

TRADE WAR
ENOUGH

12 YEARS A-CHANGIN'

Double Down!
ADVERTISING HERE
+853 287 160 81

MacauDaily 澳門每日時報® Times

FOUNDER & PUBLISHER Kowie Geldenhuys EDITOR-IN-CHIEF Paulo Coutinho www.macaudailytimes.com.mo

Greater Bay Plan
\$158 / 6GB
Data Increase Again
CTMA

N.º 3480 WEDNESDAY T. 19º/27º Air Quality Good
26 Feb 2020 ☺

"THE TIMES THEY ARE A-CHANGIN' "

MOP 8.00
HKD 10.00 2305 4271

CONSTRUCTION WORKERS HAVE APPROACHED DSAL TO SEEK EMPLOYMENT ASSISTANCE AS SEVERAL PUBLIC, PRIVATE WORKS HAVE BEEN SUSPENDED P4

BACK TO SCHOOL: SOURCES HINT CLASSES MAY RESTART ON MARCH 16 P3

MACAU'S TOURISM AUTHORITY IS ADVISING LOCAL RESIDENTS STAYING IN SOUTH KOREA NOT TO RETURN HOME VIA HONG KONG P2

AP PHOTO



Iran The head of Iran's counter-coronavirus task force has tested positive for the virus himself, showing the challenges facing the Islamic Republic amid concerns the outbreak may be far wider than officially acknowledged. The announcement regarding Iraj Harirchi came after he gave a news conference with journalists in Tehran about the virus just one day prior, seeking to minimize the danger posed by the outbreak.

AP PHOTO



India-US Defending the host who has showered him with pomp and pageantry, President Donald Trump refused yesterday to speak out publicly against a controversial new Indian citizenship law pushed by Prime Minister Narendra Modi that has sparked deadly protests over discrimination against Muslims. "I don't want to discuss that. I want to leave that to India," Trump told reporters.

AP PHOTO



US The White House sent lawmakers an urgent \$2.5 billion plan to address the deadly coronavirus outbreak, whose rapid spread and threat to the global economy rocked financial markets. The White House budget office said the funds are for vaccines, treatment and protective equipment. The request was immediately slammed by Democrats as insufficient. More on p8

More on backpage



HOPE VACCINE UNDERGOES HUMAN TRIALS

P12

BLOOMBERG

DISCOVERY: MUST SCIENTISTS IDENTIFY INGREDIENTS FOR POTENTIAL DRUG TO FIGHT COVID-19

P3

XINHUA



TOURISM REGULATOR RECEIVES FIVE CALLS FROM MACAU RESIDENTS IN SOUTH KOREA

ANTHONY LAM

MACAU'S Tourism Crisis Management Office (GGCT) has received five calls requesting assistance from local residents in South Korea, the government disclosed yesterday.

Maria Helena de Senna Fernandes, director of the Macao Government Tourism Office (MGTO), which oversees the GGCT, informed during yesterday's daily press briefing that the government has sent some 425 text messages to Macau residents currently in South Korea to remind them not to return to Macau via Hong Kong.

Fernandes told the press briefing that the tourism regulator had asked all four telecom companies in Macau to deliver the messages to local cellphone users.

She explained that the inbound calls to GGCT concerned the manner in which the Macau residents should return to the SAR. Fernandes stressed that their return trip was not imminent.

Currently, all flights between Macau and the northeast Asian country have been canceled at least until March 1. Concurrently on Monday evening, the Hong Kong government announced a ban on the entry of anyone from South Korea who is not a Hong Kong resident.

With all ferry services between the two Special Administrative Regions suspended, the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macau Bridge is the only way local residents can return to the Macau

AP PHOTO



SAR directly from Hong Kong.

En-route back to Macau from the Hong Kong airport, Macau residents must clear immigration control in Hong Kong, which is currently impossible coming from South Korea unless they also hold a Hong Kong identification card simultaneously.

Accordingly, Macau residents currently in South Korea will not be able to return to Macau via the neighboring SAR.

According to Fernandes, the five calls received by the GGCT concerned this matter. She told the press conference yesterday that her team advised the callers to use other means, mainly by transiting in other cities, to return to Macau.

"For the time being, we are sure that flights are still running from South Korea to Guangzhou and Shenzhen," said the MGTO head. "Otherwise, they can make a transit stop in Japan or other places."

Asked by the media about whether the 425 messages indicated that the same number of residents are currently in South Korea, Fernandes said, "the number doesn't mean that there are 425 Macau residents in the country. It is the quantity of mobile devices connected to a Korean mobile network [as recorded by local telecom companies]." Fernandes added that her team cannot determine how many device one person possesses, therefore MGTO temporarily has no data

as to how many Macau residents are in the northeast Asian country.

Fernandes was also asked to foresee if there is a need to postpone or even cancel other events in Macau. About a month ago, the MGTO decided to cancel several events originally held in celebration of Lunar New Year, including the annual float parade

and the Lunar New Year fireworks display.

A tourism forum, originally due to be held in April, is very likely to be postponed to September. On the other hand, the Fireworks Contest may also be outright canceled. The last time the event was canceled was about two years ago, after destructive typhoon Hato struck Macau, claiming 10 lives.

"First of all, among our regular contestants, there is Japan, Korea, Italy and the mainland. They are all currently strongly affected by the epidemic," said Fernandes. "On the other hand, even if they decided to go ahead, they still need time to source the fireworks required by their designs. The current situation may make it unfeasible."

In the meantime, the director also disclosed that occupancy rate of short-term accommodation in the city had fallen to just 11%. Unusually for Macau, economic accommodation has proved more popular than luxury accommodation.

"The current situation is even worse than the SARS-affected period in 2003," Fernandes said. "It is the worst time since I started working in the industry."

THREE PATIENTS STILL IN HOSPITAL

ANOTHER recovered coronavirus patient was released from the public hospital yesterday bringing the number of cured people up to seven. The patient, a 67-year-old woman from Wuhan, has already returned to the mainland. The city

has recorded 10 confirmed cases of the coronavirus to date, and no new infection in three weeks. The three people who have yet to be discharged from the hospital are in a stable condition, according to the health authorities.

Gov't studying how to bring home Macau residents still in Hubei

THE local government said it is studying several options when it comes to bringing home Macau residents currently staying in Hubei Province, where the contagious Covid-19 coronavirus originated. However, any solution offered by the SAR must be in full compliance with Hubei Province's disease-control measures.

As of yesterday, there

were about 100 Macau residents known to be staying in various places across the central Chinese province. The Government Information Bureau (GCS) said in a statement yesterday that the Macau authorities have been in touch with these residents since the beginning of the coronavirus crisis, and have ensured that "certain necessities" were sent to

Hubei for these Macau residents.

Most of the transportation out of Hubei Province has been suspended since January as part of strict measures introduced on the mainland to curb the spread of Covid-19.

Currently, the Macau government is considering the use of chartered coaches or use of China's high-speed railway ne-

twork in order to return the local residents to the Special Administrative Region.

Regarding a suggestion to use a chartered flight to bring them back, the government said it was concerned about the process of safely assembling those people scattered across the province. In addition, an aircraft was an enclosed space and presented

a high risk of cross-contamination should anyone aboard be infected.

The government is also studying the possibility of new infections arising from the return of local residents who have stayed in Hubei during the coronavirus outbreak. Once returned to Macau, the government has plans for the quarantine arrangements for these residents.

However, according to the GCS statement, the local authorities are also "undertaking a risk assessment regarding whether the return of those Macau residents might spread the disease within the community, and is preparing an advanced-level response plan for a scenario where new Covid-19 cases were recorded in Macau following such return." DB

www.macaudailytimes.com.mo

REACHING OUT!

+17,000

Like us on facebook.com/mdtimes



MacauDaily 澳門每日時報
Times

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF (DIRECTOR) Paulo Coutinho paulocoutinho@macaudailytimes.com
MANAGING EDITOR Daniel Beitler daniel@macaudailytimes.com
CONTRIBUTING EDITORS Leanda Lee, Severo Portela, Sheyla Zandonai

