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Novel Coronavirus Response and Coordination Centre

160 PROSECUTIONS FOR SPITTING RECORDED THIS YEAR

Since the beginning of the year, the Municipal Affairs Bureau (IAM) has recorded a total of 160 prosecutions for spitting in public places, the bureau announced yesterday. Since the outbreak of 2019-nCoV, the IAM has enhanced the cleaning of Macau's streets, the collection of trash and taken a tougher stance on prosecutions for spitting in public places. As the local government urges the public to stay home and calls for fewer people to go outside, Macau is also handling less trash. In the first five days of February, Macau's refuse incineration plant has processed 1,151 tons of trash on a daily basis, 25% less than before the virus outbreak. The IAM is urging the public to maintain cleanliness and hygiene, and to properly bag trash and throw it out in accordance with the law.

RECORD HIGH SEEN IN VEGETABLE IMPORTS

Macau has set a new record for vegetable imports amid reports of panic-buying within the local community. According to a statement released by the Municipal Affairs Bureau (IAM), a total of 315 tons of vegetables arrived in Macau, marking a new record for vegetable imports in a single day. In addition, 242 live pigs, 350 tons of frozen meat, 60 tons of fruit, 34 tons of fish, and 440,000 eggs were also imported to Macau as well. The IAM has emphasized that the epidemic situation has had no impact on the supply of fresh food in Macau, and that the SAR government and food suppliers are working together to ensure stable supply, stable prices and sufficient market supply. The IAM is also conducting daily inspections to ensure food safety.

ZHUHAI JOINS MAINLAND CITIES WITH PRECAUTIONARY ISOLATION MEASURES

The Zhuhai government has joined other mainland cities in implementing a series of precautionary isolation measures, said to be for the purpose of preventing the 2019-nCoV epidemic from developing further. Like many other mainland cities, Zhuhai is locking down its people in their residential communities. All residential communities in Zhuhai are not allowed to accept "non-local" individuals or let vehicles enter if they do not belong to that community. All cultural, entertainment, and religious venues are closed. Gatherings are not allowed within or outside of the community. Property management company employees should report anyone who has a fever. All ceremonies are also banned. Funerals should be simple and reported to community party representatives.

CORONAVIRUS PATIENT RECOVERS

ANTHONY LAM

THE first confirmed coronavirus patient in Macau was discharged from hospital yesterday after more than two weeks of treatment.

The 52-year-old businesswoman from Wuhan arrived in Macau on the morning of January 19 and had stayed at the Landmark Hotel for two days before checking herself into the hospital.

Announcing the news yesterday, the Health Bureau's (SSM) director, Lei Chin Ion, boasted that "it was the effort of the entire government."

"The patient's recovery has given us greater confidence in winning the battle [against the virus]," said Lei.

During yesterday's press conference, a video was shown of the cured patient thanking the SSM for their treatment. She said that when she was first diagnosed, she was so worried she made a call to her daughter, leaving a verbal will.

However, she commended the quality of medical care in Macau, saying that "it is much better than in the mainland." She also said that "having come to Macau is the luckiest thing [she] has ever done."

Some journalists were concerned about how the bill for her care would be paid. The SSM director explained that the patient's bill amounted to MOP34,000. A waiver mechanism is available, which the patient has applied for. Her application is under review. Under the mechanism, she may or may



not be able to enjoy a full or partial waiver.

The Bureau explained that in most of the cases in Macau, the patients' conditions were mild during the first week of treatment, worsening during the second week, before showing signs of recovery in the third week.

Following the guidelines of the National Health Commission, the SSM deemed that the patient had recovered and discharged her. The guidelines stipulate that if a patient has been afebrile for at least three consecutive days, has an improved respiratory condition, an obvious improvement in pneumonia symptoms and two negative throat swabs in three days, then they have recovered.

The SSM was also notified by their Hong Kong counterpart about 15 Macau SAR passport holders and three Portuguese passport holders now stranded on the World Dream cruise

ship that is currently berthed in Hong Kong.

According to the SSM, they all have undergone testing with negative results for the virus. None of them have developed any symptoms, but they are now under medical observation.

The cruise ship has been cordoned off because it sailed four times after allowing eight main-

land Chinese passengers infected with the disease onboard. Almost 4,000 people are now trapped on the ship.

At Wednesday's press briefing, the SSM revealed that two Macau passport holders are quarantined on the Diamond Princess cruise ship, another vessel, which is now being held at sea near Yokohama, Japan.

FOUR HOTELS BEGIN VOLUNTARY SHUTDOWN

FOUR hotels, namely the Four Seasons Macao, The St. Regis Macao, Conrad Macao and the Grand Harbour Hotel, have temporarily shut down due to the novel coronavirus outbreak, revealed the Macao Government Tourism Office (MGTO) at yesterday's government daily press briefing.

When asked about why the hotels had suspended their operations, the MGTO explained that it was their own commercial decision. Some of the hotels, according to the tourism regulator, reported low occupancy rates after the outbreak. The hotels notified the regulator once they decided to suspend services, the MGTO added. **AL**

HK microbiologist worried about status quo

AS Hong Kong introduces stricter restrictions on those entering from the mainland, Yuen Kwok Yung, a top Hong Kong microbiologist and professor at the University of Hong Kong, has indicated that the city is about to face a community outbreak.

The academic has been outspoken during the epidemic, and has re-

peatedly asked the Hong Kong government to close its borders. The city has currently closed four of its borders, and requires people entering from the mainland, including its own residents, to enter monitored quarantine for 14 days upon arriving in Hong Kong.

Yuen has told Hong Kong media outlets that the chain of infection

must be disconnected as early as possible. Earlier, he estimated that as many as 1.4 million people in Hong Kong - close to 20% of the city's population - would be infected by novel coronavirus. This estimate has so far remained unchanged.

According to Yuen, the virus's ability to spread is strong. Macau's Health Bureau, however, holds

a relatively contrasting view. Officials from the Bureau have mentioned several times that the virus's main mode of transmission is contact and droplets.

What is agreed between Yuen and the Macau Health Bureau is the necessity of wearing facemasks, maintaining cleanliness and avoiding crowded places.

As of press time, the coronavirus has claimed 565 lives around the world. In mainland China, 563 patients have died and 1,305 have recovered. There are 22 cases in Hong Kong, the highest number besides the mainland. There have been 10 confirmed infections in Macau, with one person reporting a full recovery. **AL**

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NEWSROOM AND CONTRIBUTORS Albano Martins, Annabel Jackson, Anthony Lam, Emilie Tran, Irene Sam, Ivo Carneiro de Sousa, Jacky I.F. Cheong, Jenny Lao-Phillips, João Palla Martins, Joseph Cheung, Julie Zhu, Juliet Risdon, Linda Kennedy, Lynzy Valles, Paulo Cordeiro de Sousa, Renato Marques, Richard Whitfield, Viviana Segui
DESIGNERS Eva Bucho, Miguel Bandeira | **ASSOCIATE CONTRIBUTORS** JML Property, MdME Lawyers, PokerStars, Ruan Du Toit Bester | **NEWS AGENCIES** Associated Press, Bloomberg, MacauHub, MacauNews, Xinhua
SECRETARY Yang Dongxiao amy@macaudailytimes.com

SEND NEWSWORTHY INFORMATION AND PRESS RELEASES TO: NEWSROOM@MACAUDAILYTIMES.COM **WEBSITE:** WWW.MACAUDAILYTIMES.COM.MO

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ADMINISTRATOR AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Kowie Geldenhuys kowie@macaudailytimes.com

OFFICE MANAGER Juliana Cheang juliana@macaudailytimes.com

ADDRESS Av. da Praia Grande, 599, Edif. Comercial Rodrigues, 12 Floor C, MACAU SAR **Telephones:** +853 287 160 81/2 Fax: +853 287 160 84

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Where to draw the line with self-study? Mainland and Macau instructions differ

JULIE ZHU

WITH the announcement of school re-openings being indefinitely postponed, the motherland's education authority and Macau's education authority have given different instructions to teachers, students and parents regarding whether students should self-study until schools reopen.

Recently, both mainland and Macau education authorities decided to postpone the opening of schools amid the development of the 2019-nCoV epidemic.

In mainland China, most provinces have requested that schools do not open before mid-February, some before March. Like mainland China, Macau also suspended its original school opening schedule, requesting that students from all year levels not return to school until the local government issues further information. The duration of Macau's school suspension also remains indefinite.

Both Macau and mainland China have been among the top ranks in PISA performance over the past years, and Chinese communities are well-known for their strict and intense domestic policies for children's school performance.

However, currently mainland China and Macau have made different suggestions to students, parents, teachers and schools as



to whether students should self-study before school resumes.

Earlier this week, the Ministry of Education of China issued a ban on online teaching or any kind of formal teaching of the school curriculum. The mainland education authority pointed out that students have winter holiday homework, and if schools provide online courses they will have more schoolwork to do. Besides calling for a halt on online teaching of the new semester curriculum, the mainland education authority suggested that schools arrange online teaching about epidemic prevention and mental

health consultations.

"Prioritize children's physical and mental health, cherish the precious holiday, and ensure students have a happy holiday," the Ministry of Education urged mainland parents and schools.

Despite the calls of the education authority, some schools in mainland China are still teaching the new semester curriculum online.

In Macau, the local government has clearly suggested that local parents supervise their children's self-education at home.

The Guangdong government also said that it may shorten the

next school summer holiday due to the postponement of school opening.

"School is suspended, not studies," according to the slogan of the Education and Youth Affairs Bureau (DSEJ). Many mainland Chinese local education authorities have secretly assigned students online courses to finish. The Macau government has also released self-education materials to local parents. The materials include voice recordings and videos prepared by the relevant teachers.

According to a report by public broadcaster TDM, lawmaker Wong Kit Cheng said that some

local parents complained they did not have the time to teach their children at home because they still had to work.

Wong suggested DSEJ issue online teaching materials weekly. She hopes that the study will be focused on reviewing old knowledge or readings in order to avoid increasing pressure on students, parents and teachers.

Kong Ngai, director of the Division of Education of DSEJ, said that the extended holiday period would be counted as school days, hinting that local government has no plans to shorten the summer holidays.

Macau donations to mainland unaffected by charity scandal revelations

JULIE ZHU

LOCAL associations in Macau are donating hundreds of millions to Hubei province even after corruption within Hubei province's government-owned Red Cross was exposed. It was found that the body diverted donations into the pockets of senior executives instead of using the money to help those in need.

Earlier this week, various organizations in Macau announced their donation plan to support mainland compatriots. Fukien Natives Generation Association of Macao issued a proposal to all Fujian-related asso-

ciations in Macau to donate money and supplies to mainland China.

As of Tuesday, the association had received over 30.76 million patacas. On Tuesday, the association handed out 20.5 million and 10.2 million patacas to be transferred to the Hubei and Fujian local governments respectively.

State-owned Nam Kwong (Group) Company also donated 10 million Chinese yuan to Hubei province. Hoi Luk Fung Tong Heong Wui donated 5,000 masks and 4,000 medical protection uniforms to Hubei province's Red Cross.

