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NEWS

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GROSS GAMING REVENUE FOR MACAU'S CASINOS IS FORECAST TO DECLINE IN SEPTEMBER, ACCORDING TO ANALYSTS' PREDICTIONS

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6% DROP IN LABOR DISPUTE CASES DESPITE SURGE IN WORKER COMPLAINTS: DSAL

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POPE OPENS ASIA ODYSSEY IN JAKARTA TO RALLY CATHOLICS, HAIL RELIGIOUS FREEDOM TRADITION

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AP PHOTO



South Korea On Friday, outgoing Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida will visit Seoul for a summit with President Yoon Suk Yeol to discuss enhancing bilateral ties and regional cooperation. This meeting marks their 12th summit, amidst Kishida's impending departure following political pressures in Japan.

AP PHOTO



Australia Two individuals were rescued yesterday from a disabled yacht in heavy seas off Australia's coast. The yacht, stranded 300 kilometers from the New South Wales coast, was experiencing mechanical failures and taking on water amid severe weather conditions.

AP PHOTO



Myanmar's military government announced a national census in October, aiming to prepare voter lists for the 2025 general election. Senior General Min Aung Hlaing (pictured) emphasized the census's role in future development projects, amidst ongoing civil conflicts and skepticism from pro-democracy groups.

AP PHOTO



Iran's missile capabilities remain in question as it continues to pose threats to Israel. A recent report indicates that one of Iran's advanced missiles demonstrated less accuracy than expected, reducing its effectiveness for precise military operations and potentially relegating it to a role as a terror weapon.



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Dozens of Cathay Pacific flights canceled due to faulty A350 engine component

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AVIATION
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SPECIAL OLYMPICS
GAMING JOBS FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES A CAUSE FOR OPTIMISM

ADDITIONAL SUBSIDY FOR ECONOMICALLY DISADVANTAGED HOUSEHOLDS

The Social Welfare Bureau (IAS) has announced plans to distribute an additional subsidy to 2,800 economically disadvantaged households already receiving public assistance. The initiative aims to alleviate financial pressures on these families, with a total expenditure of approximately MOP15 million. The subsidy amounts are designed to provide monthly support ranging from MOP4,350 for individuals to MOP20,270 for larger households with eight or more members. Payments will be made from tomorrow, and recipients can expect to receive the funds via bank transfer at eight local banks or through other commonly used payment methods.

RISE IN DEPOSITS IN JULY

July has seen residents' deposits increase, while loans have declined. Deposits rose by 1.8%, reaching MOP743.3 billion. Conversely, both domestic loans to the private sector and foreign loans decreased, with domestic loans falling by 0.7% to MOP528.7 billion, and foreign loans dropping by 4.3% to MOP529.7 billion. Data from the Monetary Authority indicates that the loan-to-deposit ratio for residents decreased from 57% at the end of June to 56.4% by the end of July. Additionally, the proportion of overdue loans rose slightly from 4.6% to 4.7%.

NEW SELF-SERVICE KIOSKS INSTALLED IN HENGQIN FOR SAR RESIDENTS

The Macau Identification Services Bureau has launched new multi-application kiosks in Hengqin, offering approximately 40 self-service options across 11 public administration services. According to a press release from the bureau, this initiative is designed to increase the convenience of employment, education and daily life for residents in the area. The kiosks are situated in the 24-hour self-service area on the first floor of the Government Affairs Service Centre. They provide services across seven categories, including identification, social benefits, tax advice, municipal affairs, voter registration, transport and migration.

PASSENGERS FLOCK TO AIRPORT AS EXPANDED SERVICES MOOTED

During the summer holidays of July and August, Macau International Airport served 1.47 million passengers and recorded 10,881 aircraft movements, marking respective increases of 28% and 30.2% over 2023. The airport plans to enhance international routes and collaborate with airlines on connecting flights and luggage services. In the fourth quarter, it will host roadshows in the Greater Bay Area to promote new routes and launch a "Double Anniversary Celebration and Lucky Draw Campaign," offering discounts for passengers.

DSAL

6% DROP IN LABOR DISPUTE CASES DESPITE SURGE IN WORKER COMPLAINTS

VICTORIA CHAN

THE Labour Affairs Bureau's (DSAL) 2023 annual report revealed a decrease in overall labor dispute cases and fines, even as more workers filed multiple complaints on a wider range of issues.

Last year, the bureau recorded 1,653 labor dispute cases, marking a 5.9% decrease from the previous year.

Top grievances included wages, severance pay and termination notice periods.

Complaints about overtime and public holiday compensation were also prevalent, with nearly 600 workers filing such claims.

While the total value of fines imposed on employers decreased to MOP 22.8 million, the majority were still related to non-payment of wages, holidays and termination benefits. Labor dispute violations also resulted in fines totaling MOP22 million to 161 employers.

Between January and June this year, the DSAL received nine



complaints involving 11 employees allegedly forced to take unpaid leave. The DSAL stated that these actions violate labor laws and can lead to employer prosecution or revocation of non-resident worker permits.

Prior to 2020, labor disputes over mandatory suspensions were dealt with via a compensation scheme. However, this scheme was repealed with the implementation of the minimum wage law that year. Con-

cerned about potential under-employment despite tourism recovery, lawmaker Ella Lei has requested details of how authorities are monitoring these risks and strengthening worker protections.

The lawmaker expressed ongoing concerns about suspensions from work and unpaid leave, despite the pandemic's end and return of tourism. Lawmakers have called for authorities to implement better

mechanisms to protect workers, as the previous compensation scheme was eliminated with the minimum wage law.

In response, the DSAL stated it will review current procedures and strengthen worker protections. The bureau also emphasized its continued strict control over the employment of non-resident workers, prioritizing local employment while supporting key industries' staffing needs during economic recovery.

EDUCATION

Non-higher education enrollment peaks due to surge in births during Year of the Dragon

LYNZY VALLES

THE Education and Youth Development Bureau (DSEDJ) has reported that the number of non-higher education students has reached an all-time high of approximately 89,000, driven largely by the surge in birth rates recorded over the past decade.

According to DSEDJ director Kong Chi Meng, this year's enrollments reflect a notable increase, particularly among first- and second-year secondary education students.

The spike in numbers comes following a

high birth rate observed 12 years ago during the auspicious lunar year of the dragon, traditionally seen as a favorable time for births in Chinese culture.

Additionally, many students have returned to Macau to continue their education after studying in the Greater Bay Area.

To accommodate the influx of students, schools have opened nearly 30 additional classes for first-year secondary students, with an increase of around 1,200 students compared to the previous academic year.



Kong noted that the DSEDJ coordinated closely with schools to ensure a smooth admission process for returning students, who often face challenges due to their late return to Macau. While the overall enrollment figures are encour-

aging, the official noted a decline in the number of students entering the first year of primary education, reflecting a lower subsequent birth rate.

In response, the DSEDJ plans to implement a school development assistance plan

aimed at supporting institutions struggling with low enrollment.

This initiative will provide subsidies for the purchase of equipment and teacher training to enhance educational offerings.

Last academic year, Macau recorded a "high peak" of 88,093 non-higher education students, with a mix of 3,591 in official schools and 84,502 in private institutions.

The numbers have steadily increased over the years, with 87,184 such students in 2022/2023, 85,783 in 2021/2022 and 83,984 in 2020/2021.

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Gaming jobs for people with disabilities a cause for optimism: MSO

VICTORIA CHAN

GAMING corporations have emerged as important employers of people with disabilities in Macau as the pandemic impacts the job market, according to national director of Macau Special Olympics Hetzer Siu.

"Employers now want fully skilled and prepared staff, not just to meet quotas, especially as some businesses scaled back during the pandemic," said Siu on the sidelines of a community event held by Sands China yesterday.

Siu explained that the Covid-19 pandemic forced many small businesses to contract, while larger corporations maintained the ability to hire. As a result, the gaming industry in Macau has emerged as a significant employer of people with disabilities. "You can see more disabled people hired by gaming corporations, not in casinos but in other roles," he said.