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

A MACAU TIMES PUBLICATIONS LTD PUBLICATION

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

Advertisement advertising@macaudailytimes.com

For subscription and general issues:

general@macaudailytimes.com | Printed at Welfare Printing Ltd

EDUCATION

No official date for school resumption, but sources point to March 16

RENATO MARQUES

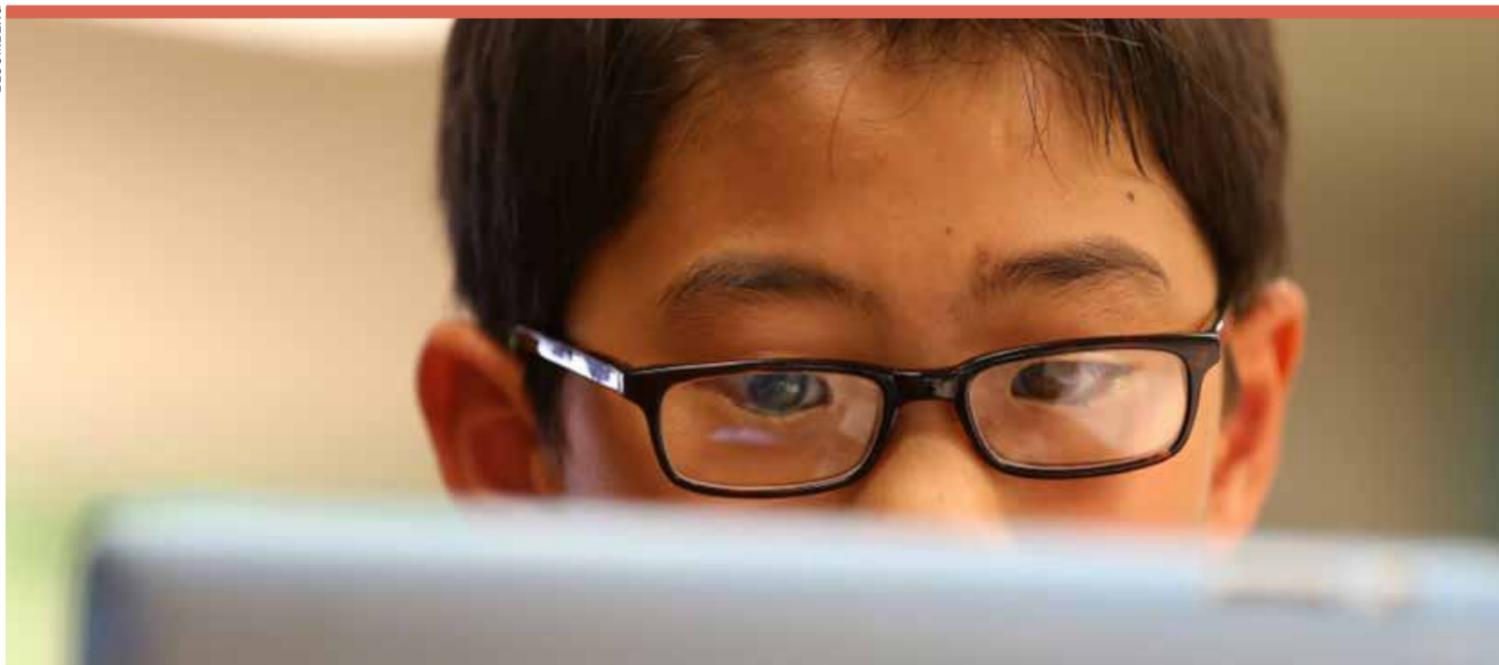
THE neighboring region of Hong Kong yesterday extended its school closure until the end of the Easter break. This was confirmed by the Secretary for Education Kevin Yeung, who said that classes at all kindergartens, primary and secondary schools would continue to be suspended until April 20 at the earliest.

In Macau, the situation seems to be quite different. As government services and private entities like banks, shops, and other services begin their return to full operation, it is unlikely that the class suspension will be carried on for much longer.

The Times has learned that teachers and other school staff members have identified March 16 as the likely date for school activities to resume, with several people in the sector confiding that March 16 is, for the time being, the only date that has been suggested as the potential date of return to classes.

One of these professionals told the Times under the condition of anonymity that according to their knowledge, the idea of March 16 being the potential date for school activities to resume might have been based on the previous date announced earlier this month in

BLOOMBERG



Hong Kong. At the time, the Hong Kong Education Bureau extended existing class suspensions at all kindergartens and schools from March 2 for another two more weeks and until March 16.

However, local government and education and health authorities have refused to confirm a date to end of the school suspension period.

On Monday, lawmaker and chairman of the Follow-up Committee of Public Administration Affairs, Si Ka Lon, informed the

media that the government had promised to give at least two weeks' notice regarding the reopening of schools so that schools, teachers, parents and children could make the necessary preparations. That implies schools in the Macau SAR will not reopen before mid-March.

Earlier this month, the Secretary for Social Affairs and Culture, Elsie Ao Ieong U also informed during the daily press conference that the health authorities were working on the guidelines to be

followed for the reopening of both the casinos and schools, giving a clear sign that the reopening of the academic institutions would not be postponed for long.

A week later, the government decided that the conditions to reopen the gaming floors had been met, leading to their reopening on February 20.

Previously, Teresa Vong, an associate professor of the University of Macau's Faculty of Education, told the Times that the suspension of formal learning, although

it may carry some consequences, in general terms and as long as it is not too long, should not cause any significant difference in terms of the overall academic performance of students.

The scholar also noted that the measures enforced by the government to keep the students on the "learning path" through online activities and e-learning has proven inefficient as a large proportion of the teaching staff have not received proper training and struggle to use these tools effectively.

MUST scientists identify ingredients that could be used to fight Covid-19

CHAIR Professor Liu Liang, Academician of the Chinese Academy of Engineering and Rector of the Macau University of Science and Technology (MUST), in collaboration with Xiao-Jun Yao, Professor of the State Key Laboratory of Quality Research in Chinese Medicine (MUST), has discovered several active ingredients from traditional Chinese medicine which could significantly inhibit critical targets of the new coronavirus, Covid-19.

The scientists screened molecules frequently used in traditional Chinese medicine and identified

ingredients that could prevent virus replication, which might make them promising candidates for further investigation into the drugs for treating the novel coronavirus, said the University.

Professor Liu's group also proved for the first time that two existing drugs, including Zhengqing Fengtongning, could observably reduce lung fibrosis. The mechanism of action was closely related to the inhibition of inflammatory cytokines, indicating that these existing drugs could have potential applications in the treatment of severe pneumonia cau-

sed by infection with the novel coronavirus and preventing sequelae such as pulmonary fibrosis which need to be further investigated.

Zhengqing Fengtongning is produced by Hunan Zhengqing Pharmaceutical Group. It has been included in the "Double List" of National Essential Medicines and Medical Insurance Medicines of China, and is widely used for treating rheumatoid arthritis in various hospitals of China.

These results from Professor Liu's research team indicate that efforts to develop antiviral and host protection drugs to treat infection

with the novel coronavirus using Chinese herbal medicine hold promise.

The project "Research on Zhengqing Fengtongning and other marketed drugs against Novel Coronavirus pneumonia" carried out by Professor Liu's research team was approved by the Guangdong Province Special Science and Technology Project of Emergency Response for Prevention and Control of New Coronavirus Infection, which is also the first collaborative project between Guangdong and Macau in this scientific space. JZ

PATRIOTIC STUDENTS WRITE LETTERS TO SUPPORT WUHAN

JULIE ZHU

THREE teachers and 19 students of Macau Pui Ching Middle School's primary school section wrote heartfelt letters to the television program, "Letters From Wuhan", expressing their love and support for Wuhan and the country at large.

The TV program is a recent televised project put together by Phoenix Channel. The program interviews medical professionals who are currently involved in Wuhan's epidemic battle, and portrays them as heroes.

In their letters to the program team, Macau primary school teachers and pupils expressed their deep concern and appreciation for the medical professionals.

Choi Iok U, one of the teachers, said she has cried "many times" while watching "Letters

From Wuhan". She hopes that more students can watch the program.

Another teacher, Shi Hongbing, who used to be a teacher in mainland's Jiangxi Province, said that she learnt that kindness should be the core value of Macau's education from watching the program.

The students' letters revealed how they were touched by the interviewees and their concern about Wuhan.

"I welcome you to travel to Macau to experience this diverse little town and feel Macau people's kindness and passion," one student wrote to a volunteer in Wuhan.

Another student wrote to a doctor, saying that, "although I am not capable of directly participating in the epidemic battle, I know that being safe at home and studying hard is making a contribution."

THREE PEOPLE POISONED WITH CARBON MONOXIDE

Three people were poisoned with carbon monoxide inside a barber shop located in the Hac Sa Wan area. The accident took place on Monday. The Fire Services Bureau discovered two faulty LPG water heaters in the store corridor which were the source of the carbon monoxide. The exhaust pipe was connected to the exhaust port of the building, which caused the carbon monoxide concentration in the shop's bathroom to reach 540 ppm. The bureau believes that the LPG water heaters were not properly installed and has requested the shop manager to stop using them. The three injured people were a 38-year-old female mainland worker, a 50-year-old female staff member and Macau resident, and a 60-year-old Macau resident who is in charge of the shop.

NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION PRESENTS OPINIONS TO WONG SIO CHAK

The General Union of Neighborhood Association of Macao (UGAMM) presented approximately ten recommendations it has compiled to Secretary for Security Wong Sio Chak during a recent visit to the secretary. The association wants the security authority to implement Macau's ten-year plan for disaster prevention. It also wants a range of other security objectives met, including a general upgrade of the city's CCTV surveillance system to provide wider coverage across Macau, the removal of fuel and storage of hazardous items from residential communities and the deployment of police officers to local communities. Among the other opinions are calls to expedite the construction of the new prison, improve human traffic diversion measures across all Macau borders, and enhance the discipline of the territory's security forces.

