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SURGE IN BACTERIAL FOOD POISONING CASES REPORTED IN AUGUST

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AP PHOTO



Myanmar Soldiers are helping clean up areas devastated by floods and landslides following Typhoon Yagi. The disaster left 384 dead and 89 missing. Ongoing civil conflict has hindered relief efforts. The UN reported widespread destruction of homes, infrastructure, and essential services.

AP PHOTO



Japan scrambled warplanes and used flares yesterday to warn off a Russian reconnaissance plane that entered Japanese airspace near Hokkaido. This comes after Chinese and Russian warships sailed nearby. Japan lodged a diplomatic protest, citing concerns over increasing military cooperation between Russia and China.

AP PHOTO



Haitians express skepticism about international efforts to quell gang violence as a UN-backed force of Kenyan police arrives. Despite pledges of additional troops, many locals doubt the mission will resolve the country's spiraling gang crisis. Haiti continues to suffer widespread violence and insecurity.

United States

OceanGate's co-founder Guillermo Sohnlein defended the company's use of carbon fiber in the ill-fated Titan submersible, saying no existing sub builders met their requirements. The company is under investigation following the June 2023 implosion, which killed five, including co-founder Stockton Rush.

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e-MOP underway, prototype by the year's end, Ho promises

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COOPERATION
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**GOV'T LAUNCHES
COMMEMORATIVE
LOGO FOR 25TH
ANNIVERSARY**

The Macau SAR Government has designed an official commemorative logo to be featured on materials related to a series of celebratory events organized by the SAR, the government announced yesterday. The official commemorative logo incorporates the number '25' and golden lotus petals as its core elements. It is colored in gold, symbolizing the "Lotus Flower in Full Bloom" sculpture, as well as Macau's prosperity and its connection with the motherland. The golden lotus is one of the symbols of Macau, representing prosperity, beauty, and happiness.

**HENGQIN LINE
TO BEGIN TRIAL
OPERATIONS IN
OCTOBER**

The Hengqin Line of the Macau LRT is set to meet its regulatory requirements and begin trial operations in October. Following the completion of the connection between the Taipa and Hengqin Line stations in August, test trains are now running for system assessments. Construction began in March 2021, covering 2.2 kilometers with two stations: HE1 near the Taipa Line, and HE2 beneath Hengqin Port, featuring elevated tracks and an underwater tunnel.

**MGM BRINGS BACK
OKTOBERFEST**

This October, MGM will host the annual Oktoberfest Macau from Oct. 25 to Nov. 5, supported by the Macao Government Tourism Office (MGTO). Now in its 14th year, the festival will feature a traditional Bavarian atmosphere with a genuine Löwenbräu beer, alongside a variety of food and carnival games. The Högl Fun Band will return from Munich to energize the event. Oktoberfest has opened in Munich after the ceremonial beer keg-tapping over the weekend, kicking off the country's 189th Oktoberfest at noon when the tap was inserted into the first keg.

FINANCE

EXPANDING RMB USAGE, TRADING INFRASTRUCTURE CENTRAL TO SINO-PORTUGUESE ECONOMIC BONDS

VICTORIA CHAN

THE expanded use of China's RMB currency and strengthened financial trading infrastructure will be central to visions of taking economic bonds between China and Portuguese-speaking nations to the next level. The Macau Association of Banks is working to solidify financial cooperation between the mainland and Portuguese-speaking countries, according to president Ip Sio Kai.

"Macau has always been exemplary in terms of the cultural exchanges between the East and West," Ip said in his opening remarks at the Greater Bay Area Investment Forum of the 2nd cooperation conference between the commercial Banks of Macau and Portuguese-speaking countries.

Ip highlighted Macau's unique position in facilitating trade and commerce between China and Portugal, noting that the city has



been a "very important medium connecting the two sides," even after its return to the motherland.

"Through the 'One country, two systems' and a low tax regime, we have many advantages in this regard," Ip said.

The association has been working closely with the Macau government improve financial cooperation, particularly in the development of RMB clearance. In August 2015, Macau became

one of the first cities approved by the Central People's Bank to establish RMB clearance banks. The association has since established relations with 17 banks from 17 Portuguese-speaking countries.

"To further our cooperation, in 2019, the Macau Association of Banks signed an initiative with various Portuguese-speaking countries, including Guinea-Bissau, Mozambique, Portugal, and Santo Domingo to build a solid

foundation for cooperation," Ip said.

During the 6th Ministerial Conference of the Macau Forum in April this year, Li Hongzhong, member of the Politburo and vice-chairman of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC), proposed several measures to support Macau's role as a financial bridge between China and Portuguese-speaking countries, including the development of a RMB settlement platform for the international bond market.

"In the future, we are looking forward to further collaborations amongst our banks and their associations to work with the Macau government to continue to build the one platform of Macau. This will allow us to take advantage of our position in the area and in national development so that we can strengthen our ties with the financial institutions of Portuguese-speaking countries," Ip said.

Local banks to strengthen ties with Lusophone nations

VICTORIA CHAN

BANKS in Macau aim to strengthen financial ties with Portuguese-speaking countries through expanded cooperation, said Adelino Buque of the Business Confederation of the Portuguese Speaking Countries (CE-CPLP), during his keynote speech yesterday.

The Monetary Authority of Macau is hosting its 2nd cooperation conference between the commercial Banks of Macau and Portuguese-speaking countries, Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macau Greater Bay Area Investment Forum, which underscores the region's role in fostering financial collegiality between China and

RENATO MARQUES



the Portuguese-speaking world.

In his speech at the conference, Buque acknowledged the "extreme relevance and importance of this event" and the organization's commitment to strengthening economic and commercial cooperation between China, Macau, and Portuguese-

-speaking countries.

CE-CPLP, which represents business interests in Angola, Brazil, Cape Verde, East Timor, Equatorial Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Mozambique, Portugal, and Sao Tome and Principe, has been actively promoting financial and banking cooperation among its member states

since adopting the "CPLP Economic Pillar" initiative in 2023.

"We are very encouraged to observe that China is also very willing to expand economic, commercial, and financial cooperation with Portuguese speaking countries via different channels, granting Macau a pivotal role and function as a bridge and liaison platform to provide efficient and quality financial services," said Buque.

The conference aims to build a more cohesive and integrated financial system between Portuguese-speaking countries and China through new banking partnerships, digitalization, innovative financial instruments, and

policies in areas like green finance, agriculture, and infrastructure development.

For Buque, the conference represents a unique opportunity to strengthen and reinforce already positive cooperation relations, mechanisms and networks in the financial sector within the framework of business and trade between China, Macau and Portuguese speaking countries.

"The ultimate goal is to boost cooperation, leading to more economic growth, sustainable development, and enhanced competitiveness in global markets," he concluded.

The conference brings together officials from China and Macau, as well as those from central banks and monetary authorities across nine Portuguese-speaking nations, aiming to foster economic and business cooperation.

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FINANCE

e-MOP prototype to be unveiled before the year-end: CE

RENATO MARQUES

THE prototype of Macau's digital currency (e-MOP) will be revealed before year-end, the Chief Executive (CE), Ho Iat Seng, said yesterday morning during the opening ceremony of the 2nd Conference of Central Bank Governors and Financial Officials between China and Portuguese-speaking Countries.

In his speech, the CE announced that the e-MOP prototype will be unveiled before the end of this year, presenting basic features that will lay the groundwork for future applications and uses.

Ho hinted that the release would occur as part of the celebrations around the 25th anniversary of the Macau handover, which takes place on Dec. 20.

"This edition of the conference will be a platform for the exchange of ideas concerning financial cooperation between China and Portuguese-speaking countries, Macau's role as a Sino-Portuguese Financial Services Platform, and the implementation of central bank digital currencies, a hot topic that attrac-



ts great attention from central banks around the world," the CE said. "Given the global trend of central bank digital currency development, the Monetary Autho-

rity of Macao (AMCM), with the support of the People's Bank of China, is co-operating with the Digital Currency Institute of the People's Bank of China to deve-

lop a research and development (R&D) project to create the Macau Digital Pataca. AMCM also plans to hold a public presentation of the prototype system of

the e-MOP later this year, in celebration of the 25th anniversary of Macau's return to the motherland."