On February 2, Galaxy

Entertainment Group announced a donation of MOP20 million to Hubei Province through Galaxy Entertainment Group Foundation. The donation was made under the coordination of the Liaison Office of the Central People's Government in the Macau SAR.

Following public health concerns associated with the outbreak of the new strain of coronavirus, Melco Resorts & Entertainment announced it is working with the government to donate HKD20 million to support initiatives for Wuhan and Hubei.

Since then, casino operators SJM, MGM and Sands China have also

announced donations of similar amounts to help fight the virus. The donations from Macau have all been given to mainland provinces for the purposes of purchasing medical supplies such as face masks.

Macau is not the only "compatriot" locality which has donated money to Hubei or the mainland in general during this outbreak. According to a statement released by the mainland Central Government, Hong Kong, Macau and Taiwan have donated a total of 143.7 million yuan to Hubei province in addition to resources and supplies worth 18.7 million yuan in total.

Most of the money was intended to be donated to mainland China's relevant charity federations, such as the China Charity Federation in different cities or the Red Cross Society China.

These associations are supposed to use the donations to purchase medical supplies or to help those in need.

However, under the rapid development of the epidemic, the mainland's Red Cross Society of China, which is a state-owned charitable organization, is under the spotlight once again due to allegations of corruption and misappropriation of donations.

In late January, Wuhan

Red Cross went viral on mainland social media due to a donations scandal. As of January 30, Wuhan Red Cross claimed to have received 398.7 million yuan in donations. The government-owned organization only used 53 million, while over 300 million remains in its account. However, no details of the whereabouts of the spent 53 million were reported.

Earlier this week, the deputy director of Red Hubei Province's Red Cross was dismissed from his position, together with another two leaders of the association.

At the same time, mention of Hubei Red Cross was removed from mainland social media and only posts from state-backed media CCTV, People's Daily, China Daily and official government accounts could be found.

LVS WARNS CASINO CLOSURE COULD LAST FOR TWO MONTHS

LYNZY VALLES

LAS Vegas Sands (LVS) president and chief operating officer Robert Goldstein has said that the two-week closure of the city's 41 casinos could last up to two months, six weeks longer than the local government has signaled with the unprecedented decision taken earlier this week.

Goldstein was speaking on the sidelines of the Nevada Gaming Control Board meeting held in Las Vegas on Wednesday.

"It's a scary time for all of us," said Goldstein, as cited in the Las Vegas Review-Journal. "It could be two weeks, it could be two months."

"[Ho Iat Seng] has made it clear that he will not be able to make a decision until he gets further understanding of the virus and its severity in Asia."

The Macau Chief Executive did not rule out the possibility of extending the shutdown of the 41 casinos in the SAR.

However, Goldstein's outlook remains positive. He referred to Ho's pro-business attitude, and said he believes that the Chief Executive is also keen on resuming business as soon as possible.

"We're hoping under his direction we can get the borders open



In this 2017 file photo, Las Vegas Sands' President Robert Goldstein (center) stands next to David Beckham (left) and musician Joe Walsh

sometime in the first quarter, but there's no way to know. Look at the SARS event 15-16 years ago. [...] These things are unpredictable."

Despite the closure of casinos,

hotels are still operating.

However, the executive admitted that only about 5% to 10% of Sands China's hotel rooms are filled.

As cited in U.S. reports, some

35,000 employees of Sands China's six casinos are staying at home, as a significant part of their operations have been affected by the closure.

Goldstein said that due to the

80% drop in tourist arrivals in Macau in January, it may be impossible for the company to make up the lost revenue by lowering its costs.

January's gross gaming revenue plunged 11.3% last month amid coronavirus travel restrictions. Yet casino operators are expecting the worst is yet to come, as analysts are forecasting a 75% drop for February.

For now, the executive implied that its casino operator in the SAR would heed the government's calls and measures.

"Our goal is to support the government," Goldstein said. "They've been very supportive of us and they're eager to open as well because the tax revenue has stopped and Macau depends on gambling. The special administrative region really depends on gambling revenue and the tax revenue, so it's quite painful for everybody."

Meanwhile, Wynn Resorts and MGM Resorts International have issued statements pledging that they would work according to the government's guidelines.

"We believe that our goals and the goals of the Macau government during this challenging period are fully aligned," Wynn Resorts Ltd. spokesman Michael Weaver said in an email.

"We will continue to work closely with the Macau government as the situation progresses," wrote MGM Resorts International spokeswoman Debra DeShong in an email.

GAMING

Expert says layoffs in smaller junket firms possible

LAYOFFS at smaller junket operators is a possibility if the coronavirus epidemic persists, an industry representative has said.

This week, the government appealed to casino operators to neither reduce employees' salaries nor impose layoffs during the challenging business period ahead.

The appeal comes after the government's announcement that the city's 41 casinos will be suspended for 15 days to contain the spread of the virus which has infected 10 people so far in Macau.

The President of the Macau Association of Gaming and Entertainment Promoters, Kwok Chi Chung, told GGRAsia that layoffs were a possibility as gaming operators had



been already reeling from the downturn in business over the past few months, even before the effects of the novel coronavirus were felt.

"So far I [haven't heard] any [junket] industry members are imposing layoffs. Many of them are trying their best to go with

the government's call not to cut salaries of staff or force them to take unpaid leave," Kwok told the media outlet.

"But with the suspension [of casino operations], we have no income. We also do not rule out the possibility that there could be layoffs

in the future, especially amongst the smaller junket firms, if the virus threat persists and casino closures are sustained," he added.

Junkets are not required to comply with the shutdown, as they are not casino operators. However, many of them have expressed that they would comply with the government's measures.

Closing the SAR's gaming premises was described by Chief Executive Ho Iat Seng as a difficult decision. It is possible that these measures will be extended if the situation worsens.

Amid these circumstances, the Times is aware that some employees in other sectors have been fired or forced to take leave. LV

FITCH AFFIRMS CASINO OPERATORS CAN ABSORB CLOSURE IMPACT

CREDIT rating agency Fitch Ratings has warned that the 15-day closure of Macau casinos is "going to have a meaningful, immediate impact to cash flows for the Macau casino operators," but that the six concessionaires were well-positioned to absorb the impact of the closure.

Building on a report issued last month by the firm, Fitch added that although the coronavirus would leave a mark on the local economy, "casino operators are well-positioned to absorb this weakness thanks to their strong balance sheets, liquidity levers, and no near-term maturities."

Statements attributed to Colin Mansfield, director of corporate finance, suggested that the impact to revenue and cash flow would be temporary. "Since we expect this to be a short-term cash flow hit, near-term liquidity is key for managing the disruption."

A hypothetical stress case

modeled by the firm showed that Macau gaming could face revenue declines of 50% and 25% in the first quarter and second quarter respectively. This would constitute an aggregate \$3.3 billion (MOP26.4 billion) cash flow decline for all six Macau operators.

Gaming analysts earlier predicted that even a two-week suspension of gambling activity in the SAR could see gross gaming revenue collapse by as much as 50% during the first quarter.

Fitch affirmed that gross gaming revenue growth in Macau was very likely to be negative this year, but that "the degree of decline is difficult to ascertain until the full extent and duration of the coronavirus' impact is clearer."

Gross gaming revenue dropped 3.4% year-on-year to about 292 billion patacas in 2019, led by a sharp decline in the fourth quarter. DB

Second worker comes forward after falling for 'layoffs letter' trick

RENATO MARQUES,
DANIEL BEITLER

A second worker has come forward to accuse his former employer, the operator of a sauna and nightclub located in Hotel Fortuna in ZAPE area, of tricking him into signing his own resignation. Unearthed yesterday, the controversial case has become one of the first reported examples of layoffs connected to the 15-day closure of gambling venues.

The company responsible for the two venues allegedly told the workers yesterday that they would be going on leave for two months.

The workers were issued a letter in Chinese – a language that they cannot read – and told it said that they accepted the terms of the two-month leave of absence from work. However, contrary to what was stated by the company, the letter in fact acknowledges the termination of the worker and states that they have already received all due compensation.

Another employee from the company reached out to the Ti-

DANIEL BEITLER



mes yesterday to confirm his experience, noting that he is one of those who signed the letter on Wednesday.

"I was tricked into signing the letter thinking that it was just the January salary, and then later I was told that we were supposed to go home [to our countries] because

the company was closed," he said. "I am still fighting to get [at least] a flight ticket from them."

The non-local worker went to the company's office yesterday to request his employer pay for his flight back home as a form of compensation. The company had requested that he return his

non-resident worker permit (blue card) to them.

The worker, who requested not to be identified, also said that the company had not allowed those losing their jobs to remove the document from the company's premises in order to, for example, have another person review it.

This was the case even for those workers who could not read the letter's content.

The employee told the Times that he was unable to present the case to the Labour Affairs Bureau (DSAL), because the authority is currently closed. "I had wanted to take this matter to the authorities but I can see no hope now as they are closed" said the employee.

Like most other basic public services in the territory, the DSAL is either fully closed or operating with skeleton staff. A request for comment sent to the DSAL yesterday went unanswered.

The Times has learned from employees of two other similar establishments located on the peninsula that not all entertainment operators are preparing to dismiss their staff at present.

Instead, and in compliance with the order of closure given by the Chief Executive, the companies have requested that all staff members take two weeks off and stay at home and but remain reachable by phone.

The employees of these two other companies admitted that they had not been fully reassured that the two weeks of leave would be paid.

The Times contacted Hotel Fortuna, which houses the entertainment venues, late on Wednesday night to request comment. The Times had not received a response as of press time.

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聯營律師 ASSOCIATES:

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高文軒 Adelino Correia •
羅善齡 Zelina Rodrigues •
白秀蘭 Susana Batalha
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康靜雅 Viviana Hong
梁淑嵐 Ana Leon
黃瀚賢 Frederico Vong
張偉鴻 Cheong Wai Hong
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VIRUS HITS HK INSURERS ALREADY REELING FROM PROTESTS

FOR Hong Kong insurers, the coronavirus outbreak is a second blow.

Already reeling from at-times violent demonstrations that slowed the flood of Chinese travelers - one of the biggest sources of new policyholders - to a trickle, the spread of the virus has seen transactions virtually grind to a halt.

A team of more than 100 agents working for one of the city's biggest insurers has seen sales to mainland visitors plummet to "almost nothing," according to a senior member of the group. Only two agents have managed to sell a policy since late January - when the

virus started spreading more broadly - generating just HKD100,000 (\$12,880) in first-month premiums, compared to about HKD5 million in January last year.

"Hong Kong's protests were nothing compared with the blow of the virus to us," said Zhou, who manages the 100-strong team, and asked their first name not be used because the matter is private. "This is the worst I have ever seen."

Chinese customers have long flocked to Hong Kong for insurance policies sold by the likes of AIA Group Ltd. and Prudential Plc, in part because the products offer an investment component and

payouts in foreign currencies that are hard to come by on the mainland.