Hetzer Siu

"I believe that gaming corporations play a significant role in this context. It is evident that more individuals with disabilities are being employed by these companies, reflecting a commendable commitment to hiring a substantial number of people

with disabilities," Siu added.

Despite this progress, Siu acknowledged that the employment situation remains uncertain, with new hires sometimes leaving their positions after just a few months. Macau Special Olympics has placed over 10

individuals with intellectual disabilities in corporate roles this year, but the long-term retention rate is unclear.

"We hope in the future we have more support to get people with intellectual disabilities into the career path to get their

job," Siu said.

The organization's efforts have received a boost from its longstanding partnership with Sands China.

Siu said Sands China has supported the organization for over a decade, providing funding for health advocacy and community programs.

"We have so many programs in cooperation with Sands China because [their] partnership supports us to do so many charity events in Macau," Siu explained, adding that in the future, "we will show health promotion for people with intellectual disabilities."

Looking ahead, Siu expressed optimism that increased international attention on Macau's social welfare programs could further improve employment opportunities for the disabled community. Gaming companies' support makes an impact, with Siu noting that "only the gaming corporations have hired a good number of disabled people until now."

NBA's Phoenix Suns spread inspiration for inclusion in the community

CURRENT and former Phoenix Suns players visited Macau Special Olympics athletes yesterday, demonstrating their skills and promoting inclusion at an event organized by Sands China. James Jones, president and general manager, was joined by basketball legends Rex Chapman and Cedric Ceballos as well as current center, Jusuf Nurkic.

"It was a pleasure to connect with these young fans," said Nurkic, adding that the "Special Olympics does fantastic work in local communities." The visit included appreciation of artwork, crafting of incense holders and assisting with health checkups.

Nurkic described the event as "amazing," saying "we as human beings should more allow public space and jobs for people with di-



sabilities." He believes they deserve to be "part of our lives" as "honest people."

Wilfred Wong, executive vice chairman of Sands China, said the goal was to "promote community inclusion, highlighting that sports can go beyond boundaries with equality and love."

During an interview,

Nurkic gave advice to young basketball players. "I don't know if it's very difficult, because it's a fun sport," he said. He recommends taking the sport seriously after age 15 while balancing it with school. "You can't say that basketball is more important than school or education," Nurkic noted.

His overall message

was to "take it seriously" and "do your best," trusting that hard work will help guide one's path. The Suns' visit helped spread inspiration and a message of community inclusion through sport. It brought NBA stars together with athletes who prove, as Nurkic said, that people with disabilities deserve an equal place in society. VC

GAMING

CASINOS TO FACE REVENUE DECLINE IN SEPTEMBER

VICTORIA CHAN

GROSS gaming revenue for Macau's casinos is forecast to decline in September, according to analysts' predictions. After record-breaking revenue in August, the summer momentum is expected to subside next month.

Macau generated MOP19.75 billion in gross gaming revenue in August, a 6.2% increase from the previous month. "August was likely helped by the calendar, with the month having five Fridays and Saturdays and four Sundays (14 days in total out of 31 days), compared with 12 weekend days in July," said Vitaly Umansky of Seaport Research Partners in a report.

However, September is typically one of the weakest months for casinos. In a note, J.P. Mor-

gan analysts predicted that September performance will translate to a daily run rate of MOP637 million, which will be an 81% recovery compared to 2019. Umansky also noted that "September is generally the weakest or second-weakest month of the year."

Deutsche Bank analyst Carlo Santarelli expects September revenue of MOP18 billion, down 18.8% from September 2019 levels.

"This represents a monthly sequential per day contraction of 6.2%, which compares to the 5.5% average sequential per day decline in September, relative to August, over the period from 2013 through 2019," Santarelli wrote. Most analysts predict September gaming revenue will range between MOP17.5 billion to MOP18 billion.

TEMPORARY U-TURN LANE TO SET TAIPA TRAFFIC ON COURSE

The Transport Bureau announced yesterday that a temporary U-turn Lane on Estrada de Pac On, located near the Immigration Department, will officially open on the morning of September 6. This new lane aims to enhance traffic flow for vehicles traveling toward the Amizade Bridge. Motorists heading to the airport or Taipa Ferry Terminal can take this U-turn lane to facilitate smoother transfers. The initiative is part of ongoing efforts to improve transportation infrastructure in the region, ensuring better accessibility for residents and visitors alike.

MACAU LEGEND NARROWS HI LOSS AMID OPERATIONAL CHALLENGES

Macau Legend Development reported a narrower loss of HKD152.4 million (USD19.55 million) for the first half of 2024, down from HKD189.1 million in the same period last year. The improvement comes as revenues increased 16.5% to HKD390.4 million, driven by a 43% rise in gaming-related revenue. However, the company is facing financial strain due to loan covenant breaches linked to the cessation of its Laos operations. Directors warned that without effective remedial measures, the company may struggle to continue operations.

UM HOSTS TSINGHUA UNIVERSITY FLAG HONOR GUARD

The University of Macau (UM) welcomed the Tsinghua University student national flag honor guard for a ceremonial flag-raising event earlier this week, marking a significant exchange between the two institutions. This ceremony follows UM's visit to Tsinghua University in 2022 and attracted many students and faculty members. The event included discussion of team structures and future collaboration, with both teams exchanging badges and armbands as mementos. UM's He Zhengqiao highlighted the event's role in strengthening friendships and creating opportunities for youth exchanges between the two universities.

KAI FONG LAWMAKERS PROPOSE STRATEGIES FOR ECONOMIC RECOVERY, SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

NADIA SHAW

LAWMAKERS from the Macau General Union of Neighborhood Associations (Kai Fong) emphasized the importance of addressing social and livelihood issues amid the city's post-pandemic economic recovery and noted that Macau is transitioning and developing its industries to achieve moderate economic diversification.

Lawmakers Ho Ion Sang, Leong Hong Sai and Ngan Iek Hang summarized their work during third session of the 7th Legislative Assembly (AL) in a press conference held yesterday.

During the session, a total of 149 written queries, 15 oral questions and 39 advance agenda items were submitted to the AL.

The lawmakers outlined several key strategies, including promoting the "1+4 Plan" to foster industrial talent and stable employment, optimizing housing policies and



public transportation systems and improving elder care services and medical facilities.

The "1+4 Plan," which was referenced in relation to multiple issues raised at the meeting, focuses on integrating four major industrial talent planning areas to foster talent development and stable employment.

The lawmakers outlined plans to conduct long-term surveys to iden-

tify talent needs, provide youth employment assistance, increase support for small and medium enterprises (SMEs) in adapting to digital transformation and strengthen collaboration with local industries.

Leong advocated for improving accessibility in urban areas and enhancing public transportation systems, calling for smart transportation solutions and better infrastructure planning. This includes li-

ght rail systems (LRT), taxis, buses, water management and road construction projects. Additionally, the lawmaker addressed the progress of sea-crossing and district-crossing construction among other critical infrastructure projects.

Meanwhile, Ho offered suggestions for improving elder care services and enhancing general medical facilities.

In terms of tourism, lawmakers referred to the "Tourism +" initiative, which aims to create outdoor performance venues to boost cultural events and attract visitors. This initiative includes organizing various performing arts festivals, increasing support for local cultural organizations and "leveraging the Jockey Club land appropriately."

Ngan reported that Kai Fong handled 1,220 consultations and cases, with 46% related to social security, medical care, and education, while 27% pertained to administrative and legal issues.

SPORTS

Macau vows to keep pushing for Olympic representation

NADIA SHAW

MACAU'S government is determined to secure representation for the city in future Olympic Games, Luis Gomes, acting head of the Sports Bureau, affirmed during a press conference on Monday.

Following a three-day visit from a Chinese Olympic delegation, Gomes emphasized the government's ongoing collaboration with the Macau Olympic Sports Committee to ensure that a team from Macau, China, can compete in upcoming Olympic events. While acknowledging that historical factors have prevented Macau from fielding an official Olympic team, he expressed optimism about future inclusion.

Macau's Basic Law



guarantees the right to use the name "Macau, China" in international sports competitions. However, the International Olympic Committee (IOC) revised its charter in 1996 to only recognize National Olympic Committees that represent independent states. This limitation complicates Macau's aspirations, as it is classified as a Special Administrative Region

(SAR) rather than an independent nation.

