

The Macao SAR Government urges:

Let's all persist;
Wash hands frequently;
Wear a mask properly;
Avoid crowd gathering;
Keep a social distance;
Declare health conditions;
Reduce leaving Macao.

Novel Coronavirus Response and Coordination Centre

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“THE TIMES THEY ARE A-CHANGIN’”

HONG KONG'S ECONOMY SUFFERED ITS WORST QUARTER SINCE 1974 CONTRACTING 8.9% IN THE FIRST QUARTER OF 2020

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BOC, BNU TO ISSUE NEW PATAKA NOTES AMOUNTING TO 37.7B

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STUDENTS WERE EAGER TO RESUME STUDIES AT SCHOOLS ON THE FIRST DAY OF CLASS ATTENDANCE AFTER MONTHS OF DISTANCE LEARNING

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China U.S. officials believe China covered up the extent of the coronavirus outbreak — and how contagious the disease is — to stock up on medical supplies needed to respond to it, intelligence documents show. Chinese leaders “intentionally concealed the severity” of the pandemic, according to a four-page Department of Homeland Security intelligence report dated May 1. More on p9



China reported three new coronavirus cases yesterday, all brought from overseas, and no additional deaths. A total of 481 people remain in the hospital because of the virus, with about 1,000 under monitoring and isolation after showing symptoms or testing positive without symptoms. China has reported 4,633 deaths from COVID-19 among 82,880 cases.

New Zealand For the first time since mid-March, New Zealand reported no new cases of the coronavirus. It's an indication the country's bold strategy of trying to eliminate the virus is working. New Zealand closed its borders and imposed a strict monthlong lockdown after the outbreak began. It eased the rules a little last week to help reopen the economy.



Japan Prime Minister Shinzo Abe announced yesterday that he will extend Japan's coronavirus state of emergency by about a month. Abe said the number of new cases has not declined enough and hospitals remain overburdened. He declared the state of emergency on April 7, initially only for Tokyo and six other urban prefectures, but later extended it to the entire nation.

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DIVERSIFICATION ROAD

It has been Macau's via crucis where all governments have tumbled or achieved little. Secretary Ao leong wants to conquer that path, with medical and sports tourism as cornerstones of her plan

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MDT ARCHIVE



BATTERED GLOBAL TOURISM INDUSTRY MAKES REOPENING PLANS

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DAILY WAGES OF CONSTRUCTION WORKERS GROW 3.3%

The average daily wage of construction workers grew 3.3% in the first quarter of 2020 compared to the previous quarter. According to data released yesterday by the Statistics and Census Service, the daily wage now stands at 720 patacas for all construction workers. Meanwhile, the daily wage of the non-resident worker segment edged up 0.5% to 607 patacas and that of the local worker segment dropped 1.8% to 942 patacas. After accounting for the effect of inflation, the wage index of construction workers (88.5) in the first quarter went up by 2.7% quarter-to-quarter in real terms, while that of local construction workers (89.7) dropped by 1.8%. The government has undertaken numerous public works across the city in recent months, making use of the quieter period of less footfall caused by the onset of the coronavirus pandemic.

CROSS-BORDER TRAFFIC HALVES IN MARCH AFTER ANTI-PANDEMIC MEASURES ADOPTED

Cross-border vehicular traffic more than halved in March, according to data released by the Statistics and Census Service, which attributes the decline to anti-pandemic measures adopted by the three governments of the Greater Bay Area. For the entire month, cross-border vehicular traffic declined by 54.1% year-on-year to about 203,000 trips, of which that passing via the Border Gate (130,000) and the Cotai Checkpoint (43,000) tumbled by 54.8% and 66.6%, respectively. However, trips across the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macau Bridge grew by 23.5% to 28,000. In the first quarter of 2020, cross-border vehicular traffic dropped by 40.4% year-on-year to 759,000 trips. Commercial flight activity at the airport dropped even further during the first quarter, falling 51.3% year-on-year to just over 8,400 movements.