AIA shares have fallen 6.4% in Hong Kong trading since Jan. 20. Prudential shares have declined 2.6% in the city.

The double-whammy of the protests and the virus are pummeling sales because industry rules require policyholders be physically present in the city before a contract can be finalized. Sales to mainland Chinese customers plunged 18% in the third quarter from a year earlier.

"We believe the new coronavirus outbreak is a near-term major negative for life insurance, on both

sales and investment/valuation," Daiwa Capital Markets analysts led by Leon Qi wrote in a Jan. 29 note.

AIA declined to comment on the effect of the outbreak on its business, saying it is in a blackout period before full-year results are released next month. Prudential also declined to comment.

For insurers on the mainland, policy sales will probably take a short-term hit before quickly recovering as the outbreak spurs people's awareness for the need for insurance, such as life or health cover, Tianfeng Securities analysts led by Xia Changsheng wrote in a Jan. 31 report.

They expect first-quarter new business value at Ping An Insurance (Group) Co. to plunge 10%; decline 6% at New China Life Insurance Co.; and 3% at China Pacific Insurance Group before stabilizing later in the year.

Ping An shares have fallen 8.8% in Hong Kong since Jan. 20, New China Life has slumped 12.7% and China Pacific is down 10.4%.

Hong Kong reported its first coronavirus death Tuesday, and has 18 other confirmed cases. The virus has killed almost 500 people and infected more than 24,000 others.

The city sealed off more checkpoints with China earlier this week after the nation halted group and individual tours late last month. Around 70% of Chinese travel to Hong Kong on individual or group tours (the rest come for work or to visit family), Goldman Sachs Group Inc. analysts Thomas Wang and Stanley Tian said in a Jan. 29 note to clients.

"A persistent suspension of the scheme would have a significant impact on insurance sales to mainland visitors," they said. "Furthermore, we believe sales to local customers could also be affected as customers may be reluctant to meet with agents on contagion concerns."

AIA is set to face short-term pressure from the escalating impact of the outbreak, Citigroup Inc. analysts said in a note. Cross-border visitor numbers could slump a further 80% this quarter if all travel permits are immediately suspended, they said.

"I can't think anyone would want to risk their life, taking a train or flight, passing the border, to buy an insurance product at such a time," said Zhou, the insurance agent. "No one is in the mood to buy insurance, there is nothing you can do but wait for the hardest time to pass." **BLOOMBERG**

Shortage rumors spark toilet paper panic buying

BLAKE SCHMIDT

HONG Kong has been struggling with a shortage of face masks to protect against the coronavirus outbreak. Now it could be facing a run on toilet paper.

Toilet rolls were unavailable in supermarkets in parts of the city as posts circulated on social media showing empty shelves and shoppers lining up to snag rolls, fueling the latest shortage in a city that's increasingly trying to isolate itself from China to keep the virus from spreading.

Hong Kong's leader has said the city will quarantine people arriving from mainland China, including Hong Kong residents and visitors entering via its international airport.

The cause of the toilet paper shortage wasn't immediately clear, but speculation was rife on social media about possible holdups involving the supply chain in mainland China. The city's government said late Wednesday that it regretted the "malicious act of spreading rumours" caused shortages of products

like rice and toilet paper. It added that steps to contain the coronavirus would not affect the movement of freight across the border.

Vinda International Holdings, a Hong Kong-listed toilet paper producer, didn't immediately respond to a request for comment yesterday, nor did some of Hong Kong's supermarket chains. Vinda shares rose as much as 8% to a record high in the morning session.

One young man carrying a sack of toilet paper rolls on the street on Wednesday evening said

a friend had lined up to get them. Others didn't have friends to help. Visits to eight supermarkets near the main business district by a Bloomberg reporter turned up no rolls. Two men stood outside a U Select supermarket in the Sheung Wan neighborhood, trying to figure out how to plan their lives around having no toilet paper.

"We went to five stores and no toilet paper," said Lok Gork, 30, a designer living in Hong Kong. "We got some wet wipes. You never know. You're better safe than sorry." **BLOOMBERG**

HONG KONG STOCKS NEARLY RECOVER POST-HOLIDAY LOSSES

HONG Kong stocks are just one strong day from erasing the rest of their post-Lunar New Year decline, as investors continue to shed their worry about the coronavirus in China.

The Hang Seng Index finished 2.6% higher Thursday, the largest gain in five months and leaving it 1.6% below its closing level before last month's holiday break. The deadly virus fueled a three-day, 5.9% drop in the benchmark last week, the biggest such decline since early August.

The index also closed back above its key 200-day moving average yesterday after falling below it a week ago.

Yesterday's rally came as part of strong gains across Asia on lessened concern about the virus as well as China announcing tariffs on some U.S. goods will be halved as of Feb. 14. Gains of more than 2% pushed Japan's Topix back into the green for 2020 while a near 4% pop for China's tech-heavy ChiNext Index put it at the highest level since December 2016.

The Hang Seng China Enterprises Index, which includes mainland companies listed in Hong Kong, also finished with a 2.6% advance yesterday. It's now 1.9% below its pre-holiday level. **BLOOMBERG**

MICHAEL SASSO

IF it seems like you're working harder just to pay the bills nowadays, at least take comfort in your shared struggle: the rising costs of housing and health care and the disappearance of middle-skill jobs are plaguing people in most other developed nations, too.

That's one conclusion of the McKinsey Global Institute, a research unit of the consulting giant, which found similarities across 22 developed nations in economic changes since 2000. Many countries in Europe and Asia along with the U.S. have enjoyed strong job markets in recent years, but the rewards are madde-ningly uneven.

Jobs requiring mid-level abilities such as administrative office positions and production work are being "hollowed out" in Europe and the U.S., leaving a polarized labor force of high- and low-skill roles. Meantime, rising costs - especially for housing - are eating up much of the wage gains workers have seen in the 21st century, the study found.

"Middle-skill, middle-income workers have been squeezed out of the labor market," according to the report. Young people, who make up about 180 million individuals in the sample countries, have also lost out. Those aged 15 to 30 are having "difficulty obtaining

Workers from US to Japan see rising costs eating up wage gains



well-paid, high-quality jobs" and "climbing on the housing ladder, with much lower wealth than that age group two decades ago."

The study - "The Social Contract in the 21st Century" - is drawn from data on 22 developed nations in the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development.

A major takeaway from McKinsey's study is that workers and consumers increasingly are on their own to fend with life's

challenges. One example of that is that collective agreements covered 44% of workers on average in 2000. That fell to 38% by 2017, the data show.

To be sure, globalization, outsourcing and other advances have benefited tens of millions, by driving down costs of most discretionary items. Nowadays, you can work six fewer weeks a year and still buy the same amount of clothes, furniture, recreation and communications equipment and

services than in 2000, all else held constant, McKinsey found in a sample of 10 countries.

However, other basic costs have soared and are eating much of the wage gains people have gotten in the past two decades. Average wages rose just 0.7% per year in the 22 developed nations between 2000 and 2018, or less than half the average annual GDP growth rate of 1.6% over the same time period.

The U.K. got whacked particu-

larly hard, with spikes in the cost of housing, education and health care devouring 107% of average income gains, McKinsey found. France fared only slightly better, with those three costs consuming 87% of income gains, while U.S. and Australian consumers each saw those expenses eat up 54%.

Still, more widely, the changing economy has affected the middle ranks. Since 2000, seven million middle-skill, middle-wage jobs have disappeared in 16 European countries and the U.S. because of automation and the shifting of manufacturing jobs to the service sector - although the rate of loss has slowed in the U.S. recently. Middle-skill workers in Belgium, France and Greece particularly got squeezed out, McKinsey found.

"The growth in high-skill jobs offers real opportunities for workers to move up the income ladder if they are able to raise their skill levels," the report says. "At the same time, it implies declining opportunities and wage stagnation for a significant share of the workers employed in middle-skill jobs." **BLOOMBERG**

Yum China falls after Pizza Hut lags

YUM China Holdings Inc. fell after Pizza Hut comparable sales missed analysts' estimates and the company said the coronavirus outbreak will "materially affect" this year's profit and sales.

Same-store sales company-wide rose 2% in the

fourth quarter, compared with analysts' average 1.6% projection, according to Consensus Metrix. But that key measure was unchanged at Pizza Hut, trailing projections, and the company cited the virus along with commodity and labor inflation headwinds for this year.

"While it is difficult to fully ascertain the expected impact of the coronavirus outbreak at this time, we can reasonably expect it to materially affect our 2020 sales and profits," Chief Financial Officer Andy Yeung said in a press release.

Yum China has tempo-

rarily shut down most KFC and Pizza Hut stores in Hubei Province, the center of the deadly coronavirus outbreak.

"Looking into 2020, the coronavirus outbreak is a major public health situation in China," Chief Executive Officer Joey Wat

said. For stores that remain open, reduced opening hours and fewer diners have slashed comparable sales.

Across China, the company has closed 30% of its restaurants, and doesn't know when they will re-open. Yum China said it may have an operating loss in the first quarter, and that future operations including cash flows could be hurt

due to the quickly spreading virus.

The company is facing more competition in the Chinese restaurant market as other international chains, like Burger King, Tim Hortons and Starbucks, quickly expand. Pizza Hut's dine-in stores are struggling to attract consumers in a space increasingly dominated by to-go options. **MDT/BLOOMBERG**

CORPORATE BITS

MGM China donates MOP20 million for buying medical supplies



MGM China yesterday announced a MOP20 million donation, made in coordination with the Liaison Office of the Central People's Government in Macau, to help Hubei province fight against the coronavirus epidemic. The donation will be used for

the purchase of preventive and medical supplies, as well as urgent-needed materials and equipment, supporting national epidemic relief and prevention.

"We would like to express our gratitude for the tireless and selfless effort of the

medical professionals, who have been protecting the lives of our people, especially the ones at the frontline of Hubei province," said Pansy Ho, co-chairperson and executive director of MGM China.

"We would also like to express our sincere condolence to the families affected by the epidemic. During this difficult time, MGM utterly unites with every fellow of our nation. We will overcome this hardship and welcome a greater tomorrow together."

According to a statement issued by the casino operator, MGM will continue to follow the government's direction in the "spirit of solidarity and cooperation."

Sands China pledges MOP25 million to fight 2019-nCoV



In an effort to address the ongoing public health challenges surrounding the coronavirus outbreak, Sands China has pledged to dona-

te 25 million patacas to help contain the spread of the virus and assist with relief efforts in mainland China and Macau.

The donation includes 20 million patacas pledged in coordination with the Liaison Office of the Central People's Government in the Macau SAR to assist the mainland in its efforts to combat the virus, and another 5 million patacas to support the local community to implement preventive measures.

"We strongly support Macau and mainland China in their efforts to contain the coronavirus and protect their citizens. We will certainly do everything we can to help return things to normal as quickly as possible," said Sheldon Adelson, chairman and chief executive officer of Las Vegas Sands and Sands China.