WECHAT PAY HK TO PROVIDE CONVENIENCE FOR PAYMENTS IN MACAU

In March, WeChat Pay HK will launch a program to provide more convenience to Hong Kong's WeChat Pay HK users when they travel to Macau. According to news reports by Hong Kong media, WeChat Pay HK has already received approval to provide cross-border payments between Macau and Hong Kong. The approval means that WeChat Pay HK users will be able to use WeChat Pay to purchase goods or services in Macau without the need to exchange money. Currently, WeChat Pay HK users can already top up their e-pocket and use the money in mainland China. With the launch of this new cross border service, Macau will become the first place where Hong Kong's WeChat Pay users can use their e-pocket besides mainland China.

DANIEL BETLER



LOCAL CONSTRUCTION WORKERS TURN TO DSAL FOR SUPPORT

LYNZY VALLES

Local construction workers have approached the Labour Affairs Bureau (DSAL) to seek employment assistance as several of the city's construction works have been halted due to the epidemic outbreak.

The slowdown in some construction work is likely connected to new measures from the Macau SAR government, which requires that all non-resident workers from the mainland face a 14-day quarantine when entering the territory.

According to a statement issued by the DSAL yesterday, the bureau carried out employment hiring procedures for about 80

workers who primarily specialize in carpentry, painting services and plasterboard works.

The bureau registered their contact information and other personal details in its system, which allows employers to contact them for job opportunities.

"DSAL staff collected their data and organized them for [job opportunities]," the bureau confirmed.

In response to the development of the epidemic outbreak in Macau, several construction sites are gradually resuming work, while DSAL said that it is taking the necessary steps to ensure stability in construction sector employment.

Public construction has no-

tably increased in the past week, with the government seemingly using the unexpected quiet period to conduct maintenance and repair works on Macau's roads.

Some gaming operators including Melco Resorts & Entertainment have admitted to a slowdown in the construction works of ongoing projects due to the low number of construction workers arriving from mainland China.

The DSAL noted that the bureau is "attentive to the situation of the labor market in Macau," reiterating that it ensures the continuity and priority of employment for local resident workers.

"Since the resumption of basic services last week, DSAL has been in immediate contact with job seekers and companies to conduct interviews," the bureau said.

Previously, an industry representative said that layoffs at smaller junket operators are a possibility if the coronavirus epidemic persists. The government has appealed to casino operators, asking them not to reduce employees' salaries or impose layoffs during the challenging business period ahead.

The Times is aware that groups of workers approached the DSAL with the hope of obtaining assistance in settling their cases.

Personal Health Declaration system registering problems

RENATO MARQUES

The Health Bureau's (SSM) electronic system for Personal Health Declaration registered several problems yesterday.

People who wanted to access public services, casinos, and other venues in which the form-filling was required experienced difficulties as the system was blocked and displayed a message stating that the system was busy, requesting users to wait 30 seconds before trying again.

In a statement, the Novel Coronavirus Response and Coordination Centre came forward to acknowledge the problem, saying that from about 9 a.m. yesterday there was an issue with the service that led to its suspension for maintenance.

The health authorities also said, "system technicians are trying to solve the situation as quickly as possible," and that "in cases where declarations cannot be made electronically, the Novel Corona-

virus Response and Coordination Centre informs that they can be made orally. We apologize for the inconvenience caused."

Around two hours later, the Center rushed to issue a new statement informing that the electronic system for Personal Health Declaration had resumed operation from 11 a.m. However, a large number of netizens and the Times realized that the electronic application continued to suffer from glitches and was malfunctioning at least until around 5 p.m. on the system's mobile application, which is the platform that is mostly used by citizens.

Questioned on the case by the media, the coordinator of the Center, Leong Iek Hou, said during the daily press conference that the information technology team has handled the case and finetuned the webpage used for the declaration form. According to Leong, "the problem should not occur again."

Completing a Personal Health Declaration form is mandatory for all people visiting government services and departments and is also a requirement to enter all gaming venues. Many other private services and companies are also adopting the application to register the health status of their employees on daily basis. A large number of civil servants are asked to complete the form every day before starting their work duties in public service.

In the meantime, the desktop version of the application seemed to have been successfully restored and was working without issues throughout the day.

GAMING

BERNSTEIN: REVENUE PLUNGE TO CONTINUE INTO MARCH

THE enduring impact of the novel coronavirus has analysts now expecting next month's gross gaming revenue to plunge by as much as 80% in year-on-year terms.

Analysts at Sanford C. Bernstein and share a similar outlook to those at J.P. Morgan, predicting that gross gaming revenue in February will plummet by as much as 90% in year-on-year terms. Now they also say the significant drop will likely continue into March.

Previously, analysts at Bernstein said that gaming revenues in the city could tumble 95% when it was still unclear whether the 15-day casino shutdown would be prolonged.

The brokerage estimated that Macau's gaming revenue was at MOP2.1 billion in February at an average daily rate of MOP255 million to MOP260 million – down 65% year-on-year.

The reopening of casinos does not guarantee that business will immediately pick



LYNZY VALLES

up as the central government still has travel restrictions in place for its residents. Only those with visas granted prior to the implementation are permitted to enter the city.

Bernstein analysts Vitaly Umansky, Eunice Lee and Kelsey Zhu, also agreed that there are still no clear indications of when the gaming industry will recover.

"IVS [Individual Visit Scheme] and group visas into Macau are suspended and most transport is severely

disrupted, with most airlines cancelling or limiting flights into Macau and surrounding airports," the brokerage said in a note seen by Inside Asian Gaming.

"We estimate February to be down 90% and March potentially to be down 80% [assuming no significant improvement in travel]. The operators we have spoken with do not see any clarity on [the] timing of recovery at this time."

The city's gaming revenue for the first half of this year

can only be clearly predicted once travel restrictions from China are lifted as mainland China is still the primary source of revenue in the city's gaming sector.

Looking ahead, the analysts have positively stated that performance in the second half of the year would be stronger than the first six months for Macau's gaming industry.

"We see a solid recovery in place in [the second half], followed by a strong 2021," noted Bernstein. LV

AL COMMITTEE DISCUSSES NEW HENGQIN PORT LAW

THE SAR government has not revealed the details of rental prices for the land plot in Hengqin that Macau plans to use as a future immigration facility, according to the Chairman of the Second Standing Committee of the Legislative Assembly (AL).

Yesterday, the committee held the first meeting to discuss the bill related to the future Macau port on the Hengqin border gate.

After the closed-door meeting, Committee Chairman Chan Chak Mo reported that the Macau SAR government will rent the land for Macau's immigration checkpoint at the future Hengqin border building.

The rental period will last from the opening date of the facility until December 19, 2049. Before the expiration date, the Macau immigration facility will be under Macau's jurisdiction.

Chan said he was not aware about the rental price because the rent is a negotiation between the SAR

government and the state. Similar to the future port, the local government is paying rent to use the land under the current University of Macau campus which covers approximately 1.09 square kilometers. The Macau government is paying approximately 1.2 billion patacas to use the land until 2049.

Macau will administer the Macau immigration facility, the Lotus Bridge, the future project connecting Hengqin port and the University of Macau campus and the reserved space for the future connection of the Light Rapid Transit to Hengqin port.

Originally, the local government announced that the port could open in the first quarter of this year. Yesterday, Chan indicated that the scheduled opening may not be realized due to the epidemic outbreak.

This Friday, the committee will invite government representatives to attend another meeting regarding the bill. JZ

AD

新 陽 光 清潔服務有限公司
NEW SUNSHINE CLEANING SERVICES LTD

Glass Cleaning
Carpet Cleaning
Pest Control

Call : 2883 3008

Member of General Association of Macao Cleaning Service Industry

仁德 CENTRO MEDICO PEDDER
• 仁德醫療中心 •

We bring high quality of medical service to Macau

General Surgery : Dr. Fok Manson, Dr. Lai Cheuck Seen Edward, Dr. Lau Wing Kee Peter, Dr. Kwong Man, Dr. Nie Fu Zhong, Dr. U Chong San, Dr. Lei Chin Chong

Breast Surgery : Dr. Leong Iat Lun

Urology : Dr. Lo Kwong Yin Richard, Dr. Zhao Yun Qiao

Paediatric Surgery : Dr. Yeung Chung Kwong

Paediatrics : Dr. Zhang Zhiqin

Obstetrics & Gynaecology : Dr. Fong Kuan Io

Plastic & Aesthetic Surgery : Dr. Lam U Lin

Orthopaedic Surgery & Sports Medicine : Dr. Lam Kun Kuan

ENT : Dr. Cheng Zheng Ang

Cardiology : Dr. Wong Kwok Yiu Chris, Dr. Jin Chun, Dr. Leong Man Kin

Gastroentero-Hepatology : Dr. Zhan De Juan

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

Dietitian : Chan Lai U Joey

Avenida da Praia Grande No 599, Edifício Comercial Rodrigues 14 e 15 Andar, em Macau
T. 2832 2298 / 2832 2229 Website: www.peddermacau.com
Opening Hours: Mon - Fri 10:00 - 19:00 Sat 10:00 - 14:00 Sun & PH closed

MAKE-UP
FOR ALL OCCASIONS

• BRIDAL / WEDDINGS • PHOTO SHOTS • PARTY •
• GRADUATION • SPECIAL EVENTS •

MAKE YOUR APPOINTMENT TODAY!