Despite these hurdles, Macau has found alternative avenues to engage in Olympic-related activities. The city participated in the 2008 Beijing Wushu Tournament, held in conjunction with the 2008 Beijing Olympics, and continues to compete in regional events, including the upcoming 2025 National Games.



YAGI

SMG MAY HOIST T3 AS TROPICAL STORM APPROACHES

TROPICAL storm Yagi is projected to move west to northwest across the northern South China Sea in the coming days. The storm is expected to approach the areas between the western coast of Guangdong and Hainan Island.

In Macau, the Meteorological and Geophysical Bureau has warned that the storm's outer subsidizing airflow will cause high temperatures today.

The bureau cautioned that high heat could trigger thunderstorms with strong gusts in the afternoon. Forecasts suggest that winds in Macau will intensify, and thunderstorms are likely to become more frequent from tonight into early Thursday morning. This could prompt the issuance of a Tropical Cyclone

Signal No. 3.

The development of Tropical Storm Yagi remains uncertain, according to the bureau.

There is potential for it to strengthen into a severe typhoon and shift its path further north, potentially bringing it closer to Guangdong's coast. Authorities will continually assess the situation, and will issue higher typhoon signals and storm surge warnings if necessary.

In the Philippines, the storm triggered landslides and unleashed pounding rain that has flooded many northern Philippine areas overnight into Monday. The storm has claimed the lives of at least 14 people and prompted authorities to suspend school classes and the government to work in the densely populated capital region. LV

AVIATION

Dozens of Cathay Pacific flights axed due to faulty A350 engine component

CATHAY Pacific Airways has canceled several flights due to ongoing maintenance on its Airbus A350 fleet, following the discovery of a faulty engine component. This issue has led to the cancellation of ten flights from Singapore to Hong Kong, originally scheduled for yesterday and today, according to Singaporean media reports.

Additionally, eight flights from Hong Kong to Singapore were canceled over the same period, alongside dozens of other flights across the Asia-Pacific region, the airline announced yesterday.

The cancellations follow an incident involving an engine part that failed shortly after one of Cathay Pacific's A350 aircraft took off from Hong Kong on Monday. As a result, the airline has decided to inspect its entire A350 fleet.

Cathay Pacific stated that maintenance on the fleet is "pro-



COURTESY REUTERS

gressing well." The airline identified 15 aircraft with the affected engine component, three of which have already been successfully repaired. The remaining aircraft will remain out of service until repairs are completed and they are cleared for operation.

Passengers affected by the cancellations have been notified and offered alternative travel options. The airline has also waived ticket change fees, including rebooking and rerouting charges, to facilitate travel plan adjustments.

Today's cancellations include

flights between Hong Kong and cities such as Sydney, Osaka, Tokyo, Taipei, Bangkok, and Singapore. One flight from Seoul to Hong Kong has been canceled for Thursday. Cathay Pacific advises travelers to check its website for the latest flight information.

According to Bloomberg, Cathay Pacific has found the faulty engine component in 15 aircraft across the A350-900 and A350-1000 variants. No other airline has reported similar issues so far. The cause of the defect is still unknown, with possible scenarios including heat from the engine, a pinched fuel hose, or misinstallation, according to Darryl Chan of the Hong Kong Institution of Engineers.

Cathay Pacific noted that this is the first reported failure of the engine component in any A350 aircraft worldwide. Other airlines, including Singapore Airlines and Japan Airlines, are inspecting their fleets as a precaution. Deutsche Lufthansa AG is also closely monitoring the situation.

Cathay Pacific expects to have all affected aircraft repaired and back in service by Saturday. **MDT/AGENCIES**

AVIATION

Air Macau sees revenue growth amid widening losses

AIR Macau has reported a 20.6% year-on-year increase in operating income for the first half of 2024, totaling RMB1.47 billion (MOP1.66 billion). This growth, outlined in Air China's recent interim financial results, reflects a recovery in demand as the airline served nearly 1.48 million passengers,

a 78.1% year-on-year increase.

However, the airline's losses attributable to its parent company, Air China, have also expanded, reaching RMB378 million (MOP427 million). This is more than double the RMB173 million (MOP197 million) loss recorded during the same period last year.

Air Macau, which operates a fleet of 23 aircraft, has struggled financially since the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic, consistently reporting losses since 2020. The airline's average flight occupancy rate improved to 73.6%, an increase of 6.62% from the previous year. Despite this, the Air China interim re-

port, released last week, did not provide insight into the reasons behind the widening losses.

The government holds a 21.5% stake in Air Macau, which has retained a monopoly on the region's airline services and had its concession extended for another three years last November. **NS**



RENATO MARQUES

CORPORATE BITS

MGM lion dance championship to showcase 21 troupes



The "11th International Lion Dance Championship 2024 - MGM Cup" will feature 21 lion dance troupes, comprising 210 athletes competing in four categories.

The categories include:

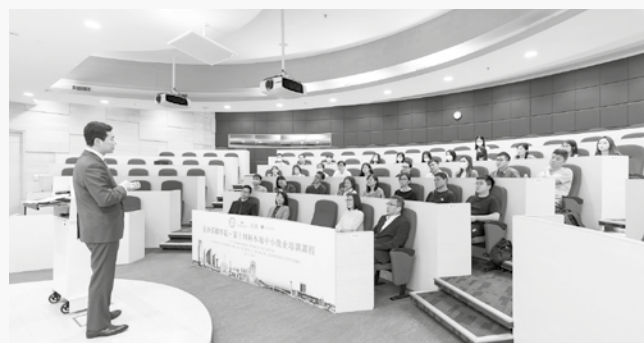
"Freestyle Lion Dance Championship - Taolu Movements on Poles," "Female Traditional Lion Dance Championship," "Youth Traditional Lion Dance Championship," and "Junior Traditional Lion Dance

Championship."

This year sees nearly a 20% increase in participating troupes from regions including Mainland China, Hong Kong, Macau, Chinese Taipei, Malaysia, Indonesia, Vietnam, Singapore, Australia, Thailand, Japan, Italy, and Myanmar. The event will take place at Barra Square of A-Ma Temple during National Day Golden Week.

MGM has also organized the Junior Lion Dance Summer Class for the past decade, promoting lion dance among youth. This year, in collaboration with Mak Chi Leong Dragon & Lion Dance Association, enrollment has tripled, allowing 100 children to participate and learn lion dance, bringing the total trained to 640 over 10 years.

Sands Procurement Academy now accepting enrollments for 15th intake



The Sands Procurement Academy is now accepting applications for its 15th intake, aimed at local SME suppliers. The registration deadline is September 6, with sessions running weekly from September 17 to October 15 at The Venetian

Macao's Adelson Advanced Education Centre.

Co-organized by Sands China Ltd., the Macao Chamber of Commerce, and the Macao Productivity and Technology Centre, this free training program has already assisted over

520 SMEs. It provides valuable business knowledge and skills, helping local suppliers collaborate with larger corporations. The program particularly focuses on micro-enterprises, young entrepreneurs, and "Made-in-Macao" businesses.

Charlie Cai, vice president of procurement and sustainability at Sands China, highlighted the new course on Xiaohongshu (RED) Operations Strategy, aimed at enhancing SMEs' marketing strategies. The academy also offers a business matching session for participants to connect with Sands China's procurement team, fostering future business opportunities.