On the same topic, the CE reaffirmed the dependence and reliance on Chinese systems and technologies to introduce the e-currency to Macau, admitting, "We rely on the country's advanced technological strengths to introduce modern, digital economic developments elements into Macau's monetary system, to meet the requirements of the long-term development of the Macau SAR."

Briefly after the CE's speech, AMCM announced further details about the launching of the e-MOP, noting in a press statement that the e-MOP, "is unlike common private cryptocurrencies, in that it is legal tender in digital form." According to law 10/2023, it has the same legal status as physical banknotes and coins, and equivalent monetary value.

AMCM also noted that the e-MOP "has zero credit risk, and is classified as a higher-level security asset."

The authority indicates that during the different R&D phases, it will conduct testing in a controlled environment (referred to as a "sandbox" test environment). This testing aims to ensure the security and stability of Macau's monetary system, "exploring the application scenarios of the e-MOP and assessing the various types of risks following the principle of prudence."

TOURISM

Visitor arrivals in August reach record high of 3.7 million

NADIA SHAW

VISITOR arrivals set a new monthly record in August, reaching 3,651,731 - a 13.3% increase year-over-year and 0.8% higher than August 2019. Same-day visitors grew 23.4% while overnight visitors increased 2.7%.

Mainland China remained the top source market, with 2.75 million visitors, up 18.5%. Visitors from the Greater Bay Area's nine Pearl River Delta cities rose 21.3%. International visitor numbers also rebounded, up 25.5% to 162,331, though still at 75.3% of August 2019 levels.

In the first eight months of 2024, total visitor arrivals expanded 32.7% to 23.39 million, 85.3% of the same period in 2019.



International visitors reached 1.5 million, 68.9% of the 2019 figure.

Meanwhile, the government anticipates that this trend will persist during the upcoming holidays, even though September typically sees a quieter period after the summer.

In an interview with local media last week, Maria Helena de Senna Fernandes, Director of the Macau Government Tourism Office (MGTO), announced that this year's National

Day Golden Week will feature an international fireworks display aimed at attracting more tourists to Macau. She expressed optimism, stating, "Although the government has not yet compiled the statistics, we hope that the National Day Golden Week will attract a daily average of 100,000 visitors to Macau."

"The strong visitor numbers, especially from the mainland, are a positive sign for Macau's touris-

m-dependent economy," said the official.

Meanwhile, the travel industry saw a strong rebound in 2023 as the number of visitor arrivals surged, according to data from the Statistics and Census Service (DSEC). The number of travel agencies operating in Macau increased to 177 in 2023, up from 176 the previous year, with total employment rising by 802 to 2,993.

Industry receipts soared 214.3% year-on-year to MOP5.06 billion, recovering to 60% of 2019 levels. Receipts from room reservations, passenger transport ticketing, package tours, and rentals of coaches with drivers all saw substantial increases. Expenditure also rose, up 180.8% to MOP4.78 billion.

COURTS

FORMER MARITIME OFFICIAL SENTENCED TO PRISON FOR CORRUPTION

LYNZY VALLES

THE former deputy director of the Marine and Water Bureau (DSAMA), Vong Kam Fai, has been sentenced to 18 months in prison for "passive corruption for an illegal act," according to a ruling by the Court of Final Appeal (TUI) yesterday.

This decision follows a lengthy legal saga that dates back to 2014, involving a controversial contract awarded to the company 'China Overseas' for dredging work near the Coloane Thermal Power Station.

The case centers on a contract for 38 million patacas that was awarded directly to the company for a six-month project, which came on the heels of a previous contract worth 50 million patacas, itself

secured by the same firm between March and August of 2014.

Prosecutors alleged that the contract awards were tainted by bribery, with several gifts exchanged among the defendants.

Initially acquitted in 2021 alongside two other former officials, Vong's case was reopened after the Public Prosecutions Office appealed the decision.

The head of department was also given a sentence of a year and a half, while the head of division was sentenced to two years.

The Court of Second Instance (TSI) has now upheld the convictions of all three officials involved, with the head of department also receiving an 18-month sentence, while the head of division faces two years in prison.

CRIME

PJ ALERTS THE PUBLIC ON INCREASING FRAUD SCAMS

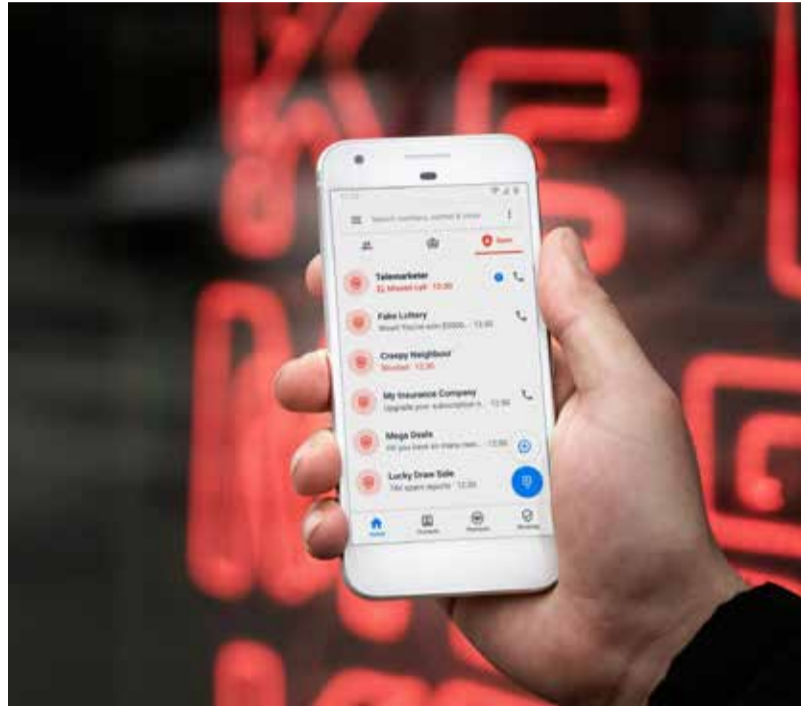
LYNZY VALLES

OVER the past three days, authorities have reported a rise in fraudulent activities, with 25 incidents exhibiting similar criminal behaviours.

The Judiciary Police (PJ) are urging the public to be more alert to such scams.

Three victims fell prey to a scheme involving impersonators posing as "public security officers." These fraudsters falsely claimed that the victims' mobile phones, registered in the mainland, were being used for illegal activities such as loansharking. They coerced the victims into participating in video surveillance and funds examination, ultimately leading to the transfer of substantial sums—ranging from MOP37,000 to MOP800,000—from the victims' bank accounts.

Additionally, three separate cases of investment fraud were reported. In these instances, victims were approached online by individuals posing as friends



or romantic partners, who lured them into investing in virtual currencies. One victim discovered the scam after investing a total of MOP325,000 and subsequently being unable to recover any of the funds.

The wave of fraud also inclu-

ded eight cases of concert ticket scams, predominantly affecting young people who purchased tickets for events in Hangzhou and Macau from unverified sellers. Victims reported losses varying from MOP1,000 to MOP16,000.

HEALTH

Surge in bacterial food poisoning cases reported in August

THE Health Bureau (SSM) has reported an increase in bacterial food poisoning cases, with 62 declarations recorded in August.

This marks a staggering four-fold rise compared to just three cases in the same month last year and a 3.8-fold increase from July's 13 cases.

Bacterial food poisoning accounted for nearly 10% of the total 784 mandatory health declarations made by local healthcare units last month.

In addition to foodborne illnesses, SSM noted a rise in cases of scarlet fever, with 28 cases reported—up 4.6 times from five cases in August.

However, this figure represents a significant drop of 68.2% from the 88 cases reported in July.

Other health concerns reported include 38 cases of Salmonella infection, 18 cases of severe respiratory infections related to Covid-19, and 13 cases of chickenpox.