TEL / WHATSAPP: (853) 6685 3323 | WECHAT: MISSJ_23
WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/JULIANAC.MAKEUPARTIST

GUI MINHAI

Court sentences Swedish bookseller to 10 years in prison

A court in eastern China has sentenced a seller of books that took a skeptical look at the ruling Communist Party to 10 years in prison for “illegally providing intelligence overseas,” in a further sign of Beijing’s hard line toward its critics.

The Ningbo Intermediate People’s Court announced yesterday that it has sentenced Gui Minhai, a naturalized Swedish citizen. Gui admitted to his crime, agreed with the sentence and will not appeal, the court said.

For years, Gui sold gossip books about Chinese leaders in the semi-autonomous Chinese city of Hong Kong. He first disappeared in 2015, when he was believed to have been abducted by Chinese agents from his seaside home in Thailand.

China maintains tight control over all information and brooks no criticism of its ruling Communist Party. It has detained scores of lawyers, writers and public intellectuals. In recent months, police have reprimanded medical workers who warned about the ongoing outbreak of a new virus that originated in the Chinese city of Wuhan.

Amnesty International’s China researcher Patrick Poon said the verdict demonstrated that “the Chinese authorities are not letting the coronavirus crisis distract them from repressing dissidents.”

“Despite the authorities’ claim that Gui has somehow handed over ‘intelligence’ while in their custody, the reason for his

targeting almost certainly relates to his attempted trip to Beijing with two Swedish diplomats in 2018,” Poon said in an emailed statement.

The court claims that Gui, who was born in Ningbo, applied to reinstate his Chinese citizenship in 2018. That would mean renouncing his Swedish citizenship, as China does not officially allow dual citizenship.

Four other people who worked for the same publishing company also went missing around the time of Gui’s detention, only to turn up months later in police custody in mainland China. Gui is the only one who remains in detention.

He was initially released into house arrest in Ningbo, then police detained him once again while he and two Swedish diplomats were on a train together bound for Beijing.

“We have noted the reports and are now seeking official confirmation about the case,” the Swedish Foreign Ministry said in an email to The Associated Press. “We have consistently made it clear that we demand Gui Minhai be released so that he can be reunited with his daughter and family.”

The foreign ministry said that Sweden was not given access to the trial, and that officials there were unable to review the indictment or offer Gui access to legal counsel.

“We demand – once again – that we immediately be given consular access,” the ministry said. AP

DISPUTE LEAVES TAIWANESE STUCK IN LOCKED-DOWN CHINESE CITIES



This picture was taken by Chen Chi-chuan, from the room at the Vienna International Hotel where the Taiwanese electrical and plumbing contractor has lived in since Jan. 28 in Shiyuan city in Hubei

RALPH JENNINGS, TAIPEI

BEAUTY salon operator Shelly Chen flew from Taiwan to her hometown in China last month to see her aging parents for the Lunar New Year holiday. Two days later, their city in the heart of a new virus outbreak was locked down to stop the fast-spreading infection.

At first, Chen didn’t leave her parents’ house in Huanggang because she didn’t want to get sick and be barred from boarding a charter flight home. She assumed a government-organized plane would evacuate her the same way hundreds of Americans, Europeans, Japanese and others were flown out early on.

A month later, she is still there, with flights to Taiwan bottled up in the perennial tug-of-war between China and the self-governing island that China claims as its territory. Her salon in Taipei, the Taiwanese capital, has lost about \$3,000 because of her absence, she said, and she worries how her two daughters will fare as they return to middle and high school this week with no one to pay tuition or give moral support.

“My daughters keep asking me when Mom is coming back. I don’t know what to say, and the most important thing a parent can give a child is her company,” said Chen, a 40-year-old single mother. She gave only an English first name she uses because she feared being trolled on social media for her comments. “I think (the governments) should use less poli-

tics and be more humanitarian,” she said.

About 1,000 Taiwanese are caught up in the lockdown of about 60 million people in Hubei province because their government cannot agree with China on the arrangements for charter flights home.

Taiwan has asked China to step up health checks and approve the names of passengers after the only charter so far on Feb. 4 brought back an unlisted passenger who was infected. “The hinderer is China, not Taiwan,” Taiwanese Premier Su Tseng-chang said last week.

China has said that Taiwan is “using all kinds of excuses to obstruct and delay” the flights.

“We just have confrontation, not cooperation,” said Chao Chien-min, dean of social sciences at Chinese Culture University in Taipei. Taiwan’s government “can blame mainland China, but can’t solve the problem.”

Chen Chi-chuan, a Taiwanese electrical and plumbing contractor, has been trapped with his wife in a 24th-floor hotel room for four weeks. They are not allowed out except to get meals left on a chair outside their door by staff who knock and leave to avoid any contact that could risk infection.

The couple was ordered to go to the hotel in Shiyuan, a Hubei city that was locked down as they were wrapping up a visit to see his wife’s parents. Marriages between Taiwanese and mainland Chinese are common and both sides see Lunar New Year as a time for family reunions.

They pay 165 yuan (\$25) a night, three meals included, and wash their clothes by hand in the bathroom. “We just watch TV programs, to hear some sort of sound, otherwise it’s boring,” the 51-year-old Chen said.

He is not related to Shelly Chen, the hair salon franchisee. Both spoke with The Associated Press via video on a messaging app.

Chen Chi-chuan worries about his business too. “I’m going to be fined, and there’s contract breach fees,” said Chen, a resident of Kaohsiung in southern Taiwan. “Plus, I’ve got to come up with payment for my workers.”

His five prescription medications for a heart condition have run out, and a shipment he requested from relatives in Taiwan hasn’t arrived. He constantly checks groups he belongs to on WeChat, a popular Chinese social media platform, for updates on possible flights.

“Taiwan is always providing info and changing it but they haven’t progressed in saying when, just telling us to patiently wait,” he said. “They’ve been saying to wait since Feb. 5. I can’t stand this — I’m almost out of money.”

Taiwan faces unique barriers to arranging flights, said Alexander Huang, a strategic studies professor at Tamkang University in Taiwan. Negotiations have fallen to special appointees from two semi-governmental bodies, not the governments themselves, he noted.

“Probably there are people in Taiwan, especially in politics, who want to show other countries we evacuated our own citizens just like you, and that’s exactly what China cannot swallow,” he said.

Conversely, China might agree to flights only if there’s a way to “teach Taiwan a lesson,” he said.

“This is an almost unresolvable challenge for Taiwan,” Huang said.

From the rooftop of her parents’ house, Shelly Chen, the hair salon operator, sees empty, dusty streets void of the usual tangle of parked cars and people on their way to work. Residents are only allowed out every three days to get groceries, based on preorders that are rationed to prevent hoarding.

She can see a blue-roofed Ministry of Civil Affairs shack across the street, whose occupants would tell her to go back inside if she tried to leave.

“The psychological pressure is huge,” she said. “The whole night last night my head hurt and I didn’t sleep. I cry every day. I’ll tell you, I’ve given up hope.” AP



A picture of missing bookseller Gui Minhai hangs on a placard beside freed Hong Kong bookseller Lam Wing-kee

HYUNG-JIN KIM, SEOUL

SOUTH KOREA

A woman wearing vinyl gloves on a subway train. Guests donning masks at a sparsely attended wedding ceremony. People feverishly stocking up on instant noodles and rice. Friends calling each other and asking if they're still alive.

Fears of a soaring viral outbreak are gripping the South Korean city of Daegu and the surrounding area, with residents struggling as they try to stay away from a virus that has already sickened hundreds of people in the region, killing at least 10 of them.

"We call each other here and half-jokingly ask whether they are alive and tell each other not to wander around," Choe Hee-suk, a 37-year-old office worker, said by phone.

The region hadn't reported a single case until Feb. 18, when a Daegu woman in her early 60s tested positive for the virus that first emerged in China.

But a week later, more than 790 cases have been reported around the city of 2.5 million people in the country's southeast, a sudden jump that has prompted concerns that the outbreak is getting out of control.

The Daegu region accounts for over 80% of South Korea's nearly 1,000 virus cases and 10 of its 11 deaths. South Korea has seen the largest outbreak of the virus outside mainland China, which has confirmed more than 77,660 cases and over 2,660 fatalities.

More than half of the cases in the Daegu area are linked to a controversial church that is viewed as a cult by mainstream Christian organizations.

The region's first patient is a

'Are you still alive?' Virus fears grip people of Daegu



People line up to buy face masks at a store in Daegu, South Korea

member of the Shincheonji Church of Jesus who had attended services before being diagnosed with COVID-19, the disease caused by the new virus. Authorities say it's unlikely that the woman, who has no record of recent overseas travel, set off the chain of infections.

As South Korea's central government vows all-out efforts to contain the region's outbreak, public anxiety is destabilizing everyday lives and threatening to seriously impact the local economy.

In Daegu's usually bustling Dongseongro commercial district on Monday, only a few pedestrians

were seen, making it look like a ghost town. Workers dressed in black protective gear and white masks sprayed disinfectant at a nearly deserted branch of the popular Lotte Department Store, local media photos showed.

Oh Sang-hak, a taxi driver, said he hadn't worked for several days because he was uneasy about picking up strangers with the virus circulating in the city.