XU ZEYU & TIAN ZIJUN,
XINHUA

ANALYSIS

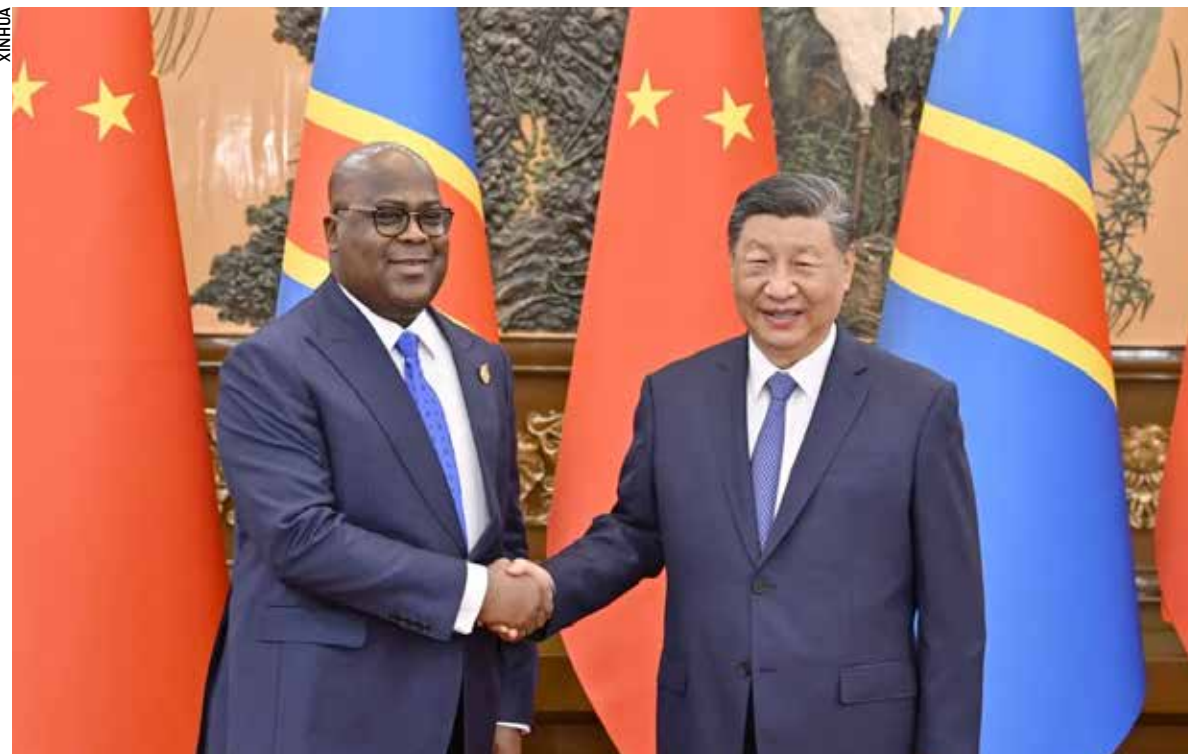
FOCAC illustrates China's vision and aspirations for Global South

LEADERS from over 50 African countries are descending on Beijing for the upcoming 2024 Summit of the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC), the largest diplomatic gathering hosted by China in years, as the "Global South," a catchall term for a diverse array of developing countries located mostly south of the Brandt Line, has been making a comeback.

Prior to the opening of the FOCAC summit, a narrative crafted by the West about China "winning" the Global South began to gain traction, alleging that China had embarked on a "charm offensive" to coax the bloc into its orbit. The claim was met with a firm response by Chinese foreign ministry spokesperson Lin Jian, who said, "As a natural member of the Global South, China never seeks to 'win the Global South,' but is committed to helping Global South partners, including African countries, truly realize development and prosperity."

FOCAC is a microcosm of China's time-tested friendship with its Global South partners. In the wake of the Cold War in the early 1990s, the Western powers started to pull out their aid and investment in Africa, and the continent began to feel the pinch as the economy began to shrink and the accumulated debt amounted to over 80 percent of its entire GDP in 1994. The dire situation prompted the Economist magazine to publish an infamous article titled "Hopeless Africa" in 2000. But it was exactly in this year that China and Africa jointly initiated the first FOCAC in the form of a ministerial conference.

"Right at that time, China did not forget its identity as a developing country," said Liu Hongwu, a professor and the director of the Institute of African Studies at Zhejiang Normal University. "In the early



President Xi Jinping with counterpart Félix Tshisekedi from the Democratic Republic of the Congo, in Beijing

2000s, China took part in the globalization led by the West through joining the WTO, but it also forged an even tighter bond with the nations of the South in Asia, Africa and Latin America."

China's Africa policy has been guided by the principle of sincerity, real results, amity and good faith, proposed by Chinese President Xi Jinping during his first foreign visit as China's top leader in 2013, which included three African countries as destinations. The principle is emblematic of China's relationship with the rest of the Global South based on equality and mutual respect.

Since the initiation of FOCAC, China has insisted on having the forum hosted alternately between China and African countries. In the past quarter of a century, FOCAC was held in African countries

including Ethiopia, Egypt, South Africa and Senegal. In contrast, the U.S.-Africa Leaders Summits, with only two ad-hoc sessions convened so far, were only held in America.

The Global South has been dismissed by some American academics as a "loaded term" or merely a "geopolitical fact," but China sees it differently. "The Global South is not some label invented by the Northern powers to rationalize their power games," said Liu Haifang, an associate professor and the director of the Center for African Studies at Peking University. "It is a self-identity commonly recognized among the nations of the South."

China's identification with the Global South was reaffirmed by Xi's remarks that "China and African countries are destined to be good friends, good brothers and

good partners, and China-Africa cooperation stands as a fine example of South-South cooperation."

The FOCAC summit taking place this week carries the theme "Joining Hands to Advance Modernization and Build a High-Level China-Africa Community with a Shared Future." It exemplifies China's engagement approach with the Global South partners built on sincerity and tangible results.

For the past three FOCAC meetings, Beijing launched "Ten Major Cooperation Plans" in 2015, "Eight Major Initiatives" in 2018, and "Nine Projects" in 2021, which outgrew the original model of mainly promoting trade and investment and started to foster Africa's nearly all segments of social-economic development. The effort to modernize the continent ma-

pped out in a succession of FOCAC meetings boils down to China's initiatives that support Africa's development on three fronts: industrialization, agricultural modernization, and talent development.

In a bid to help Africa reduce its reliance on food imports, over the past decade, more than 300 cutting-edge technologies promoted by China have helped drive up local crop yields by 30 to 60 percent on average, benefiting over one million small-scale farmers. In the meantime, China has devoted itself to promoting "Made in Africa" by building multiple industrial parks while enriching the continent's talent pool by training about 10,000 specialists per year through a vast network of vocational schools.

Since the initiation of FOCAC, Chinese enterprises have assisted Africa in building or upgrading over 10,000 km of railways, 100,000 km of highways, 1,000 bridges, and nearly 100 ports, laying the foundation for an era of fast modernization on the continent.

"We have gone willingly into a relationship that we think is a win-win," said Sierra Leonean President Julius Maada Bio in a recent interview, praising the China-Africa cooperation.

South-South cooperation is a high priority in China's cooperation with other countries. And it is China's strategic choice, not a stopgap measure. The establishment and continuity of FOCAC is testimony to China's aspiration to work with other developing countries to build a "Global South community with a shared future." XINHUA

SHANDONG

Bus crashes into students and parents, killing 11 and injuring 13, police say

A bus crashed into a group of students and their parents at a school in eastern China early yesterday, killing 11 people and injuring 13, police said.

The students and parents were at the gate of a middle school in Tai'an

city in the eastern province of Shandong just before 7:30 a.m., the Dongping county police department said in a posting on social media.

Six parents and five students were killed, it said. One of the injured was in

serious condition while the others were listed as stable, the department said.

The driver was in police custody and the incident was under investigation, it said.

The bus was specially

customized for transporting students, it said. It did not say who was responsible for operating the bus. Many schools contract out such services to private companies or individuals.

School safety, including overloaded school buses

and poorly designed buildings, has long been a problem in China.

In 2017, a dozen people, including 11 kindergarten pupils, were killed when a school bus crashed and burst into flames in a tunnel in the eastern Chinese city of Weihai, also in Shandong province. The driver, six Chinese children and five South Korean children were killed. It remains unclear whether the crash was deliberate or the result of unsafe

driving.

China has cracked down heavily on transportation dangers, adding training and vehicle inspections.