MOBILE PHONES, WATCHES, JEWELRY BEHIND 40% FALL IN IMPORTS

A steep decline in the import of mobile phones, watches and gold jewelry was behind a 40% decline in total merchandise import in March, according to Macau's government statistics body. In a statement issued yesterday, the Statistics and Census Service reported that the import of mobile phones had declined by 78% year-on-year in March, while that of watches and gold jewelry fell 61.3% and 76.6%, respectively. On the other hand, the import of other textile articles, which comprised mostly of face masks, surged by 365.2% on account of greater demand during the pandemic period. While total merchandise import declined considerably in March, total merchandise export fared considerably better, falling just 9% in year-on-year terms. With imports amounting to 4.22 billion patacas worth of products and services and exports worth 1.08 billion patacas, the merchandise trade deficit totaled 3.14 billion patacas. For the first quarter of 2020, the merchandise trade deficit stood at 13.36 billion patacas, down significantly from 17.77 billion patacas a year earlier.

Tourism diversification as solution

RENATO MARQUES

NON-gaming tourism activities have been presented as a possible solution for shielding Macau from future crises such as the one presented currently by the Covid-19 pandemic.

Secretary for Social Affairs and Culture Elsie Ao Ieong U made the acknowledgment yesterday at the Legislative Assembly (AL) during a question and answer session with the lawmakers on the sectorial discussion of the government's policy address for what remains of 2020.

Investment in medical tourism and sports tourism were two of the suggestions made by several legislators to "kill two birds with one stone." On the one side it would solve the problem of the dependency on the gaming industry and, on the other, it helps Macau to pursue its role as a World Center of Tourism and Leisure.

In reply to the suggestions of several lawmakers including Zheng Anting, Ma Chi Seng, and Chui Sai Peng, among others, Secretary Ao Ieong said that the government is already working towards making that a reality. Nevertheless, Ao Ieong



Secretary for Social Affairs Ao Ieong U (center, right)

added that for the time being there is the impossibility of developing medical tourism due to the lack of both facilities and human resources.

Developing on the topic, the Secretary said, "we have been training specialized physicians to face our current and growing needs."

"After the Islands District Medical Complex is built, we can think about launching a few projects on medical tourism, but since we do not

have this [facility] yet, we do not have the conditions to launch this idea," said the Secretary.

While the medical tourism idea is unlikely to be completed in the short or even mid-term, the secretary indicated that sports tourism is a far more viable option.

"What we want to do, and we know that the Sports Bureau [ID] is under great pressure because of this, is to host in Macau one inter-

national-level sports event every month," Ao Ieong said. "Besides the International Marathon, the Dragon Boat Races and the Grand Prix that are already events with a great tradition [...] we want to add others of the same [caliber] in other months of the year."

According to the Secretary, the idea is to start as early as next month with Ao Ieong advancing that besides the Dragon Boat races schedu-

Pandemic and politics push Hong Kong's

HONG Kong's economy suffered its worst quarter on record, extending the first recession in a decade as the coronavirus pandemic battered a city already weakened by political unrest.

The economy contracted 8.9% in the first quarter from year-ago levels, according to the government. The decline surpasses the previous record of -8.3% in the third quarter of 1998 and a 7.8% contraction in the first quarter of 2009, the two worst readings in data back to 1974, according to the Census and Statistics Department Hong Kong.

The latest decline also marks the third straight quarterly contraction for Hong Kong, the longest such stretch since the aftermath of the global financial crisis in 2009. The economy started shrinking from the third quarter of last year amid violent street protests and a government crackdown, political factors that remain unresolved.

"Our economic situation is very challenging, we are deep into recession," Financial Secretary Paul Chan said at a press conference after the data was released. "Globally the epidemic is yet to be put under comple-

te control. That will affect our export, that will also affect international traveling and business investment. Going forward, the second quarter, we believe that even if there is improvement, the improvement will be gradual and small."