"It's like time has stopped... and there is just no movement," Oh said. "Until last week, we thought the coronavirus was someone else's problem."

Lee Nag-hyeon, 63, said he thinks media reports on virus fears in Daegu have been a bit exaggerated. But he said he saw a masked woman wearing a pair of disposable gloves when he took a subway on Monday. He said he also heard about convenience store staff wearing goggles when dealing with customers.

Daegu residents posted photos on social media of supermarket shelves devoid of staples such as instant noodles, curry and dried seaweed.

Early this week People wearing masks stood in long lines outside

an Emart discount store in Daegu's Mancheon district as they tried to stock up on face masks, which have been quickly selling out online.

Choe, the office worker, said she had three boxes of ramen, four boxes of cereal and three 20-kilogram (44-pound) bags of rice at her home. Lee said he began writing on his masks the dates he last wore them to re-use them later if no more are available for sale.

At Daegu's Gyodong traditional market, about half of the roughly 1,000 shops were closed, with the number of visitors declining recently by more than 90%.

"Maybe it would be better for all the merchants to shut their doors, but their means of a living are here. So some have made the difficult decision to open their shops," said Ahn Sook-hee, an official at an association of merchants at the market.

The virus is also changing the scenes at weddings and funerals, events that typically draw large crowds in South Korea.

At Daegu's Gangbug Convention wedding hall, only two of the 10 scheduled wedding ceremonies were held over the weekend, with the other eight couples postponing their big day at the last minute. A typical wedding ceremony draws around 200 people, but the two held on Saturday had only about 50 each, according to wedding hall employee Park Ye Jin. AP

JAPAN

Abe: Flex hours, work style among key steps to fight virus

JAPANESE Prime Minister Shinzo Abe said yesterday that the success of new measures such as letting employees work from home and expanding hospital treatment capacity will determine whether the country can control its virus outbreak.

"We are at an extremely important time in ending the spread of infection at an early stage," Abe said at a meeting of a task force on the outbreak.

He said sporadic cases involving unknown transmission routes and small clusters of cases are occurring, and that slowing the pace of new infections is crucial for stopping the spread of the disease. Japan has confirmed 850

cases, the third highest number behind China and South Korea.

Basic measures announced yesterday to fight the illness include urging people to wash their hands carefully, follow "cough etiquette" and avoid going out when feeling unwell. They also urge people with mild illness to go to family doctors instead of hospitals with specialized virus-control facilities, which are treating many seriously ill patients.

In a country known for long working hours blamed for "karoshi," or death from overwork, the virus scare may help change Japan's corporate culture and allow people to work more flexible hours and

ask for time off when they are not feeling well.

"In order to prevent the further spread of the coronavirus, commuting in shifts and teleworking need to be widely exercised across society," said Economy, Trade and Industry Minister Hiroshi Kajiyama. "We will call on the corporate world to actively implement (the measures)."

Flexible working hours are mainly aimed at reducing the risk of getting infected on packed trains, but companies are also encouraged to "create an environment where employees can ask for sick leave when they are feeling unwell," Kajiyama said. He said the trade ministry be-

gan flexible hours and is promoting teleworking.

Japan's case total includes 691 people infected on the Diamond Princess cruise ship, docked in Yokohama near Tokyo. Abe's government has been widely criticized after the quarantine of the ship was seen to have failed to stop the virus from spreading. Four former passengers on the ship died and more than a dozen people who were evacuated by their home countries later tested positive for the virus. Six government officials involved in the quarantine effort also contracted the virus.

Japanese health officials and government experts have acknowledged



Tokyo selfies

the quarantine was not perfect, but have defended it. They said Japanese health authorities faced tough challenges in the absence of established rules in such a crisis and that it wasn't feasible to quarantine the ship's passen-

gers and crew elsewhere.

While the ship quarantine was capturing global attention, the virus was spreading across Japan as many tourists visited the country during the Lunar New Year holiday, experts said. AP

AP PHOTO



Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi tours San Francisco's Chinatown

White House unveils \$2.5b emergency coronavirus plan

ANDREW TAYLOR,
WASHINGTON

THE White House sent lawmakers an urgent \$2.5 billion plan to address the deadly coronavirus outbreak, whose rapid spread and threat to the global economy rocked financial markets.

The White House budget office said the funds are for vaccines, treatment and protective equipment. The request was immediately slammed by Democrats as insufficient and came as coronavirus fears were credited with yesterday's 1,000-plus point drop in the Dow Jones Industrial Average and are increasingly seen as a potential political threat to President Donald Trump.

The request was released yesterday [Macau time] and came as key government accounts were running low. The Department of Health and Human Services had already tapped into an emergency infectious disease rapid response fund and was seeking to transfer more than \$130 million from other HHS accounts to combat the virus but is pressing for more.

"Today, the Administration is transmitting to Congress a \$2.5 billion supplemental funding plan to accelerate vaccine development, support preparedness and response activities and to procure much needed equipment and supplies," said White House budget office spokeswo-

man Rachel Semmel. "We are also freeing up existing resources and allowing for greater flexibilities for response activities."

The administration is requesting \$1.25 billion in new funding and wants to transfer \$535 million more in funding from an Ebola preparedness account that's been a top priority of Democrats. It anticipates shifting money from other HHS accounts and other agencies to complete the \$2.5 billion response plan.

Senators returning to Washington after a weeklong recess will receive a classified briefing Tuesday morning on the government's coronavirus response, a Senate aide said. A spokeswoman for Senate Appropriations Committee Chairman Richard Shelby, R-Ala., said the panel "will take their input into account as we continue to do our due diligence to determine what additional resources are necessary."

Democrats said the request was insufficient and that Trump's attempt to go after existing Ebola prevention funding was dead on arrival.

"All of the warning lights are flashing bright red. We are staring down a potential pandemic and the administration has no plan," said Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer, D-N.Y., who blasted a shortage of kits to test for the virus and President Donald Trump's proposed budget cuts to health agencies like the Centers for Di-

sease Control and Prevention. "We have a crisis of coronavirus and President Trump has no plan, no urgency, no understanding of the facts or how to coordinate a response."

Trump was a vocal critic of President Barack Obama's response to the 2014 Ebola scare, which barely touched the U.S. but was seen as a factor in that year's midterm elections, which restored control of the Senate to Republicans.

Trump took to Twitter to defend his record.

"The Coronavirus is very much under control in the USA. We are in contact with everyone and all relevant countries. CDC & World Health have been working hard and very smart. Stock Market starting to look very good to me!" he tweeted.

Among the needs is funding to reimburse the Pentagon, which is housing evacuees from China — who are required to undergo 14-day quarantines — at several military bases in California.

Democrats controlling the House wrote HHS Secretary Alex Azar earlier this month to request funds to help speed development of a coronavirus vaccine, expand laboratory capacity, and beef up screening efforts at U.S. entry points.

House Appropriations Committee Chairwoman Nita Lowey, D-N.Y., called the plan "woefully insufficient."

"Despite urgent warnings from Congress and the

public health community, the Trump administration took weeks to request these emergency funds," Lowey said in a statement. "Their answer now is to raid money Congress has designated for other critical public health priorities."

Azar is slated to testify before the Senate Appropriations Committee today, and the U.S. response to the outbreak is sure to be a major topic.

In San Francisco, House Speaker Nancy Pelosi took a walking tour of Chinatown to let the public know the neighborhood is safe and open for business.

Pelosi, a Democrat who represents the heavily Chinese American city, visited the Golden Gate Fortune Cookie Factory, whose owner Kevin Chan, says his business and others are down 70% since the outbreak of the coronavirus.

"Come to Chinatown," Pelosi said. "Precautions have been taken by our city, we know that there's concern about tourism, traveling all throughout the world, but we think it's very safe to be in Chinatown and hope that others will come."

In a statement yesterday, Pelosi called the president's request "long overdue and completely inadequate to the scale of this emergency." She said the House would advance "a strong, strategic funding package that fully addresses the scale and seriousness of this public health crisis." AP

this day in history



1991 IRAQI TROOPS FLEE KUWAIT CITY

The Kuwaiti capital has been liberated by the Gulf War Allies after 208 days of Iraqi occupation.

Thousands of Iraqi troops began leaving the city after an order from President Saddam Hussein, broadcast this morning, to withdraw immediately.

He said he was ordering the retreat because of "the aggression of 30 countries against Iraq" and the economic blockade led by the US.



The first group of Allies into the city centre was a reconnaissance team of 12 US marines who arrived in the capital this evening, ushered in by some Kuwaiti resistance forces.

To the north of the city a trail of abandoned Iraqi T-55 tanks were scattered along the main highway into town, as well as transport trucks and smaller vehicles.

US pilots said the Iraqi troops, deserted by officers and in disarray, left the city "bumper to bumper".

They made an easy target for the American fighter jets which carried out repeated air strikes on the retreating troops, saying they would continue to attack until ordered not to. They reported only light anti-aircraft fire.

The main resistance came from Iraqi armoured units trapped at the international airport on the southern outskirts of the city, but the US Marine 2nd Division was reported to have the upper hand.

Kuwaiti radio, run by the government-in-exile, urged people not to take revenge on the retreating troops.