Influenza cases accounted for 463 reports, while the bureau recorded 102 cases of enterovirus infection and 33 cases of tuberculosis. There were also two cases of whooping cough and one case of legionella, alongside two asymptomatic HIV infections.

Under the Law on the Prevention, Control, and Treatment of Communicable Diseases, healthcare professionals are required to report any communicable diseases they encounter. Currently, there are 45 diseases subject to mandatory reporting. LV

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



TIS

Students explore educational opportunities abroad at university fair

NADIA SHAW

THE International School of Macao (TIS) hosted its University Fair 2024 yesterday, drawing students from across Macau eager to explore higher education options. Now in its 13th year, this event has become a vital resource for students looking to connect with top universities worldwide.

The fair opened its doors at 10 a.m. and ran until 4:30 p.m., providing a free platform for students to investigate academic opportunities both locally and internationally.

This year's fair featured a lineup of institutions, including Queen Mary University, the University of Hertfordshire, the University of East Anglia, and the University of Auckland, among others. Representatives from renowned schools such as Les Roches Global Hospitality Education and the University of British Columbia were also present, offering insights into their programs and admission processes.

Kavi Khemlani, a representative from Les Roches, highlighted the school's commitment to experiential learning, stating, "What makes Les Roches particularly attractive to students in Macau is its com-



mitment to experiential learning, which combines academic rigor with practical training in real-world environments."

Les Roches is celebrated for its innovative approach to hospitality management, with campuses in Switzerland, Spain, and Abu Dhabi. The institution offers diverse programs ranging from bachelor's degrees in Global Hospitality Management to specialized master's degrees focusing on areas like Hospitality Strategy and Digital Transformation.

He noted that the Spain campus is especially appealing to Macau

students holding Portuguese passports due to significant cost savings associated with EU membership. Students with EU passports can benefit from easier access to student visas and substantially lower tuition fees compared to non-EU students.

Tuition fees for EU students at Les Roches Marbella typically range from 11,000 to 13,000 per semester for bachelor's programs, while international students may face fees between 14,000 and 16,000 per semester.

During discussions with the Times, TIS students shared their university aspirations.

Form 4 students Bernice Lo and Narisa Chu expressed interest in biology and potential study destinations in the U.S., Canada, and the UK. They acknowledged the rigorous academic preparations they are undertaking at TIS, including essential science and math courses. "They will help you a lot and give you more support," Chu noted about the guidance provided by academic counselors.

Beatriz Ho, a Form 6 student from The School of the Nations, expressed her interest in psychology programs at various universities, mentioning, "I am also consid-

ring studying in Edinburgh and a few universities in Canada." While she acknowledges the competitive nature of these programs, she remains hopeful about her future. Ho commented on her busy final year, saying, "My final year has been pretty hectic, but I will manage," reflecting her thoughts as she navigates the challenges of the International Baccalaureate program and the pressures of early decision applications.

Last year's fair attracted over 800 students and featured representatives from prestigious institutions such as Durham University and the University of Hong Kong. Feedback from university officials praised TIS students for their preparedness and engagement during the event.

Since its inception, the TIS University Fair has evolved into an essential resource for students navigating the complexities of higher education.

A school representative stated, "At TIS, we are always thinking about the future and working to shape it today for our students." The event not only showcases global universities but also provides insights into admissions processes, scholarship opportunities, and campus life.

IAS launches new campaigns to curb youth drug abuse

VICTORIA CHAN

THE Social Welfare Bureau (IAS) and community groups are rolling out expanded efforts to prevent substance abuse among youth through new online initiatives and community engagement.

According to IAS, their collaboration with community organizations and technology companies has helped them reach out to around a dozen potential service users.

The bureau said five drug abuse registrations in the first half of this year involved individuals under the age of 21.

In response, IAS is rolling out a new online campaign, inviting influencers and celebrities to share anti-drug messages with younger audiences.

As cited in a TDM re-



port, Tong Chan U, head of the Drug Abuse Prevention Division, explained the rationale behind this strategy: "This year, in addition to the conventional promotional activities, we will adopt an approach tailored to the younger demographic to spread key messages associated with the prevention of substance abuse."

The campaign will involve a partnership with the General Association of Chinese Students of Macau, leveraging social media platforms such as Instagram and Facebook to engage with the target audience.

The importance of mental health care in drug prevention was also emphasized by the Associa-

tion for Rehabilitation of Drug Abusers of Macau.

Rute Borges, Coordinator of the Be Cool Project, said, "It is our objective to encourage a positive mental state and to facilitate continued engagement with this objective."

"Furthermore, we facilitate the expression of feelings among young people, given the inherent challenges of the teenage period."

The association's representative raised concerns about the increasing number of new psychoactive substances not legally banned in Macau, making them more easily accessible.

The Be Cool Project Open Dance Competition uses dance to promote drug prevention messages and healthy lifestyles among the younger generation.

EARLY LAUNCH FOR CITYWIDE CONSUMPTION PROGRAM

NADIA SHAW

THE SAR government has announced an earlier launch of its citywide consumption-boosting initiative, moving the launch date to Sept. 30, ahead of its original October schedule. This program aims to stimulate the local economy by promoting spending in community neighborhoods and supporting small to medium-sized enterprises across the region.

The initiative will launch later this week and run for 13 weeks, concluding on Dec. 29, while operating under an anticipated budget of MOP100 million. To mark the launch, an additional MOP10 million

will be allocated to the budget during the first week to celebrate the Establishment Day of the People's Republic of China.

Consumers can benefit from discounts on purchases exceeding MOP50 at participating stores, with each transaction entering them into a draw for prizes totaling MOP1.68 million. The draw will take place at the end of the initiative, providing further incentive for local spending.

The official launch ceremony is set for Sept. 25 at the San Kio Basketball Court, where more details about participating stores and how to join the program will be unveiled.

TRADE

Ban sought for Chinese, Russian software and hardware used in autonomous vehicles on US roads

ANNE D'INNOENZIO,
NEW YORK

THE Commerce Department said yesterday it's seeking a ban on the sale of connected and autonomous vehicles in the U.S. that are equipped with Chinese and Russian software and hardware with the stated goal of protecting national security and U.S. drivers.

While there is minimal Chinese and Russian software deployed in the U.S., the issue is more complicated for hardware. That's why Commerce officials said the prohibitions on the software would take effect for the 2027 model year and the prohibitions on hardware would take effect for the model year of 2030, or Jan. 1, 2029, for units without a model year.

The measure announced Monday is proactive but critical, the agency said, given that all the bells and whistles in cars like microphones, cameras, GPS tracking and Bluetooth technology could make Americans more vulnerable to bad actors and potentially expose personal information, from the home address of drivers, to where their children go to school.

In extreme situations, a foreign adversary could shut down or take simultaneous control of multiple vehicles operating in the United States, causing crashes and blocking roads, U.S. Secretary of Commerce Gina Raimondo told reporters on a call Sunday.



AP PHOTO
Gina Raimondo, U.S. Secretary of Commerce

"This is not about trade or economic advantage," Raimondo said. "This is a strictly national security action. The good news is right now, we don't have many Chinese or Russian cars on our road."

But Raimondo said Europe and other regions in the world where Chinese vehicles have become commonplace very quickly should serve as "a cautionary tale" for the U.S.

Security concerns around the extensive software-driven functions in Chinese vehicles have arisen in Europe, where Chinese electric cars have rapidly gained market share.

"Who controls these data flows and software updates is a far from trivial question, the answers to which encroach on matters of national security, cybersecurity, and indi-

vidual privacy," Janka Oertel, director of the Asia program at the European Council on Foreign Relations, wrote on the council's website.

Vehicles are now "mobility platforms" that monitor driver and passenger behavior and track their surroundings.

A senior administration official said that it is clear from terms of service contracts included with the technology that data from vehicles ends up in China.

Raimondo said that the U.S. won't wait until its roads are populated with Chinese or Russian cars.

"We're issuing a proposed rule to address these new national security threats before suppliers, automakers and car components linked to China or Russia become commonplace and widespread in the U.S. automotive sector," Raimondo

said.