A 10.2% drop in private consumption from a year earlier was a major driver for the contraction, according to the government report. Total exports of goods sank 9.7% in the period, while exports of services plummeted 37.8%. Government spending grew by 8.3% from a year ago.

Assuming the virus crisis

improves, Hong Kong will come out of recession gradually toward the end of the year, Chan said. On Sunday, Chan warned of the worst full-year performance on record with a contraction of as much as 7%, after the economy shrank 1.2% last year.

"Economic activities are likely to stay subdued in the near term if the threat of the pandemic continues," a government spokesman said in the release. "Hong Kong's near-term economic outlook is subject to very high uncertainties, hinging crucially on the evolving global public health and

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to solving pandemic crisis

led to take place in late June, a table-tennis competition is also being planned.

Ao Ieong also advanced that the Macau Golf Open will be held this year and that the ID is in negotiations to host a football event that includes the participation of European teams, tentatively over the summer.

"We are trying to invite some football teams from Europe to compete in Macau Stadium but this [event] is very dependent on the pandemic conditions until then," she said.

TALENT TRAINING VS RECRUITING

One of the other themes that prompted several questions by the legislators yesterday was on the dichotomy between training local residents to be able to perform some specialized tasks or hiring qualified professionals from abroad to do them.

Right at the opening of the AL session, lawmaker Lam Lon Wai questioned the Secretary on the training of qualified staff members and the amendment of the ratio between locals and those hired from abroad. On the same topic, lawmaker Lam also wanted to know how the government is planning to

attract Macau people living abroad to return.

The Secretary replied that as Chief Executive Ho Iat Seng had mentioned earlier, the "Talent Committee will study the feasibility of having a department dedicated to evaluating overseas candidates. This will include a jury that will evaluate the candidates under a fair and rigorous criteria."

On how to plan the attraction and fast integration in the job market of locals studying abroad, Ao Ieong revealed that it is one of the reasons and tasks that justify the integration of the Higher Education Bureau (DSES) into the Education and Youth Affairs Bureau (DSEJ).

"After the merging of DSEJ and DSES we will use big data to analyze the courses and needs on the market to try to adjust the courses [at universities] or prepare to future needs."

After lawmaker Chan Hong said that there is an interest from several students that have returned to Macau during the pandemic period to complete their studies in Macau, the Secretary responded that the government will study how to help these students be placed in local universities.

'NATIONAL EDUCATION IS AN IMPORTANT MATTER'

One of the topics addressed in detail yesterday was the development of national education in the SAR under the motto of "Love the Country, Love Macau."

"National education is a very important matter," said Secretary Ao Ieong. "We have already started to advance on this topic and we have the flag-raising ceremonies hosted in every school and we are also teaching the [Chinese] anthem to the students as well as the history of China."

Lawmaker Sulu Sou asked if the teaching of national education would oppose the development of free-thinking citizens as the government indicates on its goals for education. Ao Ieong replied that the aforementioned "Love the Country, Love Macau" is not just a slogan. "Youngsters will feel, see and hear about this in several ways. We incentivize them to go on trips in the mainland and learn more about the history, the culture and the habits. I do not believe that this is in any way a contradiction with having a free-thinking spirit."

On the same topic, lawmaker Chan Hong also proposed that Hengqin would be the ideal place to set up

a base camp for national education. But Ao Ieong refuted the suggestion, saying that "for the time being, we want to have a 'proximity approach,'" hinting that such topics should be addressed in local schools and the communities.

ELDERLY HOUSING PROGRAM TARGETS WALK-UP BUILDINGS

Responding to questions related to livelihood issues for senior citizens, namely the government program titled "Elderlies Residence", the Secretary clarified that the government will prioritize relocating elderly residents living in walk-up buildings to residential buildings that offer improved accessibility.

The government expects to make about 2,000 housing units available for this program.