But there were claims that the Iraqis took many prisoners as they left as hostages. Reports say up to 5,000 people were captured as the troops retreated.

Families told reporters their sons had been taken from them, ordered into the retreating Iraqi army buses as they walked to work.

During the last days of Iraqi occupation there were widespread reports of torture, rape and execution.

Colonel Abu Fahad, an officer with the Kuwaiti resistance, told The Guardian newspaper: "I have seen a lot of my friends and some of our guys executed in front of their families for nothing, just being in the country. In the past few days, we didn't even leave our houses."

Much of the city has been destroyed, with 200 buildings set on fire. Hotels, parliament buildings and government offices have been attacked.

The manager of the Sheraton hotel, Mohammed Mousa, told reporters he had been given an hour to clear the building and then Iraqi soldiers had looted it, taking everything from video recorders to the piano.

They then poured petrol over the ground floor, mined it and blasted it with tank fire.

The university, museum, schools and hospitals have all been looted and soldiers have taken whatever they could find from shops and homes.

Even clothes and mattresses lie scattered around the streets, stolen, but too bulky to take away.

Courtesy BBC News

IN CONTEXT

President George Bush announced his intention to press on with "undiminished intensity" to complete a rout of Iraqi forces. Apart from liberating Kuwait, he said the Allies wanted to secure large parts of southern Iraq and defeat Saddam Hussein's elite Republican Guard.

Two days later the president announced a ceasefire after Iraq accepted all 12 resolutions laid down by the United Nations.

Two of the main conditions were the return of all allied prisoners of war and Kuwaitis taken hostage and also the renunciation of all claims to Kuwait.

Saddam Hussein remained in power until George Bush's son, George W Bush, mounted another attack on Iraq in March 2003. With the backing of British and Australian forces, he succeeded in toppling Saddam Hussein, who fled into hiding.

He was eventually captured in December 2003 put on trial by an Iraqi court, sentenced to death and executed on 30 December 2006.

MACAU'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

YOUR STARS

ARIES
Mar. 21-Apr. 19
Some criticism could be coming your way today, but don't worry. Your ego can handle it. In fact, your drive for success sort of demands this type of honest feedback from others.

TAURUS
Apr. 20-May. 20
The power issues in a relationship are starting to get to you. It looks like maybe you could use a break from one of the partnerships you're trying so hard to keep in balance.

GEMINI
May. 21-Jun. 21
On the other hand, things are getting much easier in your career! The answers you need are all coming to you. It looks like you can finally move forward with that exciting project.

CANCER
Jun. 22-Jul. 22
You'll want to play it safe. Don't act out too dramatically, and try not to go to extremes to make your point or get a reaction out of anyone. Be mild mannered and polite.

LEO
Jul. 23-Aug. 22
Do you want a relationship to move to a deeper, more committed level? The other person might be close to being ready for that, but you have to treat the situation gingerly!

VIRGO
Aug. 23-Sep. 22
Right now, you should just try to have fun with the people who annoy you in life. If you can find a way to laugh at what you don't agree with, you'll have a lot less stress in your life.

LIBRA
Sep. 23-Oct. 22
You could be given a very captivating challenge today, and it could push you past what you thought were your limits. Stretching this way will feel a little bit weird at first.

SCORPIO
Oct. 23-Nov. 21
Before you initiate any type of conversation today, take time to formulate your goals clearly. Put together a plan detailing what you really want and another mapping out how you're going to get it.

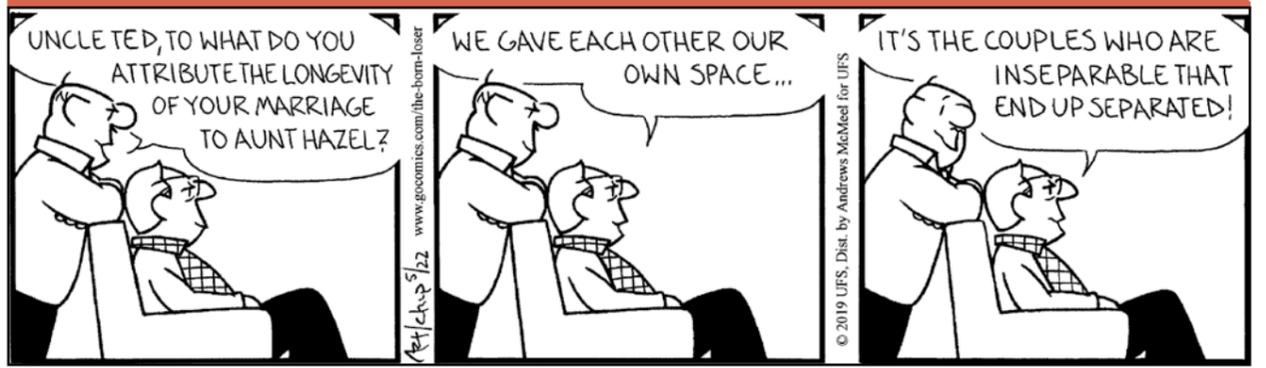
SAGITTARIUS
Nov. 22-Dec. 21
Hold off on signing any documents that could commit you to paying a certain amount of money on a regular basis. Watch out for people who want you to make a greater commitment than you can give.

CAPRICORN
Dec. 22-Jan. 19
They're not supposed to anyway. You've got a targeted audience, so speak to that group and only that group. You can't be popular with everyone, so why waste your time trying?

AQUARIUS
Jan. 20-Feb. 18
Good stuff could happen to you today or quite soon, although it might be a bit difficult for you to accept it! Your curiosity can sometimes get in the way of appreciating the goodness in your life.

PISCES
Feb. 19-Mar. 20
Going along with someone else's plans and doing what someone else tells you to do is not your idea of fun right now. Instead, you should strike out on your own.

The Born Loser by Chip Sansom



SUDOKU

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

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

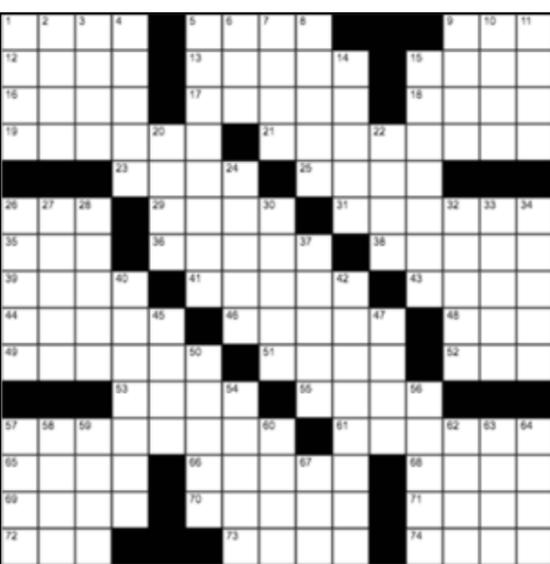
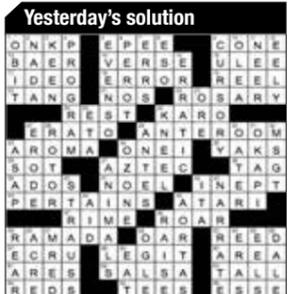
WEATHER

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

CROSSWORDS

ACROSS: 1- Hard to find; 5- Part of a process; 9- Small drink, young child; 12- Are you ___ out?; 13- Heaps; 15- Fine cotton; 16- Blues singer James; 17- Out of line; 18- Allege; 19- Pay attention; 21- Each person; 23- Assortment; 25- Exile isle; 26- Just make, with "out"; 29- Alley; 31- Inhabitant of Tripoli; 35- Son of Jacob; 36- Ring; 38- Roofing stone; 39- Increase in size; 41- Pertaining to the Netherlands; 43- Goes wrong; 44- Host; 46- Jeopardy; 48- Rebellious Turner; 49- African sands; 51- Travel on; 52- Conscripted org.; 53- Capital of Peru; 55- Adroit; 57- Piece of luggage; 61- Skylighted lobby; 65- Moonfish; 66- Scatter; 68- Raison d'___; 69- A hobgoblin; 70- Brazilian dance; 71- Droops; 72- ___-Cat; 73- Coddle; 74- Canonized Fr. women;

DOWN: 1- Monetary unit of Cambodia; 2- Not pro; 3- Goes bad; 4- Muse of lyric poetry; 5- Iberian peninsula inhabitant; 6- Shakespearean contraction; 7- Sommer of film; 8- Annoy; 9- VCR alternative; 10- Augury; 11- Shipping deduction; 14- Bulge; 15- Due; 20- Raines of film; 22- Diamond stats; 24- Get the better of; 26- Borders; 27- Destiny; 28- Methuselah's father; 30- Go into; 32- Threads; 33- Gillette razors; 34- Bird homes; 37- Bitterly pungent; 40- Affluent; 42- Refuge; 45- Actor Stoltz; 47- Took off; 50- Run up; 54- Take ___ at (try); 56- Head lock; 57- Weeps; 58- Atop; 59- Emilia's husband; 60- Writer Bombeck; 62- Let's just leave ___ that; 63- The munchies, e.g.; 64- Imbroglio; 67- Flow back;