It is difficult to know when China could reach that level of saturation, a senior administration official said, but the Commerce Department says China hopes to enter the U.S. market and several Chinese companies have already announced plans to enter the automotive software space.

The Commerce Department added Russia to the regulations since the country is trying to "breathe new life into its auto industry," senior administration officials said on the call.

The proposed rule would prohibit the import and sale of vehicles with Russia and China-manufactured software and hardware that would allow the vehicle to communicate externally through Bluetooth, cellular, satellite or Wi-Fi modu-

les. It would also prohibit the sale or import of software components made in Russia or the People's Republic of China that collectively allow a highly autonomous vehicle to operate without a driver behind the wheel. The ban would include vehicles made in the U.S. using Chinese and Russian technology.

The proposed rule would apply to all vehicles, but would exclude those not used on public roads, such as agricultural or mining vehicles.

U.S. automakers said they share the government's national security goal, but at present there is little connected vehicle hardware or software coming to the U.S. supply chain from China.

Yet the Alliance for Automotive Innovation, a large industry group, said the new rules will make some automakers scramble for new parts suppliers. "You can't just flip a switch and change the world's most complex supply chain overnight," John Bozzella, the alliance's CEO, said in a statement.

The lead time in the new rules will be long enough for some automakers to make the changes, "but may be too short for others," Bozzella said.

Commerce officials met with all the major auto companies around the world while it drafted the proposed rule to better understand supply chain networks, according to senior administration officials, and also met with a variety of industry associations.

The Commerce Department is inviting public comments, which are due 30 days after publication of a rule before it's finalized. That should happen by the end of the Biden Administration.

The new rule follows steps taken earlier this month by the Biden administration to crack down on cheap products sold out of China, including electric vehicles, expanding a push to reduce U.S. dependence on Beijing and bolster homegrown industry. **MDT/AP**

DIPLOMACY

Trump is set to travel to Pennsylvania stops focused on countering China

ADRIANA GOMEZ LICON,
PITTSBURGH

DONALD Trump is back on the campaign trail and expected to travel to the swing state of Pennsylvania to speak about his plans to counter the U.S. reliance on China with a group led by a loyalist who served as his top intelligence official.

The former president and Republican presidential nominee is atten-



AP PHOTO
Republican presidential nominee former President Donald Trump arrives at a campaign event at Wilmington

ding today (Macau Time) event in a rural area outside of Pittsburgh hosted

by the Protecting America Initiative, which is led by Richard Grenell, Trump's

former acting director of national intelligence, and former New York congressman Lee Zeldin.

Trump has embraced tariffs as he tries to appeal to working-class voters who oppose free-trade deals and the outsourcing of factories and jobs. The event on Monday focuses on proposals to increase America's food supply and to protect U.S. farmers.

The National Agricul-

tural Law Center estimates 24 states ban or limit foreigners without residency and foreign businesses or governments from owning private farmland. The issue emerged after a Chinese billionaire bought more than 130,000 acres near a U.S. Air Force base in Texas and another Chinese company sought to build a corn plant near an Air Force base in North Dakota.

Later today, Trump is expected to rally voters at 7 p.m. Eastern in Indiana, Pennsylvania, a town east of Pittsburgh, where he is hoping conservative, white working-class voters help him pull ahead

of Vice President Kamala Harris, his opponent. Harris is also visiting Pennsylvania on Wednesday.

On Sunday, Trump shared that he doesn't "think" he'd run again for president in 2028 if he loses the 2024 election. The comment was noteworthy both because Trump seemed to rule out a fourth bid for the White House and because he rarely admits the possibility he could legitimately lose an election. Trump flirted with running for president for years before his successful 2016 bid and has often played up his deliberations to stay in the headlines. **MDT/AP**

SRI LANKA

Marxist Anura Kumara Dissanayake sworn in as president

KRISHAN FRANCIS & BHARATHA MALLAWARACHI, COLOMBO

MARXIST politician Anura Kumara Dissanayake was sworn in as Sri Lanka's president yesterday after an election that saw voters reject an old guard accused of leading the country into economic crisis.

Dissanayake, 55, who ran as head of the Marxist-leaning National People's Power coalition, defeated President Ranil Wickremesinghe, opposition leader Sajith Premadasa and 35 other candidates in Saturday's election.

The election came as the country seeks to recover from a severe economic crisis that led to shortages of essentials such as foods, medicines, cooking gas and fuel in 2022, triggering massive protests that forced then-President Gotabaya Rajapaksa to flee the country and resign.

In a brief speech after the swearing-in, Dissanayake pledged to work with others to take on the country's challenges.

"We have deeply understood that we are going to get a challenging country," Dissanayake said. "We don't believe that a government, a single party or an individual would be able to resolve this deep crisis.



Commanders of the security forces stand behind Anura Kumara Dissanayake as he addresses a gathering after he was sworn in at the Sri Lankan President's Office in Colombo, yesterday

He's the ninth person to hold Sri Lanka's powerful executive presidency, created in 1978 when a new constitution expanded the office's powers.

However, Dayan Jayatilaka, a former diplomat and political analyst said Dissanayake could face challenges as the first president to enter office without a majority of the vote.

"It's not an insurmountable obstacle," said Jayatilaka, but said he will have to "engage as

much as possible in politics of consensus."

Dissanayake's coalition is led by the Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna, or People's Liberation Front, a Marxist party that waged two unsuccessful armed insurrections in the 1970s and 1980s to capture power through socialist revolution. After its defeat, the JVP entered democratic politics in 1994 and has been mostly in opposition since then. However, they have supported

several previous presidents and been part of governments briefly.

The NPP also includes groups representing academics, civil society movements, artists, lawyers and students.

Just before the swearing in, Prime Minister Dinesh Gunawardena resigned, clearing the way for the new president to appoint a prime minister and a cabinet.

Chinese president Xi Jinping

congratulated Dissanayake on his victory, saying yesterday that China looks forward to working together "to jointly carry forward our traditional friendship." The U.S. and India previously congratulated Dissanayake.

Dissanayake was first elected to Parliament in 2000 and briefly held the portfolio of agriculture and irrigation minister under President Chandrika Kumaratunga. He ran for president for the first time in 2019 and lost to Rajapaksa.

Dissanayake's first major challenge will be to act on his campaign promise to ease the crushing austerity measures imposed by his predecessor Wickremesinghe under a relief agreement with the International Monetary Fund.

Wickremesinghe has warned that any move to alter the basics of the agreement could delay the release of a fourth tranche of nearly \$3 billion.

That economic crisis resulted from excessive borrowing to fund projects that did not generate revenue, the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, and the government's insistence on using scarce foreign reserves to prop up its currency, the rupee.

Dissanayake has also vowed to dissolve parliament, where his party holds only three of 225 seats. MDT/AP

PAKISTAN

Taliban deny attacking a convoy of foreign ambassadors

MUNIRAHMED, ISLAMABAD

The Pakistani Taliban yesterday denied involvement in a bombing attack on a police convoy that was escorting foreign ambassadors in the restive northwest, as authorities said they were still trying to determine who was behind it.

Most of the ambassadors and senior envoys were traveling with their family members on Sunday to the Swat Valley, a former stronghold of the Pakistani Taliban, when the attack occurred in Malam Jabba, one of Pakistan's two ski resorts in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province bordering Afghanistan.

No one claimed respon-

sibility for the attack, but Mohammad Khurasani, a spokesman for the Pakistani Taliban, known as Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan, denied detonating the improvised explosive device that hit a police vehicle accompanying the convoy.

A police officer was killed and four others were wounded in the attack, which drew strong condemnation from Pakistan's President Asif Ali Zardari, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and other officials.

The envoys were all unharmed, but the attack suggested there was a security breach.

"For sure it was a security breach because the convoy's route was only known to police, and the bomb disposal



A damaged police vehicle which was escorting a convoy of foreign diplomats, at the site of a fatal bomb explosion on a road near Malam Jabba

unit had reportedly cleared the route," said Abdullah Khan, a defense analyst and managing director of the Islamabad-based Pakistan Institute for Conflict and Security Studies.

"Some insider (appears to have) leaked the information about the travel plans of the foreign ambassadors

to the militants," he added.