China also has suffered numerous cases in recent years of attacks on school children, often using knives or homemade explosives. The suspects were generally found to be bearing grudges and seeking revenge over personal matters or against society more generally. MDT/AP



Pope Francis is welcomed by Indonesia's Minister for Religious Affairs Qoumas (center), soon after landing in Jakarta

INDONESIA

Pope opens Asia odyssey in Jakarta to rally Catholics, hail religious freedom tradition

NICOLE WINFIELD & EDNA TARIGAN, JAKARTA

POPE Francis arrived in Indonesia yesterday at the start of the longest trip of his pontificate, hoping to encourage its Catholic community and celebrate the tradition of interfaith harmony in a country with the world's largest Muslim population.

After an overnight flight from Rome, Francis was wheeled off the plane in his wheelchair and onto the tarmac for a welcoming ceremony under Jakarta's perennial hazy, humid and polluted skies.

Two children wearing traditional clothes handed him a bouquet of vegetables, fruits, spices and flowers.

Francis planned to rest for the remainder of the day, given the rigors of an 11-day voyage zig-zagging across time zones that will also take him to Papua New Guinea, East Timor and Singapore. However, the Vatican said the 87-year-old pope met with a

group of refugees, migrants and sick people at the Vatican residence in Jakarta.

Outside the residence, he was greeted by well-wishers eager to catch sight of the first pope to visit since St. John Paul II in 1989.

"When I saw him in the car I was so touched, goosebumps," said Fanfan, a 49-year-old housewife from West Jakarta who uses only one name. "I hope he will hopefully appear in front of me to wave his hand again."

Francis' first full day of activities begins Wednesday with visits to the country's political leaders and meetings with Indonesian clergy who are helping to fuel the growth of the Catholic Church in Asia.

Indonesian President Joko Widodo welcomed the pope, saying in a broadcast statement that "Indonesia and the Vatican have the same commitment to fostering peace and brotherhood, as well as ensuring the welfare of humanity."

The highlight of Francis' first

stop will be his participation Thursday in an interfaith meeting in Jakarta's iconic Istiqlal mosque with representatives of the six religions that are officially recognized in Indonesia: Islam, Buddhism, Confucianism, Hinduism, Catholicism and Protestantism.

The mosque, the largest in Southeast Asia, sits across a piazza from the capital's main Catholic cathedral, Our Lady of Assumption, and the two are so close to each other that the Muslim call to prayer can be heard during Mass.

Their proximity is not coincidental, but strongly willed as a symbol of religious freedom and tolerance that is enshrined in Indonesia's Constitution. The buildings are also linked by an underground "Tunnel of Friendship" which Francis will visit with the grand imam, Nasaruddin Umar, before they sign a joint declaration.

While Francis will want to highlight Indonesia's tradition of religious tolerance, the coun-

try's image as a moderate Muslim nation has been undermined by flare-ups of intolerance. In 2021, a militant Islamic couple blew themselves up outside a packed Catholic cathedral on Indonesia's Sulawesi island during a Palm Sunday Mass, injuring at least 20 people.

"We have no problem with the visit. He's a guest and we will welcome him," said Eldy, a 64-year-old retired government worker who uses one name and was out walking during a car-free day in Jakarta on Sunday. "He wants to visit our Istiqlal mosque, he can do it."

Even though Catholics make up only 3% of Indonesia's population, the sheer number of Indonesians -- 275 million -- makes the archipelago home to the third-largest Christian community in Asia, after the Philippines and China.

As a result, thousands are expected to throng to Francis' events this week, which include a Mass on Thursday afternoon at Jakarta's main stadium expect-

ted to draw some 60,000 people. City authorities have urged residents to work from home that day given roadblocks and crowds.

"It is a joy for our country, especially for us Catholics," said Elisabeth Damanik, a 50-year-old housewife outside a packed Mass on Sunday at Our Lady of the Assumption. "Hopefully the pope's visit can build religious tolerance in our beloved country of Indonesia."

Care for the environment, conflict resolution and ethically minded economic development are the major themes for the trip, and Francis may touch on them during his main speech to Indonesian authorities on Wednesday.

Francis has made caring for the environment a hallmark of his pontificate and has often used his foreign visits to press his agenda on the need to care for God's creation, prevent exploitation of its natural resources and protect poor people who are bearing the brunt of climate extremes and pollution.

In Jakarta, he will find a metropolis of 11.3 million people choking under gray clouds of air pollution caused by coal-fired power plants, vehicle exhaust, trash burning and factories. Jakarta's air pollution regularly registers eight to nine times above World Health Organization limits.

"Indonesia has the worst air pollution in Southeast Asia," said Piotr Jakubowski, an air pollution expert and co-founder of Indonesian air quality monitoring company Nafas. "The visit of the pope is great because it provides a sounding board ... from another, very well-respected world leader."

Residents, too, hope Francis will speak out about the issue.

"The pollution in Jakarta is at an alarming level. That's why the presence of the pope can provide a benefit with the discussion of environmental issues," said government worker Erik Sebastian Naibaho, 26.

Francis is the third pope to visit Indonesia after Pope Paul VI in 1970 and St. John Paul II in 1989. Their attention underscores Indonesia's importance to the Vatican both in terms of Christian-Muslim dialogue and Catholic vocations, since it is home to the world's largest seminary and produces hundreds of priests and nuns a year.

"Indonesia is trying to grow in the faith," said Cardinal Ignatius Suharyo Hardjoatmodjo, the archbishop of Jakarta whom Francis made a cardinal in 2019.

At a briefing last week, he said Francis wanted to express his appreciation for Indonesia's interfaith tradition "and encourage this kind of brotherhood to continue to be maintained and developed." **MDT/AP**

AP PHOTO



Vladimir Putin walks with Mongolian President Ukhnaagiin Khurelsukh (left) during a welcoming ceremony at Sukhbaatar Square in Ulaanbaatar, yesterday

MONGOLIA-RUSSIA

Putin challenges international warrant

RUSSIAN President Vladimir Putin visited Mongolia yesterday with no sign that the host country would bow to calls to arrest him on an international warrant for alleged war crimes stemming from the Russian invasion of Ukraine.

The trip is Putin's first to a member country of the International Criminal Court since it issued the warrant about 18 months ago. Ahead of his visit, Ukraine called on Mongolia to hand Putin over to the court in The Hague, and the European Union expressed concern that Mongolia might not execute the warrant. A spokesperson for Putin said last week that the Kremlin wasn't worried.

The warrant puts the Mongolian government in a difficult position. After decades under communism with close ties to the Soviet Union, it transitioned to democracy in the 1990s and has built relations with the United States, Japan and other new partners. But it remains economically dependent on its two much larger and more powerful neighbors, Russia and China. Russia supplies the landlocked country with most of its fuel and a sizeable amount of its electricity.

The ICC has accused Putin of being responsible for the abductions of children from Ukraine, where the fighting has raged for 2½ years. Member countries are required by the court's founding

treaty, the Rome Statute, to detain suspects if an arrest warrant has been issued, but Mongolia needs to maintain good relations with Russia and the court lacks a mechanism to enforce its warrants.

The Russian leader was welcomed in the main square in Ulaanbaatar, the capital, by an honor guard dressed in vivid red and blue uniforms styled on those of the personal guard of 13th century ruler Genghis Khan, the founder of the Mongol Empire.

He and Mongolian President Khurelsukh Ukhnaa walked up the red-carpeted steps of the Government Palace and bowed before a statue of Genghis Khan before entering the building for their meetings.

A small group of protesters who tried to unfurl a Ukrainian flag before the welcome ceremony were taken away by police.

The two governments signed agreements for a feasibility study and the design of an upgrade to a power plant in Ulaanbaatar and to ensure the continuous supply of aviation fuel to Mongolia. Putin also outlined plans to develop the rail system between the two countries.

He invited the Mongolian president to attend a summit of the BRICS nations — a group that includes Russia and China among others — in the Russian city of Kazan in late October. Khurelsukh accepted,

according to Russian state news agency RIA Novosti.

On Monday, the EU expressed concern that the ICC warrant might not be executed and said it had shared its concern with Mongolian authorities.

"Mongolia, like all other countries, has the right to develop its international ties according to its own interests," European Commission spokeswoman Nabila Massrali said. But she added, "Mongolia is a state party to the Rome Statute of the ICC since 2002, with the legal obligations that it entails."