ANALYSIS

GLOBAL TOURISM TAKES MAJOR HIT AS VIRUS HALTS CHINESE TRAVEL

DEE-ANN DURBIN

This should have been a good year for global tourism, with trade tensions gradually easing, certain economies growing and banner events like the Summer Olympics taking place in Tokyo. But the viral outbreak in China has thrown the travel industry into chaos, threatening billions in losses and keeping millions of would-be travelers at home.

Gabrielle Autry, an American who lives in China, had expected to travel to Hong Kong this week to get engaged to her Chinese boyfriend. But those plans are on hold, and the couple is quarantined in their apartment in Hangzhou, an eight-hour drive from the epicenter of the outbreak in Wuhan. As of Wednesday, China had reported 28,018 cases and 563 deaths.

"We are thankful for our health and that we are together here," Autry said. She doesn't know when they will be able to reschedule their trip.

Thirty airlines have suspended service to China and 25,000 flights were cancelled this week alone, according to OAG, a travel data company. Hotel rooms in China are largely empty; Chinese hotel occupancy plummeted 75% in the last two weeks of January, according to STR, a hotel research firm. More than 7,000

passengers are quarantined on two cruise ships in Japan and Hong Kong.

Before the outbreak, the United Nations World Tourism Organization was forecasting growth of 3-4% in global tourism this year, an increase over the 1.5 billion tourist arrivals in 2019. Upsides, like economic improvement in the Middle East and Latin America, outweighed some potential downsides, like the uncertainty of Brexit or any lingering U.S.-China trade disputes.

Central to those numbers was the promise of an ever-growing number of travelers from China, where rapidly growing incomes have led to a global tourism boom. In 2018, Chinese tourists made nearly 150 million trips abroad and spent \$277 billion, according to IHS Markit. That's up from just \$15.4 billion in 2002.

The loss of those tourists is being felt most acutely in Asia, which usually attracts 75% of Lunar New Year travelers, says ForwardKeys, a travel consulting company. The new year, which began Jan. 25, is one of China's major travel periods.

Disney said Wednesday it could lose \$175 million if its parks in Hong Kong and Shanghai remain closed for two months.

Thailand expects to lose \$9.7 billion in tourist income from Chinese travelers through June, Tourism and Sports Minister Pipat Ratchakitprakan told The Associated Press.

"The day that we heard the news (about the virus), the tourists were gone," said Arisara Chamsue, who runs a shop near the Grand Palace in Bangkok. "The number has dropped. And I can only make a tenth or two tenths of what I normally make."

Thirty airlines have suspended service to China and 25,000 flights were cancelled this week

Tourists from elsewhere are also canceling travel to Asia. Brian Guyer of Bozeman, Montana, planned to go to Japan next week for a dream ski vacation after finding a good deal on Alaska Airlines. But he and his partner decided to cancel because the trip required a 14-hour layover in Beijing. They weren't sure they'd be allowed to enter Japan or the U.S. after passing through China.

Others are taking a wait-and-see approach, including concert pianist Julio Elizalde and violi-

nist Ray Chen. The two have a six-city concert tour of China scheduled in May. They're watching closely; as long as things improve over the next month or two, Elizalde says they plan to honor that commitment.

The cancellations, however, are adding up for airlines. Tourism Economics, a data and consulting firm, estimates that U.S. airlines will lose \$1.6 billion this year because of lost business to and from China. The firm doesn't have estimates for Chinese airlines.

Cruise lines are also feeling the pinch. Carnival and Royal Caribbean have canceled around 20 China cruises between them, and many cruise lines aren't letting passengers board if they have been in China or Hong Kong in the 14 days before the ship sails. That affects thousands of passengers; Royal Caribbean's Shanghai-based Spectrum of the Seas ship has a double-occupancy capacity of 4,246 people.

Miami-based Royal Caribbean estimates that the cancellations so far will shave about 1% off 2020 earnings, and that will double if travel restrictions in China are still in place at the end of February.

Destinations further from the outbreak are also feeling the loss

of Chinese tourists. Australia, already battered by wildfires, just imposed a travel ban on visitors from mainland China. China was the largest source for international visitors to Australia last year, with 1.4 million tourists who spent \$13.4 billion, according to IHS Markit.

Italy could lose \$5 billion in tourism revenue this year, said Demoskopika, a polling agency. In the U.S., Tourism Economics predicts a 28% drop in Chinese visitors, to around 2 million. That represents about \$6 billion less spent on travel and airfare.

Some worried travelers are even canceling trips to places that aren't yet impacted. Stanley Kolodziejczak, tax director at White and Case law firm in New York, planned to visit South Africa and Brazil this year, but those trips are on hold. He's concerned those countries wouldn't have the systems in place to detect and manage the virus.

But Christina Pedroni, senior vice president of Liberty Travel, a New Jersey-based travel agency, said she hasn't seen many cancellations for destinations outside of Asia. Some customers heading to Asia switched to another destination instead of cancelling entirely, she said.

"This could change if the situation grows more severe. But for now, most travelers are leaving impending travel plans as they are," Pedroni said.

Tourism will recover, as it has from previous health scares. But analysts are divided about the amount of time that recovery will take. Tourism Economics, citing the SARS outbreak in 2003, expects it will be four years before Chinese tourism to the U.S. gets back to previously expected levels. The World Travel and Tourism Council, a tourism advocacy group, says it usually takes 19 months for visitor numbers to recover after a viral outbreak.

David Tarsh, a spokesman for ForwardKeys, said there are some key differences with the SARS epidemic, which killed 774 people in 2003. In that case, he said, media reported that the virus was impacting all of southeast Asia, even though it was confined to China, Vietnam, Hong Kong and Singapore. That hurt tourism even in places that were far from the outbreak, like India.

This time, he said, travelers are more likely to understand that the virus is centered in Wuhan, China, which could help the recovery progress more quickly.

SARS also hit when travelers were still fearful after the Sept. 11, 2001 terrorist attacks in New York, he said. Tarsh also said China has been more open about its response this time around.

"China has taken very dramatic action," he said. **AP**

FOSTER KLUG &
MARI YAMAGUCHI,
YOKOHAMA

WUHAN CORONAVIRUS

'A floating prison': Cruise of Asia ends in virus quarantine

D AVID Abel's 50th wedding anniversary luxury cruise began with him eating his fill and enjoying the sights of East Asia.

It's ending with him quarantined in his cabin aboard the Diamond Princess for two extra weeks, eating a "lettuce sandwich with some chicken inside" and watching 20 infected people escorted off the ship, heading for hospitals for treatment of a new virus.

Abel is among hundreds of passengers on two cruise ships — in Japan and Hong Kong — caught in the drama and fear about the little-understood virus that just emerged in December. Tests are still pending on some passengers and crew who have symptoms or had contact with infected people.

"It's not going to be a luxury cruise; it's going to be like a floating prison," Abel said on Facebook from the ship in the port of Yokohama, outside Tokyo.

As Japanese officials loaded the ship with supplies yesterday to make the quarantine as bearable as possible, passengers took to social media to highlight small kindnesses by the crew and to complain about dwindling medicine, the quality of the food and the inability to exercise or even leave their cabins.

Their photos and videos showed the vessel that once had 3,711 passengers and crew is now a ghost ship, deserted reception areas, swimming pools and hallways. Babies on the Hong Kong ship were reportedly running out of diapers and milk.

"I think for many passengers, it's going to be absolute boredom," Abel said in a separate interview. He considers himself lucky that he has a cabin with a balcony. "The people I feel really sorry for are those with inside cabins who've got no natural light, no fresh air. It's going to be pretty grim for them for two weeks."

Grim is one way to describe the virus and the fear it's created. China counts more than 28,000 cases and it's spread to more than 20 countries. Still, fear has spread faster than the disease. Masks and

hand sanitizer are sold out in many areas of Seoul, Tokyo and Bangkok. Health workers are striking in Hong Kong and anti-Chinese discrimination has been seen across Asia. Taiwan has banned international cruise ships.

On the Diamond Princess, there were signs people were trying to make the best of a bad situation.

Yardley Wong, a passenger from Hong Kong traveling with her husband, son and her parents, said on Twitter that the crew gave her son playing cards, coloring pens and other gifts "to kill off boredom."

Australians Paul and Coralie Williamson said their cabin was smaller than a motel room and they had heard complaints from others about not having medication, or enough information.

But, after 34 years of marriage, Coralie Williamson said: "If I'm going to be stuck in a room with anyone, I would rather it be Paul than anyone else."

"So it's OK. We will need to go for a long walk on the beach when we get home," she told Australian Broadcasting Corp.

People posted photos of breakfast, a bowl of fruit salad, boiled eggs, juice and a croissant. One passenger celebrating their ninth wedding anniversary got a "happy anniversary" card from the ship staff.

"We're here for a long haul. I think it is going to get a little bit testing, obviously. But I don't know. What do we do? We couldn't jump out of the boat; that's a bit cold," Jacqui Fidrmuc from the city of Cairns told Australia's Nine Network.

Japanese health officials told reporters that a medical team and supplies were being sent to the ship. At the port where the ship dropped off infected patients and loaded up food and supplies, a person in a hazmat body-suit entered the ship carrying two boxes labeled "thermometers."

On the ship quarantined in Hong Kong, its

AP PHOTO



more than 3,600 passengers and crew were being screened because three passengers on a previous voyage had the virus. Hong Kong officials said they would try to track down 5,000 people who took previous voyages on the World Dream.

Hong Kong lawmaker Jeremy Tan said a woman on board called him Wednesday night to say she and some other mothers were running out of milk powder and diapers for their babies. He said he believed there were five or more babies on the ship, and that he delivered the essentials to authorities.

Life on the Diamond Princess in Yokohama, Abel said, "has changed beyond recognition to what you would call a luxury cruise." One meal was just a glass of orange juice, a yogurt and a bit of melon. Another was a "lettuce sandwich with some chicken inside" and a dessert.

When masked crew members hand over and pick up the trays of food, he said, "it's very brief. There's no physical contact apart from touching the tray."

Even though the sick people have been taken off the boat, there was still unease. "We've been breathing the same air as those that have been re-

moved," Abel said.

"How do we cope with it?" Abel asked on Face-

book. "We can either be creative and thinking positive things or we can be

dragging ourselves down into the gutter. I certainly won't be doing that." AP

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PHILIPPINES

DIPLOMACY CHIEF DEFENDS US PACT AFTER DUTERTE THREAT

JIM GOMEZ, MANILA

THE Philippine foreign secretary warned yesterday that abrogating a security accord with Washington would undermine his country's security and foster aggression in the disputed South China Sea.

The warning came after President Rodrigo Duterte threatened last month to give notice to the U.S. to terminate the Visiting Forces Agreement, which allows American forces to train in the Philippines, if the reported cancellation of the visa of his political ally, Sen. Ronald dela Rosa, was not corrected within a month.

"I'm warning you ... if you won't do the correction on this, I will terminate the ... Visiting Forces Agreement. I'll end that son of a bitch," the brash-speaking Duterte said in a Jan. 23 speech.

Dela Rosa served as Duterte's first national police chief and enforcer of the president's deadly anti-drugs crackdown in 2016. Thousands of mostly poor suspects have been killed under the campaign, alarming the U.S. and other Western governments and human rights watchdogs.