Khan said the attack signaled a shift in the approach of insurgents, who previously targeted security forces.

Pakistani defense analyst Syed Muhammad Ali said there was a need for better coordination between federal authorities and police about such high-profile vi-

sits to the northwest, which has witnessed a surge in violence.

Those traveling in the convoy were ambassadors and officials from Indonesia, Portugal, Kazakhstan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Zimbabwe, Rwanda, Turkmenistan, Vietnam, Iran, Russia and Tajikistan. All of them later returned to the capital, Islamabad, according to Pakistan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

In a statement, TTP said it had nothing to do with the attack. TTP is a separate group but also a close ally of the Afghan Taliban, who seized power in neighboring Afghanistan in August 2021 as U.S. and NATO troops were in the final stages of their pullout from the coun-

try after 20 years of war.

Mohammad Ali Khan, a senior police officer, said that so far no arrest had been made.

Sunday's attack came months after a suicide bomber in northwestern Pakistan rammed his explosive-laden car into a vehicle, killing five Chinese nationals and their Pakistani driver in Shangla, a district in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province.

The Chinese victims were construction workers and engineers who were working on Dasu Dam, the biggest hydropower project in Pakistan. Since then, Pakistan has beefed up security for foreigners and envoys traveling in the region. MDT/AP

UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

World leaders are gathering as outlook is gloomy

EDITH M. LEDERER,
UNITED NATIONS

FACING a swirl of conflicts and crises across a fragmented world, leaders attending this week's annual U.N. gathering are being challenged: Work together — not only on front-burner issues but on modernizing the international institutions born after World War II so they can tackle the threats and problems of the future.

U.N. Secretary-General Antonio Guterres issued the challenge a year ago after sounding a global alarm about the survival of humanity and the planet: Come to a "Summit of the Future" and make a new commitment to multilateralism — the foundation of the United Nations and many other global bodies — and start fixing the aging global architecture to meet the rapidly changing world.

The U.N. chief told reporters last week that the summit "was born out of a cold, hard fact: international challenges are moving faster than our ability to solve them." He pointed to "out-of-control geopolitical divisions" and "runaway" conflicts, climate change, inequalities, debt and new technologies like artificial intelligence which have no guardrails.

The two-day summit started Sunday, two days before the high-level meeting of world leaders begins at the sprawling U.N. compound in New York City.

The General Assembly approved the summit's main outcome document — a 42-page "Pact of the Future" — on Sunday morning with a bang of the gavel by Assembly President Philémon Yang signifying consensus, after the body voted 143-7 with 15 abstentions against considering Russian-proposed amendments to significantly water it down.

The pact is a blueprint to address global challenges from conflicts and climate change to artificial intelligence and reforming the U.N. and global institutions. Its impact will depend on its implementation by the assembly's 193 member nations.

"Leaders must ask themselves whether this will be yet another meeting where they simply talk about greater cooperation and consensus, or whether they will show the imagination



AP PHOTO

and conviction to actually forge it," said Agnès Callamard, the secretary-general of Amnesty International. "If they miss this opportunity, I shudder to think of the consequences. Our collective future is at stake."

THIS IS THE UN'S BIGGEST WEEK OF THE YEAR

The summit is the prelude to this year's high-level meeting, held every September. More than 130 presidents, prime ministers and monarchs are slated to speak along with dozens of ministers, and the issues from the summit are expected to dominate their speeches and private meetings, especially the wars in Gaza, Ukraine and Sudan and the growing possibility of a wider Mideast war.

"There is going to be a rather obvious gap between the Summit of the Future, with its focus on expanding international cooperation, and the reality that the U.N. is failing in Gaza, Ukraine and Sudan," said Richard Gowan, U.N. director for the International Crisis Group. "Those three wars will be top topics of attention for most of the week."

One notable moment at today's opening assembly meeting: U.S. President Joe Biden's likely final major appearance on the world stage, a platform he has tread upon and reveled in for decades.

At the upcoming meetings, U.S. Ambassador Linda Thomas-Greenfield told reporters this week: "The most vulnerable around the world are counting on us to make progress, to make change, to bring about a sense of hope for them."

To meet the many global challenges, she said, the U.S. focus at the U.N. meetings will be on ending "the scourge of war."

Roughly 2 billion people live in conflict-affected areas, she said.

Last September, the war in Ukraine and its president, Volodymyr Zelenskyy, took center stage at the U.N. global gathering. But as the first anniversary of Hamas' deadly attack in southern Israel approaches on Oct. 7, the spotlight is certain to be on the war in Gaza and escalating violence across the Israeli-Lebanon border, which is now threatening to spread to the wider Middle East.

Iran supports both Hamas in Gaza and Lebanon's Hezbollah militants. Its new president, Masoud Pezeshkian, will address world leaders Wednesday [Macau time]. Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas is scheduled to speak Thursday morning and Israel's Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu on Thursday afternoon.

Zelenskyy will get the spotlight twice. He will speak Tuesday at a high-level meeting of the U.N. Security Council — called by the United States, France, Japan, Malta, South Korea and Britain — and will address the General Assembly on Wednesday morning.

TO COUNTER 'A WORLD OF GRIM STATISTICS'

Slovenia, which holds the council's rotating presidency this month, chose the topic "Leadership for Peace" for its high-level meeting Wednesday, challenging its 15 member nations to address why the U.N. body charged with maintaining international peace and security is failing — and how it can do better.

"The event follows our observation that we live in a world of grim statistics, with the highest number of ongoing conflicts, with record high casual-

ties among civilians, among humanitarians, among medical workers, among journalist," Slovenian U.N. Ambassador Samuel Zbogar told reporters. He cited a record-high 100 million people driven from their homes by conflict.

"The world is becoming less stable, less peaceful, and with erosion of the respect for the rules, it is sliding into the state of disorder," Zbogar said. "We have not seen this high need to rebuild trust to secure the future ever before."

A key reason for the Security Council's dysfunction is the deep division among its five veto-wielding permanent members. The United States, Israel's closest ally, is a supporter of Ukraine alongside Britain and France. Russia invaded Ukraine and has a military and economic partnership with China, though Beijing reasserted its longstanding support for every country's sovereignty without criticizing Russia in a recent briefing paper for the U.N. meetings.

French President Emmanuel Macron and Britain's new prime minister, Keir Starmer, will be at the United Nations this week along with Biden. But Russian President Vladimir Putin and China's President Xi Jinping are sending their foreign ministers instead. Neither Putin nor Xi attended last year, either.

Guterres, who will preside over the whole affair this week, warned that the world is seeing "a multiplication of conflicts and the sense of impunity" — a landscape where, he said, "any country or any military entity, militias, whatever, feel that they can do whatever they want because nothing will happen to them." MDT/AP

this day in history

1975 FIRST BRITONS CONQUER EVEREST



Dougal Haston and Doug Scott have become the first Britons to reach the summit of the world's highest mountain.

The men arrived at the top of Mount Everest via the previously unclimbed south-west face, 33 days after establishing their base camp.

The team succeeded on a difficult direct route which has repulsed five other attempts and set a record for the fastest time up the peak.

Expedition leader Chris Bonington reported the pair had reached the 29,028ft (8,848m) summit safely and were now on their way down the mountain.

He also said they were ahead of schedule and hoped more of the 18-strong group would be able to reach the top.

The south-west face of Everest has been regarded as one of the most difficult challenges in mountaineering because of its length and exposure to high-level winds.

Mr Haston, who runs the International School of Mountaineering in Switzerland, and Mr Scott, a mountain lecturer from Nottingham, had failed twice to conquer the route.

The Queen sent a message to the team offering her warmest congratulations on a "magnificent achievement".

Jan Scott, who is planning to fly out to Nepal to meet her husband, said she was overjoyed by his success.

"It's wonderful - I knew Doug would do it one day," she said.

