wing all tournament. Left-footed Luke Shaw came off the bench against Switzerland for his first minutes since February after injury. Shaw says he's fit to start against the Netherlands if Southgate picks him.

— Southgate has to choose whether to stick with Ezri Konsa in the center of defense after he replaced the then-suspended Marc Guéhi against Switzerland. Guéhi is eligible again.

— There's scrutiny of Harry Ka-



England's Jude Bellingham, right, and England's Trent Alexander-Arnold

ne's fitness after the England captain went off with cramp in extra time against Switzerland. Ivan Toney came off the bench and scored one of England's five successful penalties in the shootout.

BY THE NUMBERS

— England has played a full hour more than the Netherlands in the last 10 days, after beating Slovakia in extra time and then Switzerland on penalties. The Dutch wrapped

up their wins over Romania and Turkey without needing extra time.

— The Netherlands hasn't reached a European Championship final since it won the tournament in 1988 and was last a semifinalist in 2004.

— England's first shot on target

against Switzerland was Bukayo Saka's goal to level the score in the 80th minute. One round earlier, Bellingham's spectacular overhead kick was England's first shot on target. That came in the fifth minute of second-half added time.

WHAT THEY'RE SAYING

"I don't really understand the criticism. What he's done for the country, for us as players as well, he really took us to the next level... I've got a lot to thank him for because he showed a lot of faith and trust in picking me when he didn't have to."

— England defender Luke Shaw on manager Gareth Southgate.

"Hopefully it's us that will have the ball more than England. So it's more England that's running. I expect a high intensity game." — Netherlands defender Micky van de Ven. **MDT/AP**

UPCOMING GAMES

	Date	Time	Home	Away	ODDS
Thu	Jul 11	03:00	Netherlands	England	H3.3, D 2.9, A 2.75

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Shuli Ren, Bloomberg



LI KEQIANG'S HAWKER
ECONOMY THRIVES IN
MAO COUNTRY

As China's property downturn continues, local governments are trying to come up with an alternative development model to make ends meet and provide jobs. A few cities may have found a way out.

Changsha, capital of the central Hunan Province, where a young Mao Zedong studied and lived, is banking on tourism to keep its economy going. Young people who want to party are attracted by the night life, and the spicy cuisine that Communist China's founding father so loved.

The city center is a labyrinth of small stalls selling food, drinks and trinkets. China's jobless divas can have a fun night out for less than \$20. Five pieces of stinky tofu (imagine the taste of deep-fried dough stuffed with blue cheese) costs 10 yuan (\$1.38). Tea latte — a blend of flavored tea with fresh milk — is another local draw.

An extreme example of this street-vendor culture is on display at Wenheyong, a multi-story food market built as a replica of narrow alleyways surrounded by low-rise buildings. The decor is vintage, reminiscent of 1980s Changsha, before economic reform changed the city's landscape. A big bucket of crawfish, spiced with garlic and chili oil, costs about 240 yuan.

Hawkers carrying boxes hanging from bamboo poles go from table to table, selling snacks. It's a novelty for young people born in modern-day China. They lap it up, happily trying local foods and taking Instagram-worthy photos. Wenheyong is so retro that one can easily forget time and space: It's actually part of a commercial high-rise that also houses the swanky Grand Hyatt hotel.

Changsha would have been touted as a great success by former premier Li Keqiang, who passed away last year.

In 2020, at the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic, he spoke repeatedly and enthusiastically about this traditional form of commerce as a way to create jobs. But President Xi Jinping seemed to take a dim view. The capital city of Beijing, for one, should be a political center, not a "hodgepodge" of factories and vendors in alleyways, he said last May.

That's a fair comment. But most cities don't have the clout and talent pool of Beijing. Thus, they will have to do with hawkers to survive the economic slowdown. After all, most citizens are not trained engineers who can build chips and electric vehicles, industries that Xi is lavishing with state subsidies.

These days, good stable income is hard to come by. Take the unskilled. Working for ride-hailing apps such as Didi Global Inc. used to be lucrative, but a slowing economy and a low-entry barrier have resulted in an influx of new drivers, and thus overcapacity. The hawker economy, then, is perhaps a way to supplement residents' daytime earnings and take some pressure off local officials.

In addition, not all street stalls stay in the dark alleyways. Some blossom into brands and unicorns, and Changsha has become the proud incubator of several. Hey Hey Black, which sells the black-colored stinky tofu unique to Hunan cuisine, has more than 1,800 locations nationwide and is hailed by People's Daily as a "success." Chayan Yuese, a milk-tea maker, has received venture capital investments and is eyeing a listing in Hong Kong.

As the Communist Party's top ranks gather later this month for one of the country's biggest policy meetings, reform-minded academics have been offering ideas on how to chart the economic course over the next decade.

Interestingly, one prominent scholar pointed out at a symposium Xi attended in May that China's productivity push would have to avoid the problem of regions copying and undercutting each other. Xi hinted that he had gotten the message.

In other words, while top cities such as Beijing, Shanghai and Shenzhen can charge ahead with AI and the clean energy revolution, others, like Changsha, need to get creative. The hawker economy, which can incubate homegrown consumer brands, is a good start.

[Abridged]

A driverless ride-hailing car in China hit a pedestrian, and people on social media are taking the carmaker's side, because the person was reportedly crossing against the light.