More than 50 Russians outside the country have signed an open letter urging the government of Mongolia to "immediately detain Vladimir Putin upon his arrival." The signers include Vladimir Kara-Murza, who was freed from a Russian prison in August in the biggest East-West prisoner swap since the Cold War.

Dmitry Medvedev, the deputy secretary of Russia's Security Council, denounced the warrant against Putin as "illegal" in an online statement yesterday and those who would try to carry it out as "madmen."

Putin, on his first visit to Mongolia in five years, will join a ceremony to mark the 85th anniversary of a joint Soviet and Mongolian victory over Japan's army that controlled Manchuria in northeast China. Thousands of soldiers on both sides died in 1939 in months of fighting over

the border's location between Manchuria and Mongolia.

"I am very delighted about Putin's visit to Mongolia," said Yansanjav Demdendorj, a retired economist, citing Russia's role against Japan. "If we think of the ... battle, it's Russians who helped free Mongolia."

Putin has made a series of overseas trips in recent months to try to counter the international isolation he faces over the invasion of Ukraine. He visited China in May, made a trip to North Korea and Vietnam in June and went to Kazakhstan in July for a meeting of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization.

But Kenneth Roth, the former longtime director of Human Rights Watch, described Putin's trip to Mongolia as "a sign of weakness," posting on X that the Russian leader "could manage a trip only to a country with a tiny population of 3.4 million that lives in Russia's shadow."

Last year, Putin joined a meeting in Johannesburg by video link after the South African government lobbied against him showing up for the BRICS summit. South Africa, an ICC member, was condemned by activists and its main opposition party in 2015 when it didn't arrest then-Sudanese President Omar al-Bashir during a visit.

Enkhgerel Seded, who studies at a university in Moscow, said that historically, countries with friendly relations don't arrest heads-of-state on official visits.

"Our country has obligations toward the international community," she said. "But ... I think in this case as well, it would not be appropriate to conduct an arrest." MDT/AP

this day in history

1957 HOMOSEXUALITY 'SHOULD NOT BE A CRIME'



A report sponsored by the government has suggested homosexual behaviour between consenting adults should no longer be a criminal offence.

The proposal is the principal and most controversial recommendation put forward by the 13-member committee chaired by Sir John Wolfenden, Vice-Chancellor of Reading University, investigating the current law on homosexuality and prostitution.

The first print of 5,000 copies of the 155-page "Report on Homosexual Offences and Prostitution" - known as the Wolfenden report - sold out within hours of publication.

After its three-year long inquiry, the Committee on Homosexual Offences and Prostitution in Great Britain came to the conclusion that outlawing homosexuality impinged upon civil liberties.

It said society and the law should respect "individual freedom of actions in matters of private morality" and stressed it was neither condoning nor condemning homosexual acts.

Ultimately, private morality or immorality was "not the law's business".

It defined "adult" as being a person over the age of 21 and that such acts should be decriminalised only if they took place "in private" and with consent.

Under current law, various homosexual offences can incur anything from a £5 fine to life imprisonment. [...]

The Wolfenden committee included three women, judges, doctors, MPs, lawyers and ministers of religion.

Only one expressed his reservation on relaxing the law on homosexuality - James Adair, formerly Procurator-General at Glasgow. He believed it would be regarded by many homosexuals as "condoning or licensing licentiousness".

Courtesy BBC News

IN CONTEXT

The Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr Goeffrey Fisher, supported the Wolfenden report's recommendation to decriminalise male homosexuality. (There was never a law against sex between women, so never one to repeal.)

He was joined by the British Medical Association, the Howard League for Penal Reform and the National Association of Probation Officers.

But the government rejected the proposal. Homosexual men would have to wait another ten years before the law permitted sexual relations between adults over the age of 21 - "in private" and not at all among members of the Merchant Navy or Armed Forces. In Scotland sex between two men was not decriminalised until 1980.

The age of consent for gay men was lowered to 18 in 1994.

A law equalising the age of consent for gay men in line with that for heterosexual adults to 16 was forced through parliament in February 2000.

Sir John Wolfenden became director of the British Museum (1969-1973) and was made a life peer in 1974. He died in 1985.

MACAU'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

YOUR STARS

ARIES Mar. 21-Apr. 19
Quicken your step. Get your heart pumping. Physical action advances your work and fitness. Avoid accidents. Look ahead. Move your body to grow stronger.

TAURUS Apr. 20-May. 20
Engage in fun activities with people that you love. Surround yourself with simple pleasures like music, art, games and romance. Share the goodness.

GEMINI May. 21-Jun. 21
Home comforts draw you in. Don't accept new challenges yet. Recharge in your sanctuary. Nurture yourself and your household with healthy comfort food and love.

CANCER Jun. 22-Jul. 22
Do the homework. Obligations vie with new tasks for your time. Either stay focused or stop. Hidden dangers abound. Avoid travel. Make virtual connections.

LEO Jul. 23-Aug. 22
New opportunities for profit arise, but don't rush. Pay attention to expenses, or risk spending it all. Save some for a rainy day.

VIRGO Aug. 23-Sep. 22
Stay cool. Expect energy surges. Don't take on more than you can handle. Consider personal priorities before automatically agreeing. Guard time for yourself.

LIBRA Sep. 23-Oct. 22
Don't make important decisions or moves yet. Slow to consider hidden implications and consequences. Review plans and options. Savor rituals and peaceful moments.

SCORPIO Oct. 23-Nov. 21
Hang out with friends and have fun. Make plans for later action. Wait for current obstacles to resolve. Get to know someone better.

SAGITTARIUS Nov. 22-Dec. 21
Hold off on making a professional decision. Get feedback from your team for a wider perspective. Wait until everyone can make the meeting.

CAPRICORN Dec. 22-Jan. 19
Take a break. Plot and review itineraries to revise plans around roadblocks. Wait for traffic to clear. Explore nearby for unexpected discoveries.

AQUARIUS Jan. 20-Feb. 18
Invest in the highest quality without wasting money on features you don't need. Carefully budget to keep expenses lower than income. Use shared resources.

PISCES Feb. 19-Mar. 20
Collaborate for solutions. Work around a challenge with your partner. Willingness to compromise provides workability. Stay receptive and open-minded.

The Born Loser by Chip Sanson



SUDOKU

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

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

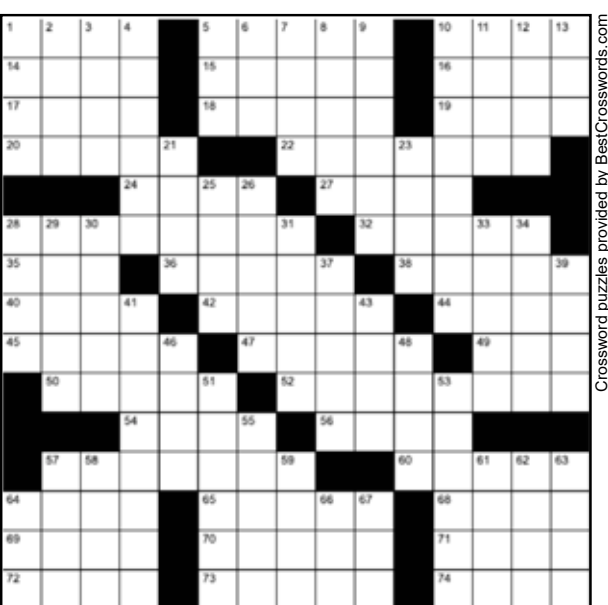
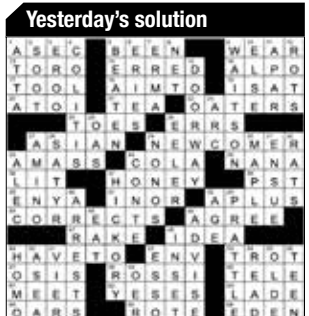
WEATHER