Courtesy BBC News

IN CONTEXT

The 1975 south-west face expedition was marred by the disappearance of Mick Burke four days later on his way to the summit. Doug Scott and Chris Bonington became two of Britain's most well-known mountaineers, making hundreds more difficult ascents and lecturing about the sport to make a living. Bonington's book about the climb was called *Everest the Hard Way* - a reference to the fact it was the hardest route up the mountain to date. Dougal Haston was killed in a skiing accident in the Swiss Alps in 1977.

MACAU'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

YOUR STARS

ARIES
 Mar. 21-Apr. 19
 Together you can haul in a bundle. The next three weeks, with Venus in Scorpio, can be especially lucrative. You're creating something beautiful.

TAURUS
 Apr. 20-May. 20
 Share support. Partnerships flow with greater ease over the next three and a half weeks, with Venus in Scorpio. Your love grows stronger.

GEMINI
 May. 21-Jun. 21
 Creative work profits, with Venus in Scorpio for almost a month. Practice manual labors, physical routines and fine motor skills. Prioritize health for growing beauty.

CANCER
 Jun. 22-Jul. 22
 Artistic efforts flower. You're especially lucky in love, with Venus in Scorpio for three and a half weeks. Savor beauty, harmony and passion.

LEO
 Jul. 23-Aug. 22
 Beautify your spaces. Pour your heart into your home for almost a month under Scorpio Venus. Develop domestic renovations that support family harmony.

VIRGO
 Aug. 23-Sep. 22
 Trust your heart to lead you this month. Speak and write about what you love, with Venus in Scorpio. Create something beautiful. Express your passion.

LIBRA
 Sep. 23-Oct. 22
 Silver flows in. Use your charm and persuasive arts for lucrative deals. The next month can get especially profitable, with Venus in Scorpio.

SCORPIO
 Oct. 23-Nov. 21
 You're beautiful, charismatic and irresistible over the next three and a half weeks, with Venus in your sign. Step into the spotlight and shine.

SAGITTARIUS
 Nov. 22-Dec. 21
 Listen to your own spirit. Nurture yourself. Savor the beauty in peaceful moments, with Venus in Scorpio. Rest and consider dreams, plans and visions.

CAPRICORN
 Dec. 22-Jan. 19
 Savor social fun. You're especially popular, with Venus in Scorpio for three and a half weeks. Support your amazing team. Grow the love.

AQUARIUS
 Jan. 20-Feb. 18
 Your career grows more fun and profitable over almost a month, with Venus in Scorpio. Create something beautiful. Infuse your work with passion.

PISCES
 Feb. 19-Mar. 20
 An adventure entices. Follow your heart where it leads, with Venus in Scorpio. Take classes and seminars. Enjoy beautiful scenery, flavors and sights.

The Born Loser by Chip Sanson



SUDOKU

EASY

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

EASY+

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

MEDIUM

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

HARD

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

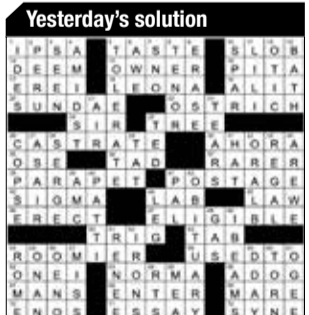
WEATHER

	MIN	MAX	CONDITION
CHINA			
Beijing	12	24	cloudy
Changchun	9	21	cloudy
Chengdu	19	33	cloudy
Chongqing	24	33	fine
Fuzhou	21	25	rain
Guangzhou	21	27	rain
Guiyang	16	28	fine
Haikou	24	30	rain
Hangzhou	19	25	overcast
Harbin	7	21	cloudy
Hefei	15	25	fine
Nanjing	16	25	cloudy
Shanghai	22	27	rain
Taipei	25	28	rain
Wuhan	16	28	fine
Hong Kong	26	28	rain
WORLD			
Moscow	8	21	overcast
Frankfurt	13	17	rain
Paris	14	18	rain
London	11	17	rain
New York	18	22	cloudy

CROSSWORDS

ACROSS 1- Horse color; 5- Sailing; 10- Pro ___; 14- Scandinavian capital city; 15- Fear greatly; 16- What ___ mind reader?; 17- Melt; 18- Dirty looks; 19- Doe or fawn; 20- Resident of Saskatoon or Edmonton; 22- Wash lightly; 23- It's owed; 24- Jacob's brother; 26- Take ___ at (try); 29- Photograph; 33- Influences; 34- Distributed cards; 35- Spring mo.; 36- Guitarist Lofgren; 37- Set up; 38- One hunted; 39- Vane dir.; 40- Deflect; 41- Equals; 42- Uneasy; 44- Shoot for; 45- "His and ___"; 46- Ladder step; 48- Souvenir; 51- Delay; 55- Consumer; 56- Now you ___; 58- Draft classification; 59- IRS IDs; 60- Wipe off; 61- ___ instant; 62- Etta of old comics; 63- Exodus commemoration; 64- Appraise;

DOWN 1- Campus mil. group; 2- Dept. of Labor division; 3- Space pioneer Shepard; 4- Currently; 5- Go off-script; 6- Rare delight; 7- Witnessed; 8- Musical gift; 9- Spots on TV; 10- Half the diameter; 11- Prayer ender; 12- Fastens a knot; 13- River in central Switzerland; 21- Ball girls; 22- Engrossed; 24- Make into law; 25- Preservative; 26- "Lou Grant" star; 27- Hog; 28- Stories; 29- Prophets; 30- Seraglio; 31- Verdi work; 32- Romantic rendezvous; 34- Women's wear; 37- Perpetually; 38- Woman's loose dressing gown; 40- Sir Guinness; 41- Window piece; 43- Need for liquid; 46- Bluffer's ploy; 47- Absolute; 48- Zwieback; 49- "___ quam videri" (North Carolina's motto); 50- Pre-Easter season; 51- Show the way; 52- Sicilian resort; 53- Chair; 54- Having a sound mind; 56- His, to Henri; 57- Prior, to Prior;



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
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LABOUR | INTERVIEW

THE BENEFITS OF A FOUR-DAY WORKWEEK ACCORDING TO A CHAMPION OF THE TREND

CATHY BUSSEWITZ,
MDT/AP BUSINESS WRITER

COMPANIES exploring the option of letting employees work four days a week hope to reduce job burnout and retain talent seeking a better work-life balance, according to the chief executive of an organization that promotes the idea.

The trend is gaining traction in Australia and Europe, says Dale Whelehan, CEO of 4 Day Week Global, which coaches companies through the month-long process of shortening their employees' work hours. Japan launched a campaign in August encouraging employers to trim work schedules to four days.