Dela Rosa and later Duterte have said Dela Rosa's visa was canceled, but U.S. officials have not addressed the matter.

Foreign Secretary Teodoro Locsin Jr. used a televised Senate hearing to enumerate what he described as crucial security, trade and

AP PHOTO



Secretary of Foreign Affairs Teodoro Locsin Jr.

economic benefits the accord provides. The U.S. is a longtime treaty ally, a major trading partner and the largest development aid provider to the Philippines.

"While the Philippines has the prerogative to terminate the VFA anytime, the continuance of the agreement is deemed to be more beneficial to the Philippines compared to any predicates were it to be terminated," Locsin said.

The accord, known by its acronym VFA, took effect in 1999 to provide legal cover for the entry of American forces to the Philippines for joint training with Filipino troops.

A separate defense pact subsequently signed by the allies in 2014, the Enhanced Defense Cooperation Agreement, allowed the extended stay of U.S. forces and authorized them to build and maintain barracks and warehouses and store defense equipment and weapons inside five designated Philippine military camps.

Terminating the VFA would affect more than 300 joint trainings and other activities this year with U.S. forces "which the Philippine military and law enforcement agencies need to enhance their capabilities in countering threats to national security," Locsin said.

The U.S. provided more than \$550 million in security assistance to the Philippines from 2016 to 2019, Locsin said, adding that there may be a "chilling effect on our economic relations" if the Philippines draws down its security alliance with Washington.

American forces have provided intelligence, training and aid that allowed the Philippines to deal with human trafficking, cyberattacks, illegal narcotics and terrorism, Locsin said, citing how U.S. military assistance helped Filipino forces quell a disastrous siege by Islamic State group-aligned militants in southern Marawi city in 2017.

U.S. military presence has also served as a deterrent to aggressive actions in the disputed South China Sea, Locsin said.

China, the Philippines, Vietnam and three other governments have rival claims to the strategic waterway.

Duterte first threatened to abrogate the VFA in late 2016 after a U.S. aid agency put on hold funds for anti-poverty projects in the Philippines. The 74-year-old leader, who has been harshly critical of U.S. policies while often praising China and Russia, has walked back on his public threats before.

Aside from threatening to take down the VFA, Duterte has said would ban some U.S. senators from entering the Philippines. He apparently was referring to American senators who sought to ban unspecified Philippine officials from entering the U.S. for their role in the continued detention of Philippines opposition Sen. Leila de Lima, a vocal critic of Duterte's deadly campaign against illegal drugs.

Duterte has publicly accused de Lima of receiving money from drug traffickers and called for her detention. De Lima has dismissed the allegations as fabricated charges designed to muzzle dissent under Duterte.

Duterte has also barred his Cabinet officials from traveling to the U.S. and turned down an invitation by President Donald Trump to join a special meeting the U.S. leader will host for leaders of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations in March in Las Vegas, according to presidential spokesman Salvador Panelo. **AP**

UK and Australia commit to free trade negotiations

BBRITISH Foreign Secretary Dominic Raab made his first overseas trip since Brexit yesterday to faraway Australia, where he reaffirmed Britain's desire for a free trade deal and gave assurances that the countries' differing views on Chinese tech giant Huawei would not stand in the way of closer relations.

Raab's first stop was the capital Canberra on a trip that will also take him to Japan as well as former British colonies Malaysia and Singapore.

Both Raab and Australian Foreign Minister Marise Payne reaffirmed their commitment to start negotiations on a bilateral free trade deal as soon as possible. They also agreed to find opportunities for engagement in the Indo-Pacific region.

AP PHOTO



Britain's Foreign Secretary Dominic Raab (left) and Australian Foreign Minister Marise Payne in Canberra yesterday

"We've recommitted today to launching negotiations on an ambitious free trade agreement between our countries as soon as possible," Raab said.

"Australia would hopefully be part of that first wave of high-priority deals

that we're pursuing," he added.

Raab said he also discussed with Payne Britain's decision this week to let Huawei have a limited role supplying new high-speed network equipment to wireless carriers.

Britain's decision is the first by a major U.S. ally in Europe, and follows intense lobbying from the Trump administration as the U.S. vies with China for technological dominance.

Australia angered China, its biggest trading partner,

by banning Huawei on security grounds from involvement in its national broadband network and the rollout of new 5G networks.

Raab assured Payne that Britain's decision would not affect its intelligence-sharing relationship with Australia, the United States, Canada and New Zealand, which form the Five Eyes partnership.

"We were absolutely clear and looked at it very clearly and there is nothing in the decision that we took that would inhibit or disrupt in any way whatsoever the Five Eyes intelligence sharing and there's nothing in the approach that we are taking that would have an impact on, for example, the sharing of sensitive data," Raab said.

Payne said she was confident Australia could strike a

free trade deal with Britain.

"We are ... at opposite ends of the world, yet we are very ready and able to grab a new era of opportunity for enhanced strategic and economic cooperation," Payne said.

"We also look forward to an early, comprehensive and ambitious free trade agreement because we both believe in rules-based markets for trade and investment," she added.

Australia also accepted Britain's offer for cooperation between the countries' space agencies so that high-resolution satellite imaging could help Australia prepare and respond to wildfires.

An unprecedented wildfire season has killed at least 33 people and destroyed more than 3,000 homes since September. **AP**

CALVIN WOODWARD
& MICHAEL TACKETT,
WASHINGTON

USA

YEARS from now, will you remember where you were and what you were doing when President Donald Trump was impeached? Have you forgotten already?

The country has been on a constitutional bullet train that took off with a whistleblower's highly detailed account of wrongdoing, roared ahead through a cascade of tweets and lurched to a halt after more than four months of inquiry, angst and debate with Trump's acquittal yesterday [Macau time]. So can you point to Ukraine on a map?

American children learn almost by rote that impeachment is a gravely serious proposition, the constitutional means for removing a president from office who commits "high crimes and misdemeanors."

The words of founders like Alexander Hamilton, James Madison and George Mason are invoked from more than two centuries ago to remind everyone why they thought the federal government needed to have a means to undo an election.

Long before anyone split an atom, the founders created the political equivalent of a nuclear weapon, with the fate of the nation in the balance.

This time, it just didn't feel like it.

We were witness to history in a way few generations have been. But it was a chapter of history laced with artifice.

The roughly half of the country that wanted Trump to be impeached and begone knew his acquittal was all but preordained in the Republican-controlled Senate. Just as Trump loyalists thought the matter was a hoax inflicted by the Democratic-controlled House.

The Senate impeachment trial delivered eloquence without persuasiveness, a mystery without suspense. It delivered argument without the anguish that accompanied the other impeachment episodes in anyone's lifetime today.

In the past they wept.

In 1974, Republican Rep. M. Caldwell Butler of Virginia wept after he cast a committee vote to impeach fellow Republican

Impeachment loses its constitutional gravity in Trump case



In this image from video, the vote total, 53-47 for not guilty, on the second article of impeachment, obstruction of congress, is displayed on screen

Richard Nixon. "For years we Republicans have campaigned against corruption and misconduct," he said. "But Watergate is our shame."

A quarter-century later, California Republican Rep. Tom Campbell verged on tears from the weight of the moment when he announced in favor of Clinton's impeachment in a near whisper.

As partisan and poisonous as that era was, too, Democrats gave their president a tongue-lashing to remember before saving his presidency. "He's not the best Democrat any of us have seen," snapped Rep. Louise Slaughter of New York.

Trump commanded fealty from his party like others also stained by impeachment or its threat never did. Only one in Congress broke with the president, and for him the anguish was plain on his face and in his voice. "The president is guilty of an appalling abuse of public trust," Utah Sen. Mitt Romney said on the Senate floor as he explained why he would vote for conviction.

The founders were never big on specifics. In essence, they told the House to handle impeachment and the Senate to manage conviction or acquittal as each chamber sees fit. Their atomic bomb from

the ages came without a detailed instruction manual or FAQ.

As the Senate sat as both judge and jury to assess the impeachment charges against Trump — for only the third time in history and the first time for a president seeking reelection — the limits of the proceedings for addressing misconduct were clear and the artifice became ever more apparent.

It was a trial in name only.

Senators on both sides openly prejudged the case. Questions were not spontaneous. The lawyers knew them in advance and were prepared with answers that even included slideshows.

The senators, muzzled in the chamber for much of the time, rushed to TV cameras to deliver their opinions on what they had just heard, unlike a jury that would be sequestered and forbidden to discuss the case.

New facts or documents were not introduced into evidence. No witnesses were called, unlike in the Andrew Johnson and Clinton impeachment trials.

Questions of fact and law were put to the prosecutors and defense lawyers, who gave self-serving answers, rather than to the person in the room most suited to the task, Chief Justice John Roberts.

Roberts had only limited say in the proceeding's substantive matters and little appetite for more, in deference to the elected

representatives. Though not a supplicant, he was more of a moderator than a jurist.

The president chose his

lawyers in part for how he thought they would look on television, an acknowledgment that the audience that mattered to him — his base — was outside the room.

There was ringing rhetoric about the meaning of words on sepia-toned parchment from the 1700s and in 2019 text messages from the smartphones of all the president's men.

The Federalist Papers and the contemporary record of a president pressing another country for a political favor were all part of this continuum.

Yet those arguments were in the realm of theater rather than of justice.

In the parlance of Washington and these times, everyone was "playing a role."

With Alexander Hamilton taking a star turn again, like on Broadway.

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what's ON

RED DECEMBER – EXHIBITION OF CARLOS MARREIROS

TIME: 10am-9pm
UNTIL: February 13, 2020
VENUE: Tap Seac Gallery, located at No. 95, Avenida do Conselheiro Ferreira de Almeida
ADMISSION: Free
ENQUIRIES: (853) 8988 4000

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TIME: 12pm-8pm
UNTIL: February 9, 2020
VENUE: 2/F, Broadway Macau
ADMISSION: MOP120
KONG SENG TICKETING SERVICE: 2855 5555

Offbeat

TOP FILMS WERE MORE DIVERSE THAN EVER BEFORE, STUDY FINDS



Hollywood's awards season may not show it, but the most popular films are increasingly diverse, a new study finds.

According to new research released this week by the University of Southern California's Annenberg Inclusion Initiative, more of 2019's top movies featured minority or female lead characters than ever recorded before.

Analyzing the top 100 films at the North American box office, USC researchers found that 31 movies had leads or co-leads from an underrepresented racial group, an increase of four films from 2018 and nearly triple the number of 10 years ago.

The data showed similar gains for female leads. Of the same films, 43 featured female leads or co-leads, an increase of four films from 2018 and more than double the number of female leads (20) in 2007.

Combined with studies released last month that showed a notable uptick in the numbers of female directors, the research paints a picture of an industry that, after years of lagging behind in representation in front of and behind the camera, is showing real signs of progress. While still falling short of an accurate reflection of the American population (51% of which is female and about 40% are people of color), researchers called it "a banner year for inclusion."