	MIN	MAX	CONDITION
CHINA			
Beijing	20	28	rain
Changchun	16	23	rain
Chengdu	27	38	fine
Chongqing	29	41	fine
Fuzhou	27	33	cloudy
Guangzhou	26	36	showers
Guiyang	20	32	cloudy
Haikou	25	32	cloudy
Hangzhou	27	35	cloudy
Harbin	16	23	rain
Hefei	23	35	cloudy
Nanjing	25	35	cloudy
Shanghai	27	33	cloudy
Taipei	26	31	fine
Wuhan	27	37	fine
Hong Kong	27	31	rain
WORLD			
Moscow	10	20	fine
Frankfurt	17	23	rain
Paris	14	22	cloudy
London	14	19	cloudy
New York	17	26	sunny

CROSSWORDS

ACROSS 1- Over here!; 5- The ___ Mutiny; 10- Took advantage of; 14- Bryce Canyon site; 15- Unexpected victory; 16- Au naturel; 17- Thick cord; 18- Conger catcher; 19- Covers; 20- Dogie catcher; 22- Appetite; 24- Wishing won't make ___; 27- Neb. neighbor; 28- Capital of Finland; 32- Utopias; 35- May ___ excused?; 36- Chili con ___; 38- Roofing stone; 40- Actress Anderson; 42- Festive occasions; 44- Days of ___; 45- Alpaca's cousin; 47- Satisfies; 49- Actor Gibson; 50- Eastern; 52- Adores; 54- At that point; 56- Defense grp. since 1949; 57- Flexible; 60- Facial expression used by Elvis Presley; 64- Let's just leave ___ that; 65- Govt. security; 68- Naturalness; 69- London art gallery; 70- Fewest; 71- Ladies of Spain; Abbr.; 72- ___ Three Lives; 73- Cosmetics Lauder; 74- Hardware fastener;

DOWN 1- Knitting stitch; 2- Greek portico; 3- Drains; 4- Essay; 5- White ball, in pool; 6- Gibbon, e.g.; 7- Land in water; 8- Requirements; 9- Online brokerage; 10- Improbable; 11- Interview-wear; 12- Whirling water; 13- ___ Moines; 21- Ear-related; 23- Heels; 25- Glitch; 26- Gumbo pods; 28- Small mountain; 29- Deadly virus; 30- Horne and Olin; 31- Acquired relative; 33- Wynonna's mother; 34- Throat problem; 37- Stationery brand; 39- Electric fish; 41- Copied; 43- Antitoxins; 46- Sounds of relief; 48- Concordes; 51- Stinging plant; 53- Not disposed to cheat; 55- Dressed to the ___; 57- And others, for short; 58- Tardy; 59- Outer garment; 61- Deserve; 62- Son of Isaac; 63- Take a breather; 64- "Lord, is ___?"; Matthew; 66- Mao ___ -tung; 67- When the French fry;



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- 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
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- Electricity - Report 28 339 922
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FOOTBALL

FIFA says \$6.5 billion of international spending in transfer window

SPENDING on transfer fees in international men's player deals cooled off during the mid-year trading period, according to FIFA research published yesterday.

FIFA said clubs committed to spend \$6.46 billion on buying players in cross-border deals during the June-to-September transfer window — down from \$7.43 billion in the same period a year ago.

The average of transfer fees paid by clubs in Europe, by far the richest market, was \$3.13 million compared to \$3.8 million one year ago.

The FIFA study is not a complete guide because it does not count the biggest transfer deal of the European offseason, nor does it include moves by players between two clubs in the same country.

Kylian Mbappé joined Real Madrid without a transfer fee being paid because the France star was a free agent after letting his contract expire at Paris Saint-Germain. Still, Madrid had to



Julián Álvarez, Argentina, one of the biggest transfer fees in cross-border deals

pay Mbappé a signing bonus variously reported as between \$110 million and \$165 million.

The biggest transfer fees in cross-border deals were Julián Álvarez's move from Manchester City to Atletico Madrid, reported to be about 75 million euros (\$83

million) and Leny Yoro from Lille to Manchester United for a reported 62 million euros (\$69 million).

The FIFA study does not include deals involving two clubs in the same country where the player's registration is not transferred between member federations.

Deals in the top-10 biggest transfer fees not counting toward the FIFA figures include Dominic Solanke from Bournemouth to Tottenham, Pedro Neto from Wolves to Chelsea and Teun Koopmeiners from Atalanta to Juventus.

English clubs were the biggest overall and net spenders with an outlay of \$1.69 billion on international transfers, and \$1.25 billion recouped. Clubs in England, Italy and Saudi Arabia all had a collective net spending of at least \$400 million.

Belgian clubs took a net profit of \$302 million, by receiving \$412 million from selling players abroad and spending \$110 million on players from clubs in other countries, according to FIFA. Those deals included Igor Thiago moving from Club Brugge to Brentford and Ernest Nuamah from Molenbeek to its sister club Lyon.

Clubs from Argentina received about \$130 million more than they spent, and Brazilian clubs made a collective profit of \$98 million on international deals, FIFA said.

Of the record 11,000 international transfers processed by FIFA in the past three months, most did not include a fee and nearly 6,300 were free agent players. **MDT/AP**

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Plastic & Aesthetic Surgery : Dr. Lam U Lin

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PARALYMPICS 2024

Medals for women in wheelchair rugby, pregnant archer wins gold and triathlon begins

CIARÁN FAHEY & JEROME PUGMIRE, PARIS

ELLA Sabljak thrust her arms in the air after helping Australia win the bronze medal in wheelchair rugby at the Paralympics on Monday, then turned her thoughts to growing the sport.

As one of three women on Australia's team she is optimistic their medal success will get others to take up wheelchair rugby.

"I really hope so. We have a huge amount of women and girls interested," she said after the 50-48 win. "Moving forward, the strategy in our teams definitely should include embedding women in our team development, all through the pipeline."

Emilie Miller and Shae Graham were the other women on the 12-strong team, the highest representation of women of any nation competing in Paris in the mixed-gender but male-dominated wheelchair rugby.

"The team uses our strengths. They never shut that down," Sabljak said about their roles. "They know what my strengths are, same with Shae, same with Emilie."

Sabljak hopes for eventual pari-

ty with a 6-6 split on teams.

"That's really ambitious. I would love to see that," she said. "The next Paralympics are in LA, four years away, who knows what can happen?"

Two other women won wheelchair rugby medals: Kae Kurahashi earned gold for Japan following a 48-41 win against a United States team featuring Sarah Adam.

PREGNANT ARCHER CLINCHES GOLD

Pregnant archer Jodie Grinham clinched gold in the mixed team compound event alongside British teammate Nathan Macqueen, after they beat Iran 155-151.

Grinham, who is seven months pregnant, celebrated once again after her bronze medal on Saturday in the women's individual compound event.

TRANSGENDER ATHLETE MISSES FINAL

Italian transgender runner Valentina Petrillo failed to reach the final of the women's 400 meters in her classification for visually impaired athletes.

The 50-year-old Petrillo, a transgender woman who was raised as a boy, finished third in her semifi-



Australia's Ella Sabljak celebrates after winning the wheelchair rugby bronze medal

nal heat despite a personal best of 57.58 seconds.

World Athletics last year banned transgender women from competing in the female category at international events if they transitioned after puberty. But its para counterpart, World Para Athletics, has not followed suit.

BRAZIL'S UNBEATEN RUN CONTINUES

Brazil's 3-0 win against host France in blind soccer group play means it still has not lost a match in Paralympic competition since its introduction to the Games in 2004.

The Brazilians are chasing a sixth straight gold medal and are spearheaded by Jefferson Goncalves Mizael Oliveira,

known as Jefinho.

The speedy 34-year-old is gunning for his fifth consecutive gold medal.

WOODHALL IS SIXTH IN 100M

Hunter Woodhall hoped to match his wife by winning an Olympic medal but he finished sixth in the 100 meters.

Woodhall is married to long jumper Tara Davis-Woodhall, who gold at the Olympics last month.

Hunter is a double amputee running in the T62 category. He clocked 10.96 seconds. Costa Rican Sherman Isidro set a Paralympic record winning in 10.65.

Hunter was born with a birth defect that left him without fibulas in either leg and led to amputation below the knees.

INTO THE RIVER AT LAST

Triathlon events in the Seine River finally got the green light and home favorite Alexis Hanquiquant soon had the enthusiastic crowd going.