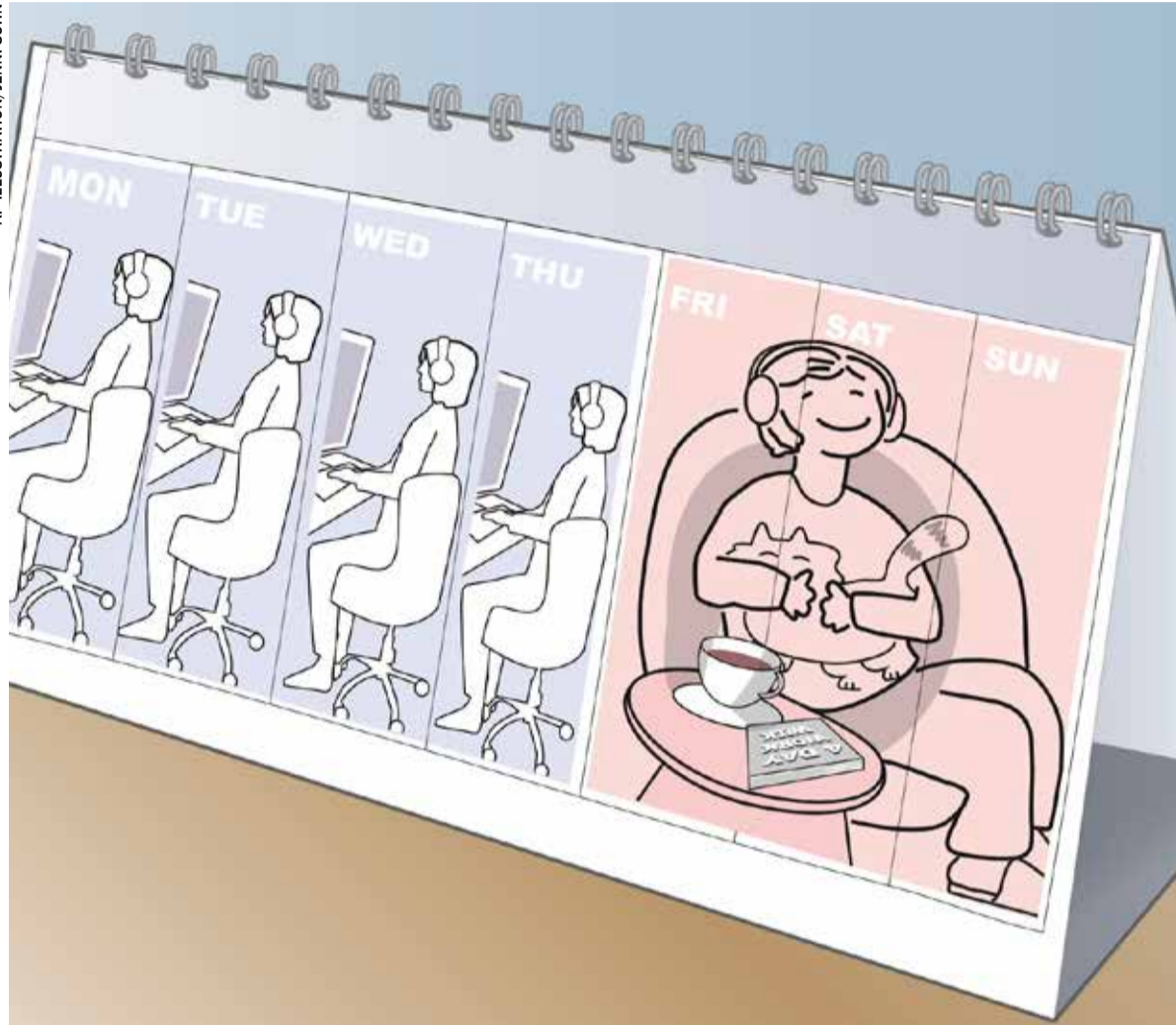
American companies haven't adopted four-day weeks as broadly, but that could change. Nearly a third of U.S. CEOs polled by accounting firm KPMG in 2024 said they are exploring alternative work schedules such as a four-day or four and a half-day workweek.

The Associated Press spoke with Whelehan about the reasons why companies might want to consider the change. His comments have been edited for length and clarity.

- Why should organizations switch to a four-day workweek?

Whelehan: The bigger question is, why shouldn't they? There's a lot of evidence to suggest we need to do something fundamentally different in the way we work. We have issues of burnout.

AP ILLUSTRATION/JENNI SOHN



We have a recruitment and retention crisis in many industries. We have increased stress within our workforce, leading to health issues, issues with work-life balance, work-family conflict. We have people sitting in cars for long periods, contributing to a climate crisis. We have certain parts of the population that are able to work longer hours and therefore be rewarded for that, creating further inequity within our societies. Lastly, we look at the implications that stress actually

has on long-term health. We know that it's linked to issues like cardiovascular disease, to cancer, to diabetes. So stress is something not to be taken lightly, and it's only rising in our world of work.

- Why is the 40-hour workweek so common?

Whelehan: To understand where we are now, let's take a step back into pre-industrial times. My granddad was a farmer, worked seven days a week and was required on-site all the time. It was a lot of long hours, but also he had a lot of autonomy.

By the time my dad entered the workforce, he was a technician in a mechanical role. And he was expected to produce products on a large scale. As a result he wasn't given the rewards from farming, but was given a salary. That change from my grandfather's time to my dad's brought about the birth of a discipline known as management. And management, led by Frederick Taylor, was looking at the relationship between fatigue and performance. A lot of scientific studies were done

to try to understand that relationship, leading to the need for a five-day week as opposed to a six-day week. By the time I entered into the workforce, we no longer had a very physical, laborious workforce. It's highly cognitive and highly emotional.

The fundamental physiological difference is that our brain as a muscle can't withstand the same level of hours of work as our muscles in our body might be able to. So it's that mismatch between an outdated work structure of 40 hours, rooted in very physical labor, and what is now a highly cognitive workforce.

- How can companies increase revenue while employees work fewer hours?

"The reduction of working time brings about productivity gains by people having naturally more time to rest and recover."

Whelehan: The reduction of working time brings about productivity gains by people having naturally more time to rest and recover, allowing them to come back into a new week more engaged and

well-rested. That's one way in which you see productivity gains. The second is the fundamental shift that organizations undergo while transitioning to a four-day week.

When we work with organizations, we use what's called a 100-80-100 principle. So 100% pay for 80% time for 100% output. We ask organizations to design their trials in that sort of philosophy: How can you keep your business at the same level or improve while working less? The fundamental change we see is, let's move away from thinking about productivity as how much time it takes to get something done, versus focusing on what outcomes we know drive businesses forward.

- How does a four-day work week support equity?

Whelehan: Disproportionately high amounts of part-time workers are female. As a result, women typically take a reduction in pay. That's despite the fact that, based on the evidence that we've seen in trials, those part-time workers are producing the same output as their five-day-week counterparts.

In four-day week trials, everyone embarks on the journey. So we see men taking on greater levels of responsibilities in household or parenting responsibilities.

The alternative situation is women take part-time work, reduce their pay. Men have to work longer hours at a higher salaries and more stressful jobs in order to make up the deficit. ... It just creates this vicious cycle.

- What kinds of work could potentially be dropped to increase productivity?

Whelehan: Meetings. We are addicted to meetings. It's just gotten worse and worse since the pandemic. I think a lot of that comes from a culture of indecisiveness. There's a sense of not wanting to make decisions, and therefore delaying the

process or involving many people in the process so that everyone has a responsibility, and thus no one has responsibility. And that is not good when it comes to the greater issue of productivity.

Dale Whelehan,
CEO of 4 Day Week Global

GOLF | QUEEN CITY CHAMPIONSHIP

Lydia Ko pulls away with a 63 to win Ohio championship for third LPGA title of the year

LYDIA Ko extended her amazing summer run when she turned a two-shot deficit into a rout by closing with a 9-under 63 to win the Kroger Queen City Championship for her third LPGA Tour title of the season.

Ko won for the third time in her last four starts, which includes her Olympic gold medal that gave the 27-year-old from New Zealand enough points for the LPGA Hall of Fame.

It also includes another major in the Women's British Open, this one at St. Andrews.

"It's been pretty surreal," Ko said after her five-shot victory at the TPC River's Bend over Jeeno Thitikul, who closed with a 70 and simply couldn't keep up.

Thitikul was two shots ahead after eight holes of the final round. Three holes later,



Lydia Ko of New Zealand plays her shot from the fifth tee during the final round of the LPGA Kroger Queen City Championship golf tournament at TPC River's Bend in Maineville, Ohio

the Thai was chasing the hottest player in women's golf.

Thitikul made bogey on the

par-4 ninth. Ko made a 10-foot birdie putt on the 10th hole to tie for the lead, and then pul-

led ahead by two shots with a 12-foot eagle putt on the par-5 11th.

Ko seized control for good with a pair of two-shot swings — she made birdie and Thitikul made bogey on the 13th and 15th holes.

Thitikul two-putted for birdie on the par-5 closing hole to at least finish alone in second, one shot ahead of Haeran Ryu (67).

"It's just like insane — it's super insane. Her putter was on fire today," Thitikul said of playing alongside Ko. "I respect her as like my older sister, as a legend, and also as my role model. It was such a really good experience watching her in my eyes on the same tee box, on the same greens, just like VIP seat."

Nelly Korda, the No. 1 player in women's golf who still has a

comfortable lead in the Race to CME Globe with her six victories this year, had a 68 and tied for fifth, nine shots behind.

Ko, who finished at 23-under 265, now has 22 career LPGA victories. It was the fifth time she has at least three wins in the same season on the LPGA, her biggest year coming with five wins when she was 18 and reached No. 1 in the world.