"It is clear that Hollywood is taking steps to create more inclusive stories and that those films are connecting with audiences," Stacy L. Smith, founder of the Inclusion Initiative, said in statement.

But those gains haven't been reflected in Hollywood's awards season, which culminates Sunday with the Academy Awards. For the 87th time, no female filmmakers were nominated for best director. And while the much-nominated Korean drama "Parasite" has made history, only one person of color (Cynthia Erivo, for "Harriet") was nominated in an acting category. At the British Academy of Film and Television Awards on Sunday, only white actors were nominated.

"There is also a very obvious disconnect between what sells tickets and what garners awards points to a systemic bias at cultural institutions like the BAFTAs or the Academy Awards," Smith said. "After another year in which the major studios increased their output of films with female and underrepresented leads or co leads, it is critical to recognize that talent is not limited by gender or race/ethnicity."

TV canal macau

| | |
|-------|---|
| 13:00 | TDM News (Repetição) |
| 13:30 | Telejornal RTPi (Diferido) |
| 15:00 | O Sábio |
| 15:45 | Beo and Peno Sr.1 |
| 16:00 | Animaizinhos Selvagens Exploradores |
| 16:15 | Portugueses Pelo Mundo Sr.1o |
| 17:00 | Conferência de Imprensa Saúde (Directo) |
| 18:00 | Império (Repetição) |
| 18:50 | TDM Talk Show (Repetição) |
| 19:25 | Livros com João Guedes (Repetição) |
| 19:30 | Ouro Verde Sr.1 |
| 20:30 | Telejornal |
| 21:15 | TDM Reportagem |
| 21:50 | Solteira e Boa Rapariga |
| 22:20 | Império |
| 23:15 | TDM News |
| 23:55 | Pele |
| 01:30 | Telejornal (Repetição) |
| 02:15 | RTPi Directo |

this day in history



1964 BEATLEMANIA ARRIVES IN THE US

The four members of the British hit band, the Beatles, have arrived in New York at the start of their first tour of the United States.

The young men, with their now infamous mop-head hairstyles, stepped onto the tarmac at Kennedy Airport just after 1300 local time.

There were more than 3,000 screaming teenagers at the airport. Many had skipped school or work. Some were in tears and some were carrying placards with phrases such as "I love you, please stay".

The Beatles' first scheduled appearance will be on American television on Sunday on the Ed Sullivan show. He apparently booked them to appear after seeing the huge crowds who greeted their return to Heathrow from Sweden last October.

More than 5,000 fans applied for tickets to be part of the audience for the live show - only 750 were lucky enough to get them.

The Beatles - Paul McCartney, Ringo Starr, John Lennon and George Harrison - received maximum police protection, the kind of arrangement usually produced for kings and presidents.

There were security barriers too, without which, the Beatles would almost certainly have been crushed by the throng of screaming women.

Elsewhere in the United States, excitement over the Beatles' arrival has reached almost fever-pitch.

Their songs are playing constantly on radio stations, in shops and other places of work.

Millions of Beatle records have already been sold and a company called Puritan Fashions Incorporated, which describes itself as "the only exclusive official licensed manufacturer of Beatle wearing apparel" is marketing T-shirts, sweat shirts, turtle-neck sweaters, tight-legged trousers, night shirts, scarves and jewellery inspired by the Beatles.

Beatle wigs are also for sale at \$2.99 each - or the equivalent of one guinea.

Courtesy BBC News

cinema

CINETEATRO

For the public health and safety, and to better cooperate with the government's anti-virus precaution, Cineteatro Macau has decided to suspend all movie screenings from January 27, 2020 until further notice.

IN CONTEXT

The Beatles were the first British band to break into the American market. Their appearance on the Ed Sullivan show reportedly led to a dip in the crime rate to a 50-year low as 73 million people or 40% of Americans tuned into watch. They performed the songs All My Loving, Till There Was You, She Loves You, I Saw Her Standing There and I Want To Hold Your Hand. The band appeared twice on the Ed Sullivan show and their performances still rate as the second and third most-watched programmes in the history of US TV. Only the 1983 final episode of Korean war comedy MASH achieved more viewers. In February 2004, the Beatles were given the President's Award at the Grammys to mark the 40th anniversary of what became known as "Beatlemania". It was accepted by the widows of John Lennon and George Harrison, Yoko Ono and Olivia Harrison.

MACAU'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

YOUR STARS



ARIES

Mar. 21-Apr. 19

You can't get mad if they're not treating your money the way you would. All you can do is keep this in mind the next time they come asking for funds.



TAURUS

Apr. 20-May. 20

Looking forward in life is a great way to aim for positive changes, and living in the moment is always good, but today it's looking back that will offer you the most reward, entertainment, and insight.



GEMINI

May. 21-Jun. 21

You could be privy to information today that spells trouble for one of your favorite people, and you could be stuck with the dilemma of whether to tell them what you know.



CANCER

Jun. 22-Jul. 22

Today, if you have a question or concern about what you're working on, go to the source. Asking someone for answers directly is the best way to get the clear, credible information you need.



LEO

Jul. 23-Aug. 22

You'll meet up with someone from a drastically different background today, and they could have something serious to say that you should pay attention to, even if no one else wants to.



VIRGO

Aug. 23-Sep. 22

Sure, you will never know what you missed out on, but then again, you will never know what you missed out on. Keep your eyes on the prize and keep going forward!



LIBRA

Sep. 23-Oct. 22

Feel like you've been through an emotional ringer lately? Take heart. You're due for a break now. Your great attitude has made everything go very smoothly lately, so good for you!



SCORPIO

Oct. 23-Nov. 21

There are so many fresh possibilities just about to enter your life. What you need to do today is let yourself believe that your future holds more happiness than you past ever did.



SAGITTARIUS

Nov. 22-Dec. 21

You're centered on tackling the more creative aspects of this task, but they aren't. Their mind is much more focused on the small details of time, place, and budget, and this could be responsible for some increased tension.



CAPRICORN

Dec. 22-Jan. 19

Your bank account isn't as flush as you may think. And a quick review of your accounts could go a long way toward keeping you in a more economical state of mind.



AQUARIUS

Jan. 20-Feb. 18

There is no excuse for being bored today, what with all the fun ideas and invitations being tossed your way. If you're not feeling in the mood to be social, then it would be in your best interests to fake it.

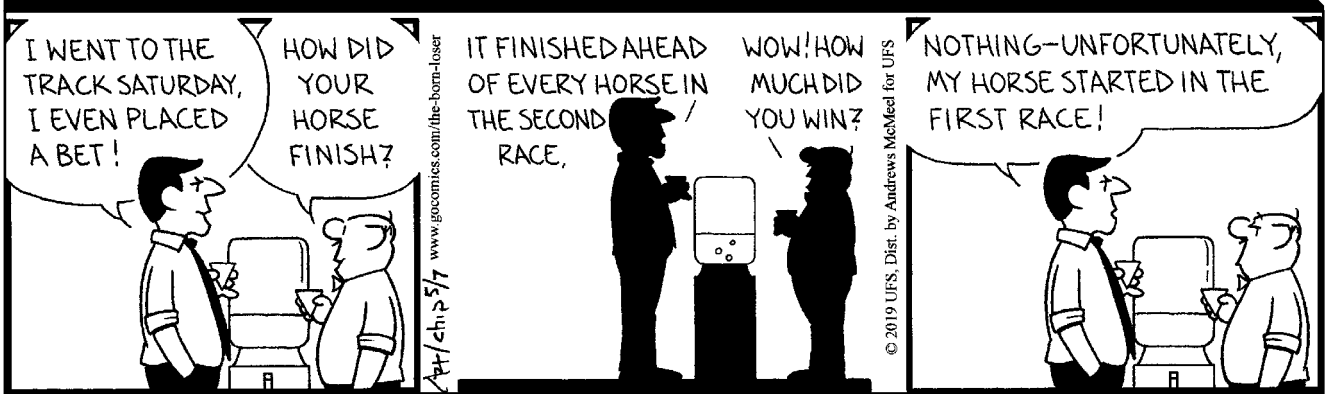


PISCES

Feb. 19-Mar. 20

Pretend like your success is a foregone conclusion and it just might be. Speed is a priority today, too, so feel free to take any shortcuts that appear.

The Born Loser by Chip Sansom



SUDOKU

EASY

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

EASY+

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|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | 1 | | | | 6 | | |
| | 2 | 6 | | 7 | | | 4 | 8 |
| | | 8 | 2 | | | 5 | | |
| 3 | | | 1 | | | | | 9 |
| | 5 | | 7 | 8 | | | | |
| | | 7 | | | 4 | 1 | | |
| 7 | 4 | 9 | | | | | | |
| 6 | | | 3 | | | | | |
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MEDIUM

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

HARD

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

WEATHER

| | MIN | MAX | CONDITION |
|-----------|-----|-----|---------------|
| CHINA | | | |
| Beijing | -5 | 8 | clear |
| Harbin | -22 | -9 | snow shower |
| Tianjin | -2 | 8 | smoggy |
| Urumqi | -12 | -3 | clear |
| Xi'an | -1 | 8 | overcast |
| Lhasa | -5 | 4 | snow shower |
| Chengdu | 7 | 12 | overcast |
| Chongqing | 10 | 12 | overcast |
| Kunming | 3 | 20 | clear |
| Nanjing | 7 | 10 | drizzle |
| Shanghai | 8 | 10 | moderate rain |
| Wuhan | 2 | 7 | drizzle |
| Hangzhou | 6 | 9 | moderate rain |
| Taipei | 17 | 21 | cloudy |
| Guangzhou | 18 | 26 | cloudy |
| Hong Kong | 19 | 24 | cloudy |

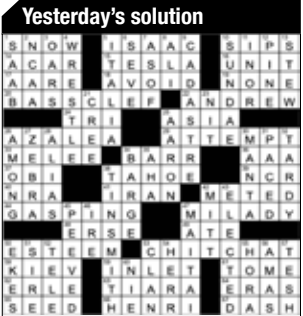
WORLD

| | MIN | MAX | CONDITION |
|-----------|-----|-----|-----------|
| Moscow | -6 | -4 | flurry |
| Frankfurt | 0 | 5 | overcast |
| Paris | 0 | 4 | clear |
| London | 4 | 6 | drizzle |
| New York | -7 | 1 | clear |

CROSSWORDS

ACROSS: 1- Famous last words; 5- Kit item; 9- Bristle; 13- Bridle strap; 14- Out of line; 16- Lukas of "Witness"; 17- Nick and Nora's pooch; 18- Mother of Isaac; 19- Art Deco artist; 20- Demonstrate; 21- Jamaican popular music; 22- Right-leaning?; 24- Extent of space; 26- Attention-getting sound; 27- Jeopardy; 29- Blue gem; 33- Clan symbol; 34- On a single occasion; 35- Quod ___ demonstrandum; 36- Tree of the olive family; 37- Point in the desired direction; 38- ___ Maria; 39- Egyptian goddess of fertility; 41- Like some dorms; 42- Pays to play; 44- Academic teacher; 46- Sporting blades; 47- Hwys.; 48- Gothic-type arch; 49- Critique; 52- Blackguard; 53- Group of individual facts; 57- Miners' sch.; 58- Make one; 60- Custardy dessert; 61- First, second, or third; 62- Tadpole milieu; 63- As far as; 64- Cornerstone abbr.; 65- Sgts., e.g.; 66- It may be floated;