Ao Ieong said that those living in walk-up buildings and that have mobility difficulties will be the priority of this program, explaining that the idea is that these people can rent their houses to the younger people and with the income generated by the rentals, pay for their rental in a new and barrier-free building. In some cases, these residences will have access to other door-to-door services, such as meal delivery and even healthcare.

BOC, BNU TO ISSUE NEW PATAKA NOTES AMOUNTING TO MOP37.7 BILLION

THE Executive Council has concluded its discussion on the draft executive regulations for Bank of China (BOC) and Banco Nacional Ultramarino (BNU), which will issue new pataca notes with new anti-counterfeiting features that amount to 37.7 billion patacas.

Each bank is authorized to release a maximum of 80 million units of 10 patacas, 120 million units of 20 patacas, 50 million units of 50 patacas and 80 million units of 100 patacas. The banks are also authorized to release a total of 24 million units of 500 patacas and 12 million units of 1,000 patacas.

Only after the entry into force of the administrative regulations will the SAR government instruct the two issuing banks to proceed with preparatory work for the subsequent printing and launch of the new series of banknotes, the date and details of which will be disclosed at a later date.

The government recently standardized the banknote's anti-counterfeiting configuration, having adopted the consistent elements of anti-counterfeiting characteristics.

The banknotes of each issuing bank have their own design concepts. Those of the BOC show the characteristics of the different cultures and the historical heritage of Macau, while those of BNU highlight "the constant expansion of the territory of Macau over the centuries." LV

economy into record slump

economic situations."

Developments in the U.S.-China relationship, geopolitical tensions and global financial market volatility also warrant continued attention, the spokesman said. Revised figures with a more detailed breakdown are due on May 15.

Even as the city prepares to ease some social distancing measures amid a steady improvement in the local outbreak situation, the hit to global commerce and the threat of renewed anti-government unrest means activity is likely to remain depressed. Unemployment is rising with tourism, retail, transport and other industries decimated.

The extended downturn's impact can be especially seen across the city's struggling small and medium-sized businesses, which have borne the

brunt of the impact from protests since last year and now the coronavirus.

"Hong Kong has been a risk-taking society relative to starting a business, but the situation going on the last year will create long memories in people's minds," said Todd Hancock, chairman of the Canadian Chamber of Commerce. "It's been a very challenging year for SMEs in Hong Kong. The unfortunate reality is some of these will not survive and others will struggle for a very long time."

As of December, 340,000 SMEs accounted for more than 98% of all business units and employed some 1.3 million people, or about 45% of the total excluding civil servants, according to government data.

Sentiment among small businesses is sitting near a record low while those

reporting a need for credit jumped to an almost four-year high of 8.8%, March government data show.

Those businesses that do survive will likely emerge with smaller, leaner operations, with lasting implications on the wider economy as jobs that once existed may not return. Total employment in the city shrank by a record 3.6% in March.

The threat of protests resuming once the virus fades and measures forbidding group gatherings ease could also further extend the pain for businesses and the economy.

"It's about the huge uncertainty of the city's future," said Alicia Garcia Herrero, chief Asia Pacific economist with Natixis SA. "Anybody who lives here understands it, you don't even know what is going to happen tomorrow." MDT/AGENCIES

DISEASE CONTROL GUIDE

- ARRIVING HOME**
 - Wash hands at once
 - Change into clean clothing
 - Avoid touching mouth and nose after touching door handles
 - Disinfect mobile phones, telephones, keypads, toilets, taps, and remote controls
- AT HOME**
 - Wash hands before and after meals
 - Close toilet lid before flushing
 - Disinfect regularly door handles
 - Regular exercise
 - Keep regular hours
 - Keep home clean
- LEAVING HOME**
 - Wear a face mask
- PUBLIC TRANSPORT**
 - Must wear a face mask
 - Avoid talking
 - Avoid touching eyes, nose and mouth
 - Cover mouth and nose with a tissue when sneezing or coughing
- WORKPLACE**
 - Check body temperature before entering
 - Receptionists must wear a face mask
 - Wear a face mask if your work involves face-to-face contact with other people
 - Keep good indoor ventilation
 - Reduce meetings
 - Disinfect with alcohol door handles, computer mouse, stationery, and desks
 - Avoid talking while eating and take off face mask only before eating
 - Keep a safe distance from the other diners
- LIFT**
 - Must wear a face mask
 - Frequently disinfect lifts, especially buttons
 - Take the stairs if possible

If you develop a fever or other respiratory symptoms, please wear a face mask and seek medical attention. If an employee is advised to rest at home by the doctor, his or her employer should allow the employee to stay home and not go to work.