Hanquiquant raised his arms in triumph and pointed to his name as the home fans chanted his name.

"The crowd was incredible," said Hanquiquant, who competed in the PTS4 class. "Doing it at home is exceptional."

Hanquiquant had his right leg amputated just below the knee in 2013, about three years after it was crushed by agricultural equipment in a work accident.

Sport classes PTS2 to 5 are for athletes with limitations in lower or upper limbs who don't need a handcycle for the cycling segment or a racing chair for the running segment. Prosthetic legs and bike modifications are allowed.

Triathlon events were postponed from Sunday because of concerns about the river's water safety after rainstorms. Heavy rains cause wastewater and runoff to flow into the river, leading to a rise in bacteria levels.

FIRST BADMINTON MEDAL FOR US

Miles Krajewski and Jayci Simon won America's first medals in badminton — a silver — in the mixed doubles SH6 classification for athletes with short stature.

The two 19-year-olds lost the final to China's Lin Naili and Li Fengmei at Porte de la Chapelle Arena in northern Paris.

But silver was still great after they qualified by grabbing the final available spot back in April. MDT/AP

AD

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OPINION

Multipolar World

Jorge Costa Oliveira



SOUTHEAST ASIA WILL BE THE NEXT 'FACTORY OF THE WORLD'

Foreign direct investment (FDI) in China declined after Q2 2022. This drop in FDI is part of a broader global trend of decreasing investment flows and is likely also the result of the slowdown of China's economy and the uncertainty arising from the decoupling/de-risking between the West and China. In 2023, out of a total of 1.21 trillion, 564 billion was invested in developing Asian countries. Compared to 2022, China experienced a 9% decline, and India saw a 37% drop.

Although it took a few years, many foreign companies have reached the same conclusion that many Chinese companies had already reached: it is preferable to invest in stable emerging countries with lower costs and growing domestic markets. These countries benefit from the fact that their products are not subject to entry restrictions in the coveted EU and US markets. Moreover, it's wise to avoid dependency on a country (China) that, despite its large market and productive potential, may face a gradual decoupling from the world's current major economic blocs—Europe and North America.

Among these emerging markets, the most attractive are those in the major Southeast Asian countries, all of which are members of the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP), a free trade agreement (FTA) that provides privileged access to the Chinese market. Another FTA—between ASEAN and India—facilitates access to the Indian market. Additionally, these countries maintain political neutrality to navigate the turbulent waters of a world polarized by the West-China rivalry, yet increasingly multipolar.

In the short term, the 2024 World Investment Report shows that the number of greenfield investments announced for Southeast Asia increased by 42% (+ 56.4 billion in value), focusing on services (in 2022) and the manufacturing sector (in 2023). According to UNCTAD data, China, Hong Kong, the US, Japan, and Singapore remain the region's largest investors.

Over the next decade, Southeast Asia (with 700 million people, mostly low-income, but with a good percentage of qualified professionals) is set to be one of the regions with the fastest and highest economic growth, catalyzed by foreign investment.

An interesting report ('Southeast Asia Outlook 2024-34' by the Angsana Council, Bain & Company, and DBS Bank) predicts that the foreign investment channeled into the major Southeast Asian countries from now until 2034 will be massive. If we consider just four strategic sectors—electric vehicle production (in Thailand, Malaysia, and Indonesia), electric battery production (in Indonesia, Thailand, and Malaysia), semiconductor production (in Malaysia and Singapore), and data centers (in Indonesia, Thailand, and Singapore)—there are already investment leads worth hundreds of billions of euros.

Southeast Asia is set to become the next "factory of the world."

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A boat carrying migrants ripped apart in the English Channel as they attempted to reach Britain from northern France yesterday, plunging dozens into the treacherous waterway and leaving 12 dead, authorities said.

Many didn't have life preservers in what one official called the deadliest migrant accident in the channel this year.

"Unfortunately, the bottom of the boat ripped open," said Olivier Barbarin, mayor of Le Portel near the fishing port of Boulogne-sur-Mer, where a first aid post was set up to treat victims. "If

people don't know how to swim in the agitated waters ... it can go very quickly."

The mayor said 12 died after initially giving a toll of 13. Lt. Etienne Baggio, a spokesman for the French maritime prefecture that oversees that stretch of sea, said rescuers pulled a total of 65 people from the waters in a search operation that lasted more than four hours. Doctors confirmed 12 did not survive, he said.

Baggio called it the deadliest migrant boat tragedy in the English Channel this year.

AP PHOTO



This image made from video shows police officers outside Makala prison in Kinshasa

ATTEMPTED JAILBREAK AT A CONGO PRISON KILLS 129 PEOPLE AS CHAOS ERUPTS

JEAN-YVES KAMALE, KINSHASA

An attempted jailbreak in Congo's main prison left 129 people dead, including some who were shot and others who died in a stampede at the overcrowded facility, authorities said yesterday. Activists alleged the death toll was higher but did not provide a figure.

A provisional assessment showed that 24 inmates were fatally shot by "warning" shots fired by guards as they tried to escape from the Makala Central Prison in the capital of Kinshasa early on Monday, Congolese Interior Minister Jacquemin Shabani said on the social platform X.

"There are also 59 injured people taken into care by the government, as well as some cases of women raped," he said, adding that order has now been restored at the prison, part of which was burned in the attempted jailbreak.

He did not elaborate on the incidents of rape. The prison holds both male and female inmates.

It was not known if all 129 fatalities were inmates. Also, it wasn't immediately clear how the stampede occurred as details of the jailbreak remained sparse.

Makala, Congo's largest

penitentiary with a capacity for 1,500 people, holds over 12,000 inmates, most of whom are awaiting trial, Amnesty International said in its latest country report.

The facility has recorded previous jailbreaks, including in 2017 when members of a religious sect stormed the prison and freed dozens of inmates.

Gunfire inside the prison started around midnight on Sunday and lasted into Monday morning, local residents in the area said.

"Shots were ringing out everywhere," said Stéphane Matondo, who lives nearby, adding that military vehicles arrived shortly after and that the main road to the prison was blocked.

Videos posted online show bodies lying on the ground inside the prison, many of them with visible injuries. Another video shows inmates carrying bodies that appeared to be lifeless onto a vehicle.

There were no signs of forced entry into the prison, which is located in the city center, 5 kilometers (3 miles) from the presidential palace.

The attempted escape was plotted from inside the prison by inmates in one of the wings, Mbemba

Kabuya, the deputy justice minister, told the local Top Congo FM radio.

In the hours following the attack, officials visited the prison as authorities convened a panel to investigate the incident. Congolese President Felix Tshisekedi, who is in China on an official visit, has not publicly commented on the incident.

Calling for an independent investigation, rights groups and the opposition accused the government of using excessive force and covering up the true death toll. An earlier statement from a senior government official on Monday said that only two people died.

Martin Fayulu, an opposition leader, compared the death toll to "summary executions" and said it was an "unacceptable crime that cannot go unpunished."

Makala — among other prisons in Congo — is so overcrowded that inmates often starve to death, activists say. Scores of prisoners have been released in recent months as part of efforts to reduce the number of inmates.

Justice Minister Constant Mutamba called the attempted jailbreak a "premeditated act of sabotage" and promised a "stern response." **MDT/AP**

AP PHOTO



UK London announced yesterday [Macau time] the suspension of certain arms exports to Israel, citing a risk of international law violations. This move, while limited in scope, signifies growing international pressure on Israel regarding its military actions in the ongoing Gaza conflict.

AP PHOTO



Netherlands On Tuesday, the Dutch Data Protection Authority fined Clearview AI €30.5 million for creating an "illegal database" of faces. This action highlights concerns over privacy violations and the invasive nature of facial recognition technology.

AP PHOTO



Venezuela A Venezuelan judge issued an arrest warrant on Monday for opposition former presidential candidate Edmundo González. This follows a contested election result, escalating tensions and crackdowns on the opposition by President Nicolás Maduro's government.

AP PHOTO



USA With the U.S. presidential election approaching, Vice President Kamala Harris and former President Donald Trump are focusing their campaigns on seven key states. The intense political competition is centered around issues like the economy, immigration, and abortion.