Ko also won the season opener in Florida in January, but there were times early in the summer when she wondered if she would ever get the final victory needed for the LPGA Hall of Fame.

She took care of that with Olympic gold in Paris, won at St. Andrews for her third major and, after a three-week break, picked up as though nothing had changed.

"I had the most unbelievable three weeks in Europe. And now after having another three weeks off here, not entirely sure what it's going to be like," Ko said.

She was two shots behind Thitikul going into the final round and was expecting Thitikul to keep going strong. The Thai did, but she fell back with bogeys on the ninth, 13th and 15th holes and Ko was on her way to another victory. **MDT/AP**

AD

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OPINION

The Conversation

Eric Smalley, MDT/The Conversation



TIKTOK BAN GOES TO THE COURT: FIVE ESSENTIAL READS ON THE CASE AND ITS CONSEQUENCES

TikTok headed to court on Sept. 16, 2024, seeking to overturn a law that would force it to separate from its China-based parent company or face a U.S. ban. During the hearing at the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit, TikTok's lawyers argued that such a move would have "staggering" consequences for free speech. This marks the latest step in a long debate over the app's future, driven by its immense popularity among young Americans and concerns in Washington about security risks. Regardless of the outcome, many expect the case to reach the Supreme Court.

TikTok has faced controversy, especially regarding its links to China. Politicians pushing for a ban or divestment argue the app could be a tool for the Chinese Communist Party to influence Americans or access their data. Shaomin Li, a scholar at Old Dominion University, explains that while TikTok's parent company, ByteDance, operates like other Chinese businesses as a joint venture with the state, the relationship is complex. ByteDance management serves both investors and political overseers, and when these interests clash, the party takes precedence.

Another concern is data exploitation. Like many popular apps, TikTok collects a wealth of data from users, including contact information, website tracking, and personal posts. Doug Jacobson, a cybersecurity researcher from Iowa State University, notes that U.S. lawmakers worry the Chinese government could exploit this data to spy on Americans. However, Jacobson points out that the Chinese government may already have access to personal information on a vast portion of the U.S. population through other means, making a TikTok ban potentially ineffective in addressing the broader issue of data security.

Moreover, banning TikTok might introduce new security risks. Robert Olson, a computer security expert at Rochester Institute of Technology, warns that U.S. users could turn to risky practices like sideloading to keep accessing TikTok if it's removed from app stores. This method bypasses security protections from Apple and Google, making users more vulnerable to malware. Olson argues that the legislation intended to improve cybersecurity could ironically lead users to engage in more dangerous online behaviors.

TikTok's legal challenge also raises significant First Amendment concerns. Technology law scholars Anupam Chander of Georgetown University and Gautam Hans of Cornell University suggest that forcing ByteDance to sell TikTok constitutes prior restraint, which prevents speech before it occurs. They explain that by altering TikTok's ownership, the government would be changing the platform itself, which could be seen as interference with free speech—a core issue the First Amendment aims to prevent.

Finally, the forced sale or ban of TikTok may not effectively address the problems at hand, such as Chinese influence, teen harm, and data privacy violations. Sarah Florini, a media scholar at Arizona State, highlights that the Chinese government and other adversaries have long used U.S.-based social media to shape public opinion. Furthermore, concerns over the harmful effects of social media on teens are not exclusive to TikTok, as demonstrated by the Facebook whistleblower case. Florini argues that while concerns about TikTok are valid, they are not unique, as U.S.-based platforms have posed similar threats for over a decade. [Abridged]

France has sent a group of special anti-riot police that's been banned for 65 years to the French Caribbean island of Martinique, where protesters have gathered despite the government barring demonstrations in parts of the island.

The force arrived this weekend after the local representative of France's central government in its overseas territory said in a statement that protests were forbidden in the municipalities of Fort-de-France, Le Lamentin, Ducos and Le Robert until yesterday [Macau time]. The government also issued a curfew.

The restrictions came after violent protests broke out on the island last

week over the high cost of living, with gunfire injuring at least six police officers and one civilian. Police launched tear gas and government officials said several stores were also looted.

Officials said the bans were meant "to put an end to the violence and damage committed at gatherings, as well as to the numerous obstacles to daily life and freedom of movement that penalize the entire population, particularly at weekends."

As protests wound on without violence, the force of French anti-riot police arrived on the island, and were staying at a hotel in Fort-de-France on Sunday. It wasn't immediately clear how many were sent.



Malaysia Inspectors-General of Police Razarudin Husain speaks during a press conference in Kuala Lumpur yesterday

MALAYSIAN POLICE RESCUE 187 MORE CHILDREN AS SEX ABUSE PROBE OF ISLAMIC GROUP DEEPENS

MALAYSIAN police said yesterday they have rescued 187 more children and raided locations nationwide linked to an Islamic business group that is being investigated for alleged sexual assault of children.

National police chief Razarudin Husain said the children and young people, including 59 under age 5, were rescued from welfare homes linked to Global Ikhwan Services and Business, or GISB Holdings. They included a boy who was seen being caned and another child who was seen being stepped on in online videos, he said.

That brought the number of children under age 18 who have been rescued to 572 since the case against GISB erupted earlier this month, he said.

Police also arrested 156 more suspects for investigation, he said.

Police say some children are believed to have been sodomized and taught to sexually abuse each other, denied medical treatment and burned with hot metal spoons

as punishment. Medical screening so far has determined that at least 13 teens were sodomized and 172 children suffered long-term physical and emotional injuries.

The victims are mostly children of GISB employees, placed in the homes since they were indoctrinated from a young age to be loyal to the group, police say.

The increased police action against GISB came after the country's king called for a swift police investigation and action in the case, which has shocked and enraged the nation.

GISB, which aims to promote an Islamic way of life, owns mini-markets, bakeries, restaurants, pharmacies and other businesses in Malaysia and abroad. It has its roots in the Al Arqam Islamic sect, which was deemed heretical and banned by the government in 1994.

Last week, police detained members of GISB's top management, including CEO Nasiruddin Mohamad Ali, two of his

wives and two of his children. Some family members of the late Ashaari Mohamad, who headed Al Arqam before his death in 2010, were also arrested.

Nasiruddin earlier admitted there may have been some sodomy cases in the homes but denied any widespread abuse.

Razarudin said there were an estimated 10,000 employees and followers of GISB who were believed to be practicing the Al Arqam teachings. Islamic authorities are investigating, he said.

He said police have raided 280 locations nationwide linked to GISB, but most have been vacated. In 59 of the locations, police seized Islamic books and materials with deviant teachings, he said.

Authorities have frozen 138 bank accounts linked to GISB with a total value of about 1.9 million ringgit (\$452,000), and 14 properties as part of a probe into money laundering, he said. Several people have been charged with sexual assault of children. **MDT/AP**



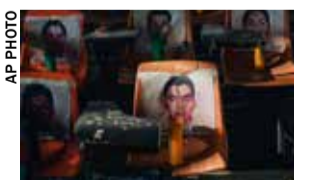
United States A tugboat powered by ammonia, the NH3 Kraken, sailed for the first time in New York, demonstrating how ammonia could help reduce carbon emissions in maritime shipping. Developed by Amogy, the ship runs on green ammonia and represents a step toward zero-emissions propulsion in shipping.



US-Ukraine Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy visited a Pennsylvania ammunition factory to thank workers for producing 155 mm artillery shells crucial to Ukraine's defense. The visit precedes Zelenskyy's participation in the UN General Assembly and talks with U.S. President Joe Biden in Washington.



Israel-Lebanon Hezbollah yesterday launched over 100 rockets into northern Israel, while Israel responded with airstrikes. Both sides seem closer to war after Israel killed a top Hezbollah leader in Lebanon. Hezbollah declared an "open-ended battle," and the U.S. is urging efforts to prevent further escalation.



Mexico Ten years after the disappearance of 43 students in Mexico, the case remains unresolved. Authorities have only found bone fragments from three students. The case is emblematic of cartel violence and government corruption, with families demanding justice and transparency from the Mexican government.