DOWN: 1- Important times; 2- New Ager John; 3- Bandleader Puente; 4- Unconscious; 5- Mortarboard feature; 6- Honshu port; 7- Gumbo vegetable; 8- Pasture used for grazing; 9- Encase; 10- British nobleman; 11- "Mon Oncle" director; 12- Just ___; 15- Talk softly; 23- Cookbook abbr.; 25- Backboard attachment; 26- Walked back and forth; 27- Deputised group; 28- Body of values; 29- Twisted expression?; 30- Beside oneself; 31- All-night parties; 32- French summers; 33- Follow; 34- Siouan speakers; 37- Foul-up; 40- Like barber poles; 42- Mimic; 43- Necessary; 45- Shoshone language member; 46- Exit; 48- Best; 49- Rustic; 50- JFK postings; 51- Sleeveless garment; 52- Pres., militarily; 54- Chow chow chow; 55- Cheerio!; 56- By and by; 59- The French word for "no";



USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

Emergency calls 999

Fire department 28 572 222

PJ (Open line) 993

PJ (Picket) 28 557 775

PSP 28 573 333

Customs 28 559 944

S. J. Hospital 28 313 731

Kiang Wu Hospital 28 371 333

Commission Against

Corruption (CCAC) 28326 300

IAM 28 387 333

Tourism 28 333 000

Airport 59 888 88

Taxi 28 939 939 / 2828 3283

Water Supply - Report 2822 0088

Telephone - Report 1000

Electricity - Report 28 339 922

Macau Daily Times 28 716 081



AD

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One Central, Lakeview High Floor
\$12,500,000 1,269 ft² 2 2 2

FOR RENT



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FOR SALE

| | |
|--|-------|
| [Taipa] Jade Garden | 4 2 3 |
| 3,180 ft² \$18,000,000 (ref: 19126002) | |
| [Macau] Lakeview Tower | 3 2 2 |
| 1,344 ft² \$11,000,000 (ref: 19126001) | |
| [Taipa] Hoi Wan Garden | 2 2 1 |
| 900 ft² \$5,100,000 (ref: 19106003) | |
| [Taipa] Nova City | 3 2 2 |
| 1,515 ft² \$11,750,000 (ref: 19106001) | |

FOR RENT

| | |
|--|-------|
| [Macau] Furnished | 2 1 1 |
| 700 ft² \$12,500/mth (ref: 19101007) | |
| [Taipa] New studio | 1 |
| 470 ft² \$9,500/mth (ref: 19101002) | |
| [Taipa] Nova Grand | 2 1 1 |
| 935 ft² \$17,800/mth (ref: 19091005) | |
| [Taipa] Manhattan high floor | 4 2 2 |
| 2,305 ft² \$26,800/mth (ref: 19091003) | |



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The Art of Giving

Lurdes de Sousa *



MODERN PHILANTHROPY: BATTLES IN A TIME OF PEACE

CORONAVIRUS.

If there is one word that Macau residents and the rest of China have been hearing endlessly these days, it must be this one. This epidemic has significantly affected more or less all aspects of our lives for the past several weeks. This epidemic is like others we have seen before. These new epidemics pop-up like mushrooms in many parts of the world, you name them: SARS, bird flu, Ebola, Zika... They are all tragic, as they claim lives and have immediate effects on national budgets and the world economic forecast. With dense cities and convenient travel, they spread faster and further than ever before. We know it. And tomorrow another one will appear. Why? Because we don't plan, we react.

Not much has been said about the reinvention of philanthropy, and how modern philanthropy could be reimaged and innovated for the common good. This sad occurrence is a perfect lesson in how concrete and needed philanthropy will be in the years to come.

Last week at Davos, a global initiative to fight epidemics by the name of CEPI (Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations) was discussed. It is an initiative designed to shorten the response time to epidemics by creating vaccines that can be released quickly once an outbreak occurs. "What CEPI does is take the things that we do in battle and do them in peacetime," explained the CEO of GlaxoSmithKline, one of the world's leading pharmaceutical companies.

It's a real challenge; a "market failure," economists would say. Getting vaccines to the stage of preparation where they can be used quickly and effectively sounds like science fiction. It is a challenge not only because it requires sophisticated research, anticipation and innovation, but also because, aside from the technological and scientific challenges, other factors must be considered, such as liability, licenses, regulatory approvals, stockpiling etc. Whether CEPI will be able to achieve its goal when confronted with these challenges is unknown, but what is already happening before our eyes is that the biggest challenge has already been overcome: a financing solution that has industry, governments and philanthropic institutions working together. \$460 million in initial funding from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, the Wellcome Trust, the governments of Germany, Japan and Norway, and promises of \$700 million in total for a program involving the global vaccine manufacturers is in itself an achievement. The war is not yet won, but the battle is.

Governments, we all know, tend to lack the immediate capacity to respond and accountability at the hands of tax payers for such an investment, if unsuccessful, can be a heavy political price to pay. On the other hand, getting the entire industry to converge and put aside competition and profit is not an easy step either.

"Capitalism is dead," declared one speaker at Davos. Maybe not yet... but it sure is dying as a result of the pressing global challenges that are putting the very future of our societies at stake.

CEPI would not have been possible without the contributions of philanthropic institutions and individual wills, for philanthropy is the only actor that has enough flexibility in its decision-making processes to take the lead. Let's hope that CEPI will be successful and that more philanthropists from around the world, and Asia in particular, will join a battle in a time of peace.

***President, Associação Internacional de Filantropia (Macau)**
國際博愛協會 (澳門)
president@artofgiving.org.mo

Macau Daily Times is the official media partner of the Associação Internacional de Filantropia (Macau).

OSCARS 2020

PREDICTIONS: CAN 'PARASITE' UPSET '1917'?



A HEAD of Sunday's 92nd Academy Awards (Monday morning, in Macau), MDT/AP shares its predictions for a ceremony with a lot of locks but the potential for a few surprises.

BEST PICTURE

THE NOMINEES: "Ford v Ferrari," "The Irishman," "Jojo Rabbit," "Joker," "Little Women," "Marriage Story," "1917," "Once Upon a Time ... in Hollywood," "Parasite"

WILL WIN: "Parasite"

SHOULD WIN: "Parasite"

SHOULD HAVE BEEN A CONTENDER: "The Last Black Man in San Francisco"

The last-arriving contender, Sam Mendes' World War I film "1917," has seemingly, fittingly run away with it. The top-prize winner of the Producers Guild, the Directors Guild and the BAFTAs, "1917" is the clear favorite. But I think Bong Joon Ho's universally beloved "Parasite" could pull off an upset that would rank alongside the underdog win of "Moonlight" three years ago.

BEST ACTRESS

THE NOMINEES: Cynthia Erivo, "Harriet"; Scarlett Johansson, "Marriage Story"; Saoirse Ronan, "Little Women"; Charlize Theron, "Bombshell"; Renee Zellweger, "Judy"

WILL WIN: Renee Zellweger

SHOULD WIN: Saoirse Ronan

SHOULD HAVE BEEN A CONTENDER: Alfre Woodard, "Clemency"

Zellweger is already a winner for "Cold Mountain" in 2004. But her fragile yet powerhouse performance as Judy Garland in "Judy" is that irresistible thing: a comeback story. The part reverberates with Zellweger's own history; she and Garland are both former American sweethearts. She's a fine choice, but the verve and velocity of Ronan's great performance in "Little Women" shouldn't be overlooked.

BEST ACTOR

THE NOMINEES: Antonio Banderas, "Pain and Glory"; Leonardo DiCaprio, "Once Upon a Time ... in Hollywood"; Adam Driver, "Marriage Story"; Joaquin Phoenix, "Joker"; Jonathan Pryce, "The Two Popes"

WILL WIN: Joaquin Phoenix

SHOULD WIN: Adam Driver

SHOULD HAVE BEEN A CONTENDER: Andre Holland, "High Flying Bird"

After several years of lethargy, best actor is the year's most competitive category. The next five options — including Adam Sandler ("Uncut Gems") and Eddie Murphy ("Dolemite Is My Name") — are equally good. Phoenix, like all of this year's acting favorites, has been the clear front-runner for some time, for his morose yet limber Joker. But Driver's performance in "Marriage Story" is the real show-stopper here; a more nuanced and rewarding performance that culminates beautifully in song and tears.

BEST SUPPORTING ACTRESS

THE NOMINEES: Kathy Bates, "Richard Jewell"; Laura Dern, "Marriage Story"; Scarlett Johansson, "Jojo Rabbit"; Florence Pugh, "Little Women"; Margot Robbie, "Bombshell"

WILL WIN: Laura Dern

SHOULD WIN: Laura Dern

SHOULD HAVE BEEN A CONTENDER: Zhao Shuzhen, "The Farewell"

Dern has won every precursor award ahead of the Oscars, and is poised to win her first Academy Award. That's cause for celebration. Dern has been one of the finest actresses in Hollywood for decades, and her fearsome divorce attorney in "Marriage Story" is indelible, particularly her fabulous monologue on the double-standards of modern marriage. But this category is also missing some worthy actresses, including Jennifer Lopez ("Hustlers") and Shuzhen, who played the grandmother unaware of her own cancer diagnosis in Lulu Wang's tender family drama "The Farewell."

BEST SUPPORTING ACTOR

THE NOMINEES: Tom Hanks, "A Beautiful Day in the Neighborhood"; Anthony Hopkins, "The Two Popes"; Al Pacino, "The Irishman"; Joe Pesci, "The Irishman"; Brad Pitt, "Once Upon a Time ... in Hollywood"

WILL WIN: Brad Pitt

SHOULD WIN: Brad Pitt

SHOULD HAVE BEEN A CONTENDER: Wesley Snipes, "Dolemite Is My Name"

Nothing is more certain this year than Pitt's win for "Once Upon a Time ... in Hollywood," a movie that perfectly showcases Pitt's sly charisma. His march toward his first acting Oscar has been fun, too, in a string of acceptance speeches (thanks to an apparent joke writer helping him out) filled with memorable one-liners. The talent in this category is extraordinary — Pesci or Hanks would win most years.

DIRECTOR

THE NOMINEES: Martin Scorsese, "The Irishman"; Todd Phillips, "Joker"; Sam Mendes, "1917"; Quentin Tarantino, "Once Upon a Time ... in Hollywood"; Bong Joon Ho, "Parasite"

WILL WIN: Sam Mendes

SHOULD WIN: Martin Scorsese

SHOULD HAVE BEEN A CONTENDER: Marielle Heller, "A Beautiful Day in the Neighborhood"

Mendes appears the favorite here for the technical acumen of his seemingly-one-take "1917." The pristine command of Bong would be a better choice but so would the colossal achievement of Scorsese in "The Irishman." He has won best director only once before. And in 2019, Scorsese not only produced a career-crowning masterwork but mounted a passionate defense for the future of cinema.