STUDENTS EAGER TO RESUME STUDIES, EDUCATION REGULATOR SAYS

ANTHONY LAM

STUDENTS are enthusiastic to resume their formal studies," Wong Ka Ki, head of the Education Department and Youth Affairs Bureau (DSEJ) said yesterday, when questioned about how many students applied for absence on the first day of senior secondary school resumption. Wong said that the bureau "has not received reports from any school."

Some months ago, when the DSEJ first announced its desire to resume foundational education, it offered parents and students the choice of not returning to schools. The bureau said such absences should be handled with flexibility by schools.

It was because of this that the bureau official was so questioned at the Health Bureau's daily press conference.

Wong described students as "happy" yesterday morning when they returned to classes. "Finally resuming school has made students happy," said Wong.

Wong emphasized that the entire education team of the DSEJ has conducted visits to local senior secondary schools for site inspection and observation. He added that all 46 secondary schools would have resumed today, with 44 doing so yesterday.

Some journalists were con-



Colegio de Santa Rosa de Lima

cerned about whether primary education would resume in May, following the proposed resumption for junior secondary education a week from now.

Currently, daycare services are only provided by schools, under the arrangement of the DSEJ, to help working parents with the care of children so that they would not be left at home unattended.

Wong responded that work is being done in that respect. Once updates are available, the regulator will announce them.

Nonetheless, the bureau department head stressed that an

announcement about primary school resumption would not be made two weeks in advance. "Because we have [allowed a 14-day buffer] in announcing the first phase of school resumption," Wong explained. "We hereby remind students who are still out of Macau, in Zhuhai or Zhongshan, to return to their home as soon as possible."

Failure to meet the 14-day quarantine period requirement will result in these students' delay in resuming studies, the department head added.

When questioned by the Times

about whether current measures would remain effective as the introduction of e-voucher has prompted a lot of people to venture out, Dr Lo Iek Long, medical director of the Conde São Januário Hospital (CHCSJ), said that it is impractical to put the city in extensive lockdown, despite the pandemic.

"There have been no new cases in the city for quite some time," the doctor said. He then hinted that residents should learn how to live with the measures, as the operations of the city should basically return to normal.

"Our anti-infection measures have become a normality," the doctor explained. "Local people should be cautious and conscious of the risks of infection."

The doctor's opinion is that people need to work, study and live. The authorities have to find a balance between fighting the disease and resuming normal life. According to the doctor, the phase in which urban lockdown is needed has passed, as that time was at the start of the outbreak.

He understands that after so long people must have lowered their guards slightly. Lo thinks shopping is acceptable at this time, although gathering in groups for dinner is still something that should not take place.

Recent events have exposed the city's vulnerability to price hikes, as widely reported by netizens over the long weekend. When questioned by the Times about whether these price hikes could happen to facemasks as well, should the government decide to terminate the centralized mask supply scheme, Lo reiterated that the city will consider whether the scheme should continue indefinitely.

He stressed that the scheme was begun to ensure crucial supply. He believes his colleagues in the government's economy and finance branch will respond to any suspected profiteering.

The medical director revealed that work is being done on amending the visitation time at the CHCSJ. The plan will be disclosed once complete, he said.

Only six patients remaining at Coloane's clinical center

LYNZY VALLES

THE Macau SAR has no active cases of Covid-19, with only six recovered patients remaining at the Public Health Clinical Centre in Coloane.