The operator of the vehicle, Chinese tech giant Baidu, said in a statement to Chinese media that the car began moving when the light turned green and had minor contact with the pedestrian. The person was taken to a hospital where an examination found no obvious external injuries, Baidu said.

The incident on Sunday in the city of Wuhan highlights the challenge that autonomous driving faces in complex situations, the Chinese financial news outlet Yicai said. It quoted an expert saying the technology may have limitations when dealing with unconventional behavior such as other vehicles or pedestrians that violate traffic laws.

Images posted online show a person sitting on the street in front of the driverless car with its rooftop sensors. Comments on social media largely supported Baidu, pointing out that the pedestrian had broken the law, the English-language Shanghai Daily newspaper said in a post on X.

France The Paris prosecutor's office said yesterday it opened a preliminary investigation last week into suspicions of illicit financing of far-right French leader Marine Le Pen's (pictured) campaign during the 2022 presidential election. The office told The Associated Press that the judicial probe opened July 2 into allegations of accepting a financial loan, misappropriation of property, fraud and forgery. But it did not give details. Le Pen hasn't commented.



USA A solid majority of Americans oppose a federal abortion ban as a rising number support access to abortions for any reason, a new poll finds, highlighting a politically perilous situation for candidates who oppose abortion rights as the November election draws closer. Around 6 in 10 Americans think their state should generally allow a person to obtain a legal abortion if they don't want to be pregnant for any reason, according to a new poll from The Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research. That's an increase from June 2021, a year before the Supreme Court overturned the constitutional right to the procedure.



US
TOURISTS STILL FLOCK
TO DEATH VALLEY
AMID SEARING HEAT
WAVE BLAMED FOR
SEVERAL DEATHS

TY O'NEIL, CLAIRE
RUSH & ANITA SNOW,
DEATH VALLEY

HUNDREDS of Europeans touring the American West and adventurers from around the U.S. are still being drawn to Death Valley National Park, even though the desolate region known as one of the Earth's hottest places is being punished by a dangerous heat wave blamed for a motorcyclist's death over the weekend.

French, Spanish, English and Swiss tourists left their air-conditioned rental cars and motorhomes Monday to take photographs of the barren landscape so different than the snow-capped mountains and rolling green hills they know back home. American adventurers liked the novelty of it, even as officials at the park in California warned visitors to stay safe.

"I was excited it was going to be this hot," said Drew Belt, a resident of Tupelo, Mississippi, who wanted to stop in Death Valley as the place boasting the lowest elevation in the U.S. on his way to climb California's Mt. Whitney, the highest peak in the lower 48 states. "It's a once in a lifetime opportunity. Kind of like walking on Mars."

Park Superintendent Mike Reynolds cautioned visitors in a statement that "high heat like this can pose real threats to your health."

The searing heat wave gripping large parts of the United States also led to record daily high temperatures in Oregon, where it is suspected to have caused four deaths in the Portland area. More than 146 million people around the U.S. were under heat alerts Monday, especially in Western states.

Dozens of locations in the West and Pacific Northwest tied or broke previous heat records over the weekend and are expected to keep doing so into the week.

The early U.S. heat wave came as the global temperature in June was record warm for the 13th straight month and marked the 12th straight month that the world was 1.5 degrees Celsius warmer than pre-industrial times, the European climate service Copernicus said.

In Oregon's Multnomah County, home to Portland, the medical examiner is investigating four suspected heat-related deaths recorded on Friday, Saturday and Sunday, officials said. Three of the deaths involuntarily county residents who were 64, 75 and 84 years

old, county officials said in an email. Heat also was suspected in the death of a 33-year-old man transported to a Portland hospital from outside the county.

Portland broke daily record temperatures on Friday, Saturday and Sunday and was on track to do so again on Monday with a forecast high of 102 F (38.9 C), National Weather Service meteorologist Hannah Chandler-Cooley said. High temperatures were expected in Portland through Tuesday evening.

The temperatures aren't expected to reach as high as they did during a similar heat wave in the Pacific Northwest in 2021, which killed an estimated 600 people across Oregon, Washington and western Canada. But the duration could be problematic because many homes in the region lack air conditioning.

The largest national park outside Alaska, Death Valley is considered one of the most extreme environments in the world. The hottest temperature ever officially recorded on Earth was 134 F (56.67 C) in July 1913 in Death Valley, though some experts dispute that measurement and say the real record was 130 F (54.4 C), recorded there in July 2021. MDT/AP



Afghanistan Afghan sprinter Kimia Yousofi is preparing to compete at her third Olympics after being selected for the Paris Games from her training base in Australia. Yousofi, Afghanistan's flag bearer at the opening ceremony for the Olympics in Tokyo, has been living in Australia since 2022. The Australian Olympic Committee yesterday congratulated Yousofi on her selection for the women's 100-meter sprint.

Vatican Vatican's chief prosecutor has strongly defended the integrity and fairness of the city state's justice system following criticism that Pope Francis' absolute power and his interventions in the so-called "trial of the century" last year violated the defendants' fundamental rights. Prosecutor Alessandro Diddi's defense comes as the Vatican tribunal finalizes its written reasonings for its December 2023 verdicts.