Crossword puzzles provided by BestCrosswords.com

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

- Emergency calls 999
- Fire department 28 572 222
- PJ (Open line) 993
- PJ (Picket) 28 557 775
- PSP 28 573 333
- Customs 28 559 944
- S. J. Hospital 28 313 731
- Kiang Wu Hospital 28 371 333
- Commission Against Corruption (CCAC) 28326 300
- IAM 28 387 333
- Tourism 28 333 000
- Airport 59 888 88
- Taxi 28 939 939 / 2828 3283
- Water Supply - Report 2822 0088
- Telephone - Report 1000
- Electricity - Report 28 339 922
- Macau Daily Times 28 716 081



<p>FOR SALE</p> <p>Nova City 3 bedroom, ready to move in HK\$11,750,000 1,515 ft² 3 1/2 2 1/2</p>	<p>FOR RENT</p> <p>Taipa Village one bed apartment \$10,900/mth 740 ft² 1 1/2 1 1/2</p>	<p>FOR SALE</p> <p>[Macau] Commercial Space in Barra n/a ft² \$42,000,000 (ref: 20016002)</p> <p>[Macau] Seaview Garden 3 1/2 2 1/2 1,420 ft² \$11,800,000 (ref: 20016004)</p> <p>[Macau] Waterfront Duet- New studio 1 1/2 469 ft² \$5,100,000 (ref: 20016001)</p> <p>[Taipa] Nam Long 1 1/2 1 1/2 785 ft² \$4,780,000 (ref: 20016009)</p>	<p>FOR RENT</p> <p>[Taipa] Buckingham 2 1/2 2 1/2 1,439 ft² \$20,900/mth (ref: n/a)</p> <p>[Macau] Central Macau unit 2 1/2 2 1/2 n/a ft² \$20,000/mth (ref: 20011001)</p> <p>[Macau] Vai Fung Triplex 2 1/2 2 1/2 n/a ft² \$15,800/mth (ref: 19121001)</p> <p>[Taipa] Nam Long 2 1/2 1 1/2 645 ft² \$11,800/mth (ref: 1911 1001)</p>
---	---	--	--

(853) 2835 2699
hello@jmlproperty.com
www.jmlproperty.com
f jmlmacau @ jmlproperty

HONG KONG

CASH, TAX CUTS ON THE TABLE IN RECESSION BUDGET

ERIC LAM

AS the Hong Kong government posts its first deficit in more than 15 years, all eyes will be on financial secretary Paul Chan's budget release today and how he'll tap cash reserves to stimulate an economy under pressure from months of unrest and the coronavirus outbreak.

Anti-government protests drove the city into recession last year and economists now forecast another slump for 2020, spelling the first back-to-back annual contractions on record. Yet Chan holds a major card that he has largely yet to play: A fiscal reserve that stood at HKD1.12 trillion (\$144 billion) as of Dec. 31.

One factor that could inform Hong Kong's response is the big packages announced elsewhere, such as by rival Singapore, which has pledged to post its biggest budget deficit since at least 1997 to combat the impact of the virus. While Hong Kong has historically espoused a conservative fiscal policy, the government has already earmarked an extra HKD30 billion in this fiscal year to help those affected by the virus outbreak.

"No government wants to be accused of having done too little," said Alicia Garcia Herrero, chief Asia Pacific economist at Natixis SA.

So far, the spending measures rolled out to deal with Hong Kong's downturn have been limited, focusing on helping low-income families and enterprises that have been most hurt by the damaged economy. Chan has so far played down talk of cash handouts, though he said

the government wanted to have a "bold" response.

"The government's resources are always limited, and this budget cannot fully meet everyone's requirements," Chan said in a blog post Sunday, according to translated text from the Chinese-language post.

In an earlier post describing "tsunami-like" shocks to the economy, Chan appeared to temper expectations by raising concerns about the long-term affordability of stimulus measures given the recent surge in government spending amid the recession.

"The projected fiscal deficit for the new fiscal year may be a record high in terms of dollar value," he said.

Hong Kong last posted a budget deficit in March 2004 of about HKD40 billion in the aftermath of the SARS epidemic.

Chief Executive Carrie Lam earlier this month pledged an extra HKD30 billion in funding, targeting those affected by the virus outbreak. Specific proposed measures include an HKD80,000 one-off subsidy to licensed tour agencies and up to HKD200,000 one-off subsidy to restaurants - sectors hit hardest by the downturn.

The package is on top of about HKD35 billion in stimulus and livelihood spending announced since the start of protests in June. The city in January announced a HKD10.6 billion injection to revitalize the Ocean Park attraction, which is now closed because of the epidemic.

Tommy Wu, senior economist with Oxford Economics in Hong Kong, said he anticipates

the coming budget will focus on long-term spending such as on housing, health care and social welfare "as well as policies to help Hong Kong keep its existing competitiveness in the financial industry and to develop new industries, along with discussions on linkages with China on various fronts."

Accounting firm KPMG LLP earlier this month came out in favor of the HKD10,000 payout in the form of electronic spending vouchers, advocating bold spending by tapping the ample fiscal reserve. The firm forecasts a deficit of HKD47.7 billion.

A large cash handout may not be the best option, as the greater the payout, the more likely it is people will try to save the cash if possible instead of spending it, said Natixis' Garcia Herrero.

"It is easy for the government to implement but not a good policy," she said.

Rival firm PwC also warned that a handout to all adult permanent residents in the city would lead to extra spending of as much as HKD70 billion, according to Hong Kong tax partner Jeremy Choi. He instead called for short-term relief measures such as interest-free loans to affected retail, restaurant, hotel and tourism firms as well as other tax measures such as a simplified installment payments application process and enhanced tax deductions.

Chan downplayed prospects for a handout in an interview with Bloomberg TV in January, before the shutdowns connected to the virus outbreak that have further hurt economic growth in the city. **BLOOMBERG**



One of China's biggest bubble tea chains seeks \$400 million US IPO

NAIXUE'S Tea, one of the biggest bubble tea chains in China, is considering an initial public offering in the U.S. that could raise as much as \$400 million (MOP3.21 billion), according to people familiar with the matter.

The company, also known as Nayuki, is working with advisers on the potential first-time share sale that could take place as soon as this year, said the people,

who asked not to be identified as the discussions are private. The firm is currently looking to raise about \$50 million to \$100 million in a pre-IPO funding round, the people said.

Naixue, started by Shenzhen Pindao Restaurant Management Co. in 2010, has more than 230 stores across China, according to its website. The chain sells fresh-fruit tea - some with cheese foam on the top - as

well as cold brew tea and baked goods. HEYTEA, another popular bubble tea chain, is among its biggest rivals in the country.

Details of Naixue's offering including timeline, size and listing venue could change as the novel coronavirus outbreak is weighing on market sentiment, the people said. A representative for Shenzhen Pindao didn't immediately respond to requests for comment.

Chinese companies raised about \$3.7 billion through U.S. listings last year, led by DouYu International Holdings Ltd. and Luckin Coffee Inc., according to data compiled by Bloomberg. Citic Capital Acquisition Corp. is among the nine Chinese firms that completed their U.S. first-time share sales this year, raising a total of \$722 million, the data show. **BLOOMBERG**

MACAU'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

GERALD IMRAY,
SOMERSET WEST

ATHLETICS

Olympic champ van Niekerk back after more than 2 years out

OLYMPIC champion Wayde van Niekerk is competing again after more than two years out with a career-threatening knee injury and is facing a race against time to be ready to defend his title at the Tokyo Games.

The Olympics are five months away and the world record holder in the 400 meters still hasn't run a major race since the 2017 world championships in London.

Van Niekerk competed at two low-level meets over the last week in Bloemfontein, South Africa, the city where he lives and trains. He came through his three races without any problems, although they were 100- and 200-meter races.

That's still a major boost for the 27-year-old van Niekerk, whose planned return to the track last year was delayed because of setbacks with his recovery.

Van Niekerk ran the 100 meters at an in-house university event last week, and ran the 100 and 200 at another meet in Bloemfontein on Saturday. He posted 10.20 seconds for the first 100 meters last week in a race on a grass strip which was hand timed. He ran 10.10 for the 100 and 20.31 for the 200 on the track at the weekend event, both electronically timed.



South Africa's Wayde van Niekerk

It was a desperately disappointing blow for an athlete who had been tipped to be the new face of track and field following the retirement of Usain Bolt. Van Niekerk provided one of the standout performances of the 2016 Olympics in Rio de Janeiro when he won gold in the 400 and shattered Michael Johnson's 17-year-old world record with a spectacular run in Lane 8.

He had hoped to make a long-awaited comeback at the London Diamond League meet last July in preparation for the world championships in Doha. He wasn't ready and had to give up on an attempt at a third straight world title in the 400.

Van Niekerk is now aiming to test his knee over 400 meters in preparation for the South African national championships in late April. The South African track and field federation requires athletes to compete at the nationals if they want to go to the Olympics. AP

He won all three races.

"Feels so good to be back on the track and to be competitive again," van Niekerk said. "I've been off it a while so I'm learning to deal with it all again."