INTERNATIONAL FILM

THE NOMINEES: "Corpus Christi," Jan Komasa; "Honeyland," Tamara Kotevska, Ljubo Stefanov; "Les Misérables," Ladj Ly; "Pain and Glory," Pedro Almodóvar; "Parasite," Bong Joon Ho

WILL WIN: "Parasite"

SHOULD WIN: "Honeyland"

SHOULD HAVE BEEN A CONTENDER: "Portrait of a Lady on Fire"

This will be an easy win for "Parasite," with potentially bigger awards to come. But little in this awards season was more disappointing than the lack of attention for Celine Sciamma's "Portrait of a Lady on Fire."

RUGBY | SIX NATIONS

Wales give Tompkins start at center vs Ireland

NICK Tompkins' try-scoring debut as a replacement impressed Wales coach Wayne Pivac enough to start him at outside center against Ireland in Six Nations rugby this weekend.

Tompkins displaced George North, who bumped newcomer Johnny McNicholl off the right wing position, in the only change to the starting lineup that hammered Italy 42-0 last weekend in Cardiff.

Tompkins went on for Hadleigh Parkes in the 53rd minute, and six minutes later scored Wales' third try of five with a long run from a ruck. He

and Parkes will fill the centers together this time against Ireland tomorrow in Dublin.

"He played exceptionally well when he came on last week so he deserves the start," Pivac said yesterday.

The Saracens midfielder played for England Under-18s and Under-20s, but switched his allegiance to Wales, for which he qualified through a grandmother.

The return to fitness of scrumhalf Gareth Davies and return from suspension of prop Rhys Carre saw them slotted into the reserves, along with lock Adam Beard for the injured Cory Hill, and utility back Owen Williams. AP

AP PHOTO



Wales Nick Tompkins scores a try during the Six Nations rugby union international between Wales and Italy at the Principality Stadium in Cardiff, Wales

WALES LINEUP

Leigh Halfpenny, George North, Nick Tompkins, Hadleigh Parkes, Josh Adams, Dan Biggar, Tomos Williams; Taulupe Faletau, Justin Tipuric, Aaron Wainwright, Alun Wyn Jones

(captain), Jake Ball, Dillon Lewis, Ken Owens, Wyn Jones. Reserves: Ryan Elias, Rhys Carre, Leon Brown, Adam Beard, Ross Moriarty, Gareth Davies, Owen Williams, Johnny McNicholl.



FOOTBALL

FC PORTO DENIES WRONGDOING AFTER REPORT OF PROBE INTO PRESIDENT

PORTUGUESE soccer club Porto denied wrongdoing yesterday after a local magazine said the club and its president were being investigated for tax fraud and money laundering related to the transfer of players such as Radamel Falcao and Iker Casillas.

The magazine Sábado said authorities were looking into Porto and club president Jorge Nuno de Lima Pinto da Costa over past transfers of players.

Porto said neither the club nor Costa were ever approached by authorities about the investigation. It said the timing of the release of the information was suspicious, coming just before a decisive Portuguese league match against rival Benfica.

The teams play on Saturday in Porto. The hosts trail Benfica by seven points after 19 matches. AP

AD

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OPINION

Bizcuits

Leanda Lee



EXTRAORDINARY TIMES OF CRISES

During the 1997 Asian Financial Crisis, multinationals in Asia who maintained their support for local communities and workers were the ones equipped to ride out the crisis. Their strength and resilience lay in making difficult decisions together with their workers, maintaining some level of livelihood and operations. Workers agreed on arrangements to cut back hours as business revenues declined, helping to extend job security. Those who could prioritized colleagues in greater need. Some took voluntary early retirement. Available resources were shared to help everyone see out the crisis. This is what would now be recognised as corporate sustainability; keeping businesses and communities sustained for as long as possible.

These corporate actions were acknowledged by local communities, governments and finance providers, so upon recovery, when assistance became available, resources and finances were to be allocated, and purchase contracts issued again, these companies were close to the front of the line because they had proven their dedication and commitment to their host nations.

In Macau, we are currently experiencing profound insecurities, loss of freedom of movement, panic and life-changing effects brought by the coronavirus. Companies are letting people go, cutting their hours, strongly encouraging people to take annual leave or leave without pay.

These may be natural consequences of the extraordinary events that have drastically reduced the visitor numbers our economy relies upon. I refer not just to the casinos but all the smaller enterprises that depend to some extent on their interconnectedness with tourism and anything that trickles down from that: advertising, printing, cafes, wine merchants, produce suppliers, mechanics, transportation. Even indirectly, what activity in our peculiar community doesn't rely in some way on a vibrant tourism sector? And, behind each activity there are individuals and families.

We expect to share the burdens, but the speed with which some workers have been summarily laid off and domestic helpers let go is questionable. In crises, reverting to self-preservation mode is natural, even for companies. Here in Macau, however, many have benefited greatly from lengthy periods of prosperity. Now is when we should share what we have with those who are in less fortunate positions. It is not a time to hoard or kick out, it is a time to distribute and help each other through.

People and institutions change in times of crises. Indeed, crises can be harnessed to effect change when ordinarily vested interests would impede it.

The coronavirus is one of many big issues the world is currently grappling with: Climate Emergency, future of work, inequality, erosion of trust in institutions and leadership. If within these crises, businesses focus on their profitability and merely batten down, we all lose out on the ingenuity, skills, knowhow and capital that businesses can bring to help address our problems.

A new wave of intellectual thinking has been driven by the existential crises we are facing. It is a development, in a way evocative of the 1960s that gave us the shareholder primacy of Milton Friedman, the one that told us the nature of business was to make profit. It has not always been, nor will always be so.

The new wave believes corporations to be a critical mechanism to bring about effective change, enhancing social wellbeing and environmental recovery and stewardship. The role of purposeful companies is thus to solve problems and to do so profitably over time.

Economist Tim Jackson in his book "Prosperity Without Growth" similarly suggests enterprise as service. In the words of Professor Colin Mayer of the Said Business School, Oxford University, "the purpose of business is to produce profitable solutions for the problems of people and the planet, and not to profit from producing problems for people or planet."

Should Macau ever establish a securities market, business response to our virus crisis will give us something to reflect on when the time comes to determine the laws that will govern the nature of business. Let it be purposeful.

WHO TO MEET ON PROMISING DRUGS FOR NEW VIRUS

The World Health Organization is convening a research conference next week to identify promising drug and vaccine candidates to be fast-tracked for development against the new virus that emerged from China.

WHO Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus told reporters last night the U.N. health agency will be inviting scientists to identify research priorities and coordinate the effort to find effective drugs and vaccines.

The meeting will be held Tuesday and Wednesday in Ge-

neva and will include some "virtual" attendees. WHO said it would include Chinese scientists but didn't say if the "virtual" attendees were those who could not travel due to bans, quarantines or other reasons.

"To put it bluntly, we're shadow boxing," Tedros said, explaining there are many unknowns about the virus, including its transmissibility and severity. "We need to bring this shadow out into the light so that we can attack it properly," he said.

AP PHOTO



CHINESE SCIENTISTS ASK FOR PATENT ON US DRUG TO FIGHT VIRUS

JOE McDONALD & LINDA JOHNSON, BEIJING

SCIENTISTS in the city at the center of China's virus outbreak have applied to patent a drug made by U.S. company Gilead Science Inc. to treat the disease, possibly fueling conflict over technology policy that helped trigger Washington's tariff war with Beijing.

The government-run Wuhan Institute of Virology said this week it applied for the patent in January along with a military laboratory. An institute statement acknowledged there are "intellectual property barriers" but said it acted to "protect national interests."

Granting its own scientists a patent might give the Chinese government leverage in negotiations over paying for the drug. But it also might fuel complaints Beijing abuses its regulatory system to pressure foreign companies to hand over valuable technology.

Yesterday, the official Xinhua News Agency said clinical trials of the drug, remdesivir, were due to start.

Gilead, headquartered in Foster City, California, said it applied in 2016 for a Chinese patent on use of remdesivir against coronaviruses and is waiting for a decision.

The coronavirus family includes the novel coronavirus, or 2019-nCoV, blamed for the outbreak in Wuhan.

"Gilead has no influence over whether a patent office issues a patent to the Chinese researchers," said a company spokesman, Ryan McKeel. "Their application has been filed more than three years after Gilead's filing and will be considered in view of what is already known about the compound and pending patent applications."

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The institute said its application was filed Jan. 21. Two days later, Chinese authorities suspended most access to Wuhan, a city of 11 million people. That lockdown has expanded to surrounding cities and some in other provinces, isolating a total of about 60 million people in the most sweeping anti-disease measures ever imposed.

China has the right under World Trade Organization rules to declare an emergency and compel a company to license a pa-

tent to protect the public. It would be required to pay a license fee that is deemed fair market value.

The government might be able to avoid that fee if the patent were granted to the Wuhan institute, part of the elite Chinese Academy of Sciences.

The institute said it applied for a "use patent" that specifies the Wuhan virus as the drug's target. Gilead's patent application, filed before the virus was identified, cites only the overall family of coronaviruses.

The Chinese researchers made their patent application "from the perspective of protecting national interests," said the institute statement.

"If relevant foreign companies plan to contribute to China's epidemic prevention and control, we both agree that if the state needs it, we will not require enforcement of rights given by the patent," it said.

Gilead said last week it was working with U.S. and Chinese health authorities on studying remdesivir. The company said it has provided the drug for emergency use in a small number of patients with the Wuhan virus "in the absence of any approved treatment options." AP

AP PHOTO



Nepal will count a third gender in its next population census, for the first time counting LGBT people as a minority group that can be allocated government jobs and education. The LGBT community in the Himalayan nation has long demanded the census taken every 10 years count sexual minorities.

India Prime Minister Narendra Modi said in Parliament that Indian Muslims had nothing to fear from a new citizenship law and accused opposition parties of toeing rival Pakistan's propaganda to create fear. Modi said the Congress and other opposition parties had incited the nationwide protests against the law, which fast-tracks naturalization for Hindus, Christians and other religious minorities.

Maldives Police said yesterday they have arrested three people in the stabbings of two Chinese and an Australian that may have been carried out by Islamic extremists. Police were investigating the authenticity of a video circulating on social media showing a masked man claiming responsibility for Tuesday's stabbings. They did not give other details. The victims were reported to be stable.

Hollywood To the world, he was a legend. Kirk Douglas, the muscular actor with the dimpled chin who starred in "Spartacus," "Lust for Life" and dozens of other films and helped fatally weaken the Hollywood blacklist, died at 103.

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Oscars Hollywood's awards season may not show it, but the most popular films are increasingly diverse, a new study finds. According to new research released this week by the University of Southern California's Annenberg Inclusion Initiative, more of 2019's top movies featured minority or female lead characters than ever recorded before. Meanwhile, the Oscars will be awarded Monday morning (Macau time).

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