"Thank you to everyone who believed in me and stuck by me. This is only the beginning."

Van Niekerk tore the anterior cruciate ligament and meniscus in his right knee playing in a charity

tag rugby game in his home town of Cape Town in late 2017. He was rushed to the United States for surgery and has been rehabilitating at a sports medicine center in Doha, Qatar.

AD

MACAUCLOSER
生活藝術雜誌 LIVING & ARTS MAGAZINE

V
V
Instagram icon
^
^

MACAUCLOSER
ANA MOURA

ON SALE
JAN/FEV issue

WELCOME TO Playmate's club
花心公子俱樂部

WILD NIGHT OUT

Come and buy a Standard drink Mop45 only
You can see a European Striptease Show

Attention
No admission under 18

Business Hours: 8:00pm-4:00am
Address: Basement, Hotel Guia, Macau Tel: 28532081 www-macauplaymatesclub.com

OPINION

World Views

Shuli Ren, Bloomberg

CHINA'S POLICY FLIP-FLOPS ARE SCARING INVESTORS

The Chinese public was caught off-guard Monday when Wuhan, the epicenter of the coronavirus outbreak, said it would ease a sweeping lockdown on the city, only to retract it hours later. This policy flip-flop isn't just unsettling. It raises the question of whether President Xi Jinping is capable of handling a global health and economic crisis.

Granted, China's political brass have been on steroids in recent weeks, meeting often and issuing frequent statements. In the last month alone, Xi and the Politburo Standing Committee — which consists of the country's top leadership — have met four times, each concluding with a speech by the president. This level of engagement is extremely rare.

The question is: What kind of message is getting delivered to local officials from Xi's high-level and vaguely worded speeches?

From the latest communication, bureaucrats and investors alike may well believe that stable economic growth is front-and-center again. Xi devoted six paragraphs of his Feb. 23 speech, or 914 words, to the economy, compared with three paragraphs and 701 words to the virus. Unlike earlier meetings, politicians didn't wear masks, a show of confidence that the worst of the outbreak is behind us.

By Monday morning, six provinces lowered their virus alert levels, a move that signaled freer labor migration. This came as China's economy remained at a standstill amid municipal officials' draconian quarantine measures. As of Friday, only large businesses in the relatively virus-lite eastern provinces saw half of their workers return, while smaller enterprises and inland China lagged behind, the government said in a briefing.

Against that backdrop, it's possible that Wuhan's misstep came down to crossed wires. Somewhere along the chain of command, the instructions were misinterpreted.

This certainly wouldn't be the first time. In late 2018, a few third-tier cities felt emboldened to ease their housing-price controls, after a pro-growth agenda emerged at a key national economic meeting. Within a day, officials were forced to reverse their stance because they didn't understand the "complexity" of Beijing's top directives.

And who can blame them? Xi's words often run at odds with those of Beijing's own technocrats. Last weekend, when he called for "even more" flexible monetary policies, the People's Bank of China took a more measured tone. In an op-ed for the Financial Times, Deputy Governor Chen Yulu said the central bank saw a V-shaped rebound as the most likely scenario. He made no mention of reserve ratio cuts, which are being widely priced in by investors.

If history is any guide, Xi's word is the last word. Central bankers and finance ministers are just the messengers who sometimes don't get the instructions quite right.

To be sure, hazy wording can give local governments room to interpret national policies to their own advantage. In Xi's China, municipals are perpetually short of cash. Even Wuhan, a vibrant college town and tech hub, needed commercial activities and good jobs to fill its pension fund shortfall. So it makes sense officials would want to get businesses up and running again.

So far, traders have largely placed their faith with Xi. Last week, the blue-chip CSI 300 Index recouped all of its losses since the prolonged Lunar New Year break, while the new economy-focused ChiNext Index notched a three-year high. As I've noted, this rally was largely thanks to Xi's Feb. 3 speech, in which he insisted on delivering this year's economic growth targets. This was widely seen as a prelude to a big stimulus.

But these lower-level flip-flops are concerning. Investors may be able to stomach the death toll, now at more than 2,600, or that China is sacrificing a whole province to contain the spread. But at a time of international emergency, we can't have policy U-turns. That's the downside of having an enigmatic political leader who has anointed himself president for life.

CANARY ISLANDS HOTEL QUARANTINED AFTER VIRUS CONFIRMED

THE BUZZ

A tourist hotel on the Canary Island hotel of Tenerife was placed in quarantine yesterday after an Italian doctor staying there tested positive for the new virus from China that has infected thousands worldwide.

The press office for the town of Adeje said that the H10 Adeje Palace hotel was in quarantine.

Spanish news media reported that some 1,000 tourists staying at the complex are not allowed to leave.

The Canary Islands, an archipelago located some 100 kilometers

west of the African coast, is a popular vacation destination that attracts many northern Europeans all-year-around.

The Italian doctor who is positive for the COVID-19 disease has been quarantined in a local clinic while samples are analyzed in a hospital near Madrid to confirm the initial diagnosis.

Spanish private news agency Europa Press, citing the regional government's health department, said the visiting tourist had arrived from one of the areas in northern Italy where a cluster of the coronavirus has infected hundreds.



AP PHOTO

Austria Public broadcaster ORF reports that authorities have confirmed the first COVID-19 cases in the Alpine country. ORF quoted authorities in the western state of Tyrol saying that one of the two confirmed cases involved a person from northern Italy. It wasn't immediately clear whether the individual had recently traveled there. ORF reported that the patients currently have a slight fever and are being isolated at an Innsbruck hospital.



AP PHOTO

US Democratic rivals to Bernie Sanders are preparing to try to knock him off his front-runner perch in a debate today before a critical South Carolina primary that could dramatically reshape the race. With mounting fear among the Democratic establishment that the self-described democratic socialist is on the verge of gaining a significant lead, several candidates are resorting to a last ditch effort to stop him.



AP PHOTO

Greece Riot police and residents clashed for several hours on the Greek islands of Lesbos and Chios, as protesters tried to prevent authorities from bringing excavating machines from the mainland to build new migrant detention camps. Police fired tear gas to disperse the crowds that gathered to try and stop police from disembarking from government-chartered ferries.



AP PHOTO

Egypt Hosni Mubarak, the Egyptian leader who was the autocratic face of stability in the Middle East for nearly 30 years before being forced from power in an Arab Spring uprising, died yesterday, aged 91. Mubarak was a stalwart U.S. ally, a bulwark against Islamic militancy and guardian of Egypt's peace with Israel. His overthrow, however, plunged the country into years of chaos and uncertainty.

COVID-19

US DRUGMAKER READIES POSSIBLE CORONAVIRUS VACCINE FOR TESTING

DRUGMAKER Moderna has shipped its first batch of a possible coronavirus vaccine for humans to government researchers for testing.

Shares of the biotech company soared yesterday, a day after the company said it sent vials to the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID) for early-stage testing in the United States.

The institute expects by the end of April to start a clinical trial of about 20 to 25 healthy volunteers, testing whether two doses of the shot are safe and induce an immune response

likely to protect against infection, NIAID Director Anthony Fauci said in an interview. Initial results could become available in July or August, The Wall Street Journal reported yesterday.

Modern's turnaround time in producing the first batch of the vaccine—co-designed with NIAID, after learning the new virus's genetic sequence in January—is a stunningly fast response to an emerging outbreak.

If a trial starts as planned in April, it would be about three months from vaccine design to human testing. In comparison, after an outbreak of an older coronavirus, severe acute respiratory syndrome, in China in 2002, it took about 20 months

for NIAID to get a vaccine into the first stage of human testing, according to Dr. Fauci, quoted by WSJ.

"Going into a Phase One trial within three months of getting the sequence is unquestionably the world indoor record. Nothing has ever gone that fast," he said.

Even if the first study [on human volunteers] is positive, the coronavirus vaccine might not become widely available until next year

Public-health authorities say advances in vaccine technology, aided by government and private investments, are shortening development timelines when outbreaks occur. In the past, researchers scrambled to develop vaccines in response to outbreaks such as SARS, Ebola and Zika with mixed results. Older types of vaccines are developed from viral proteins that must be grown in eggs or cell cultures, and together with animal testing it can take years before a vaccine can be used in humans.

Newer approaches rely on what are known as platform technologies—building blocks that can be tweaked quickly with the genetic information from a

newly emerged pathogen.

The fast production of a vaccine and plans to test it soon don't guarantee its success. "You're never sure until you're at the end what you have," said Bruce Gellin, president of global immunization at the Sabin Vaccine Institute.

Saying there are other coronavirus vaccines in the works, he added: "The sequence of testing is designed to sort out what works from what doesn't. That's why it's important to try as many things as possible that seem feasible, because not all horses will finish the race."

It is uncertain whether Moderna's vaccine will work because its gene-based technology hasn't yet yielded an approved human vaccine. And even if the first study is positive, the coronavirus vaccine might not become widely available until next year because further studies and regulatory clearances will be needed, D. Fauci said.

More than 80,000 people have been infected globally from the viral outbreak that began late last year in China. A total of 35 cases have been reported in the United States.

More than 2,600 people have died from the virus in mainland China, including one U.S. citizen. **MDT/AGENCIES**