The city confirmed its first Covid-19 case on January 22, when a woman from Wuhan tested positive. Initially during the first wave, the city only recorded a total of ten patients who tested positive for the virus, yet this soared to 46 cases during the second wave of the virus, consisting mostly of returnee residents from abroad.

The last patient, who was discharged Sunday from the public hospital, was a non-resident worker from the Philippines who had been hospitalized for a total of 39 days.

The migrant worker has been transferred to the Public Health Clinical Centre in Coloane for a 14-day period of quarantine and medical observation.

Despite being cleared of Covid-19, Macau has seen three relapse cases among those who have recovered from the virus.

These three people have undergone treatment and were declared to have recovered from the virus.

One of them was the 15th confirmed case in the city, who was discharged from hospital isolation on April 12 and entered a convalescence period at the Public Health Clinical Centre in Coloane.

On April 25 and 26, which were his 13th and 14th days at the Coloane

center, he tested positive for Covid-19.

Health authorities have stressed that the relapse cases are not worrying and just prove that the system currently enforced in Macau is effectively detecting these cases before the patients are discharged and continue with their normal lives.

Cases of relapse are being seen also in other jurisdictions, including South Korea, Brunei, India and Vietnam.

According to reports, South Korean health experts noted such relapses might have occurred due to traces of virus fragments that have been inactivated.

In South Korea, more than 260 people who recovered and tested negative subsequently tested

positive again. Experts from South Korea's central clinical committee for emerging disease control say that there was no live virus present in such cases, positively refuting theories such as the virus being reactivated or becoming infectious again.

The apparent reinfection cases may have occurred as the virus's genetic information, or RNA, fragments remained in their bodies, and showed up in test kits.

"RNA fragments can still exist in a cell even if the virus is inactivated," the committee explained in a press release. "It is more likely that those who tested positive again picked up virus RNA that had already been inactivated."

GROUP OF CASINO WORKERS SUFFERS FOOD POISONING

A large group of workers from four different casinos – all connected to gaming operator Sociedade dos Jogos de Macau (SJM) were diagnosed with food poisoning on the same night, the Health Bureau (SSM) has announced.

The health authority received a notification on Sunday night from both of the city's hospitals, the Kiang Wu Hospital and the Conde São Januário Hospital, about the collective gastroenteritis infection.

It is considered one single case involving a group of people from several locations. The collective infection involved many people – 53 precisely – of whom 13 are male and 40 are female. Their ages range from 26 to 60.

Each member of this large group of people works at

one of the following properties: Jai Alai Oceanus, Grand Lisboa, Lisboa Hotel and the New Orient Landmark Hotel.

According to the SSM, the case has a seeming connection with an employee catering area for the four properties, as 32 of the group dined at the facility on May 1, while the others did so on some dates between April 30 and May 2.

The 43 with whom the SSM has had contact declared that they developed symptoms of diarrhea, fever and vomiting from April 30, with three of them hospitalized.

The SSM believes there is a possibility that food poisoning was caused by microorganisms. The bureau has also notified the Municipal Affairs Bureau as part of a co-investigation. **AL**



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ILHA VERDE NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION PROPOSES PENALTY FOR PROFITEERING

Sellers who take advantage of the e-voucher scheme by inflating the prices of goods should be banned from participating in the second phase of the scheme, Chan Fong, deputy director-general of the Ilha Verde Neighborhood Association has proposed. This suggestion comes in response to the widespread price hikes during the first days of the scheme. Chan thinks that the existing mechanism is too weak in the regulation of such practices. Vong Kok Seng, deputy director-general of the Macao Chamber of Commerce, encouraged local sellers to refrain from increasing prices, as he observed a strong demand for consumption locally. The Consumer Council has received more than 300 complaints related to the e-voucher scheme.

LAWMAKER WARNS PRICE HIKES THREATEN TO LESSEN ECONOMIC GAIN FROM E-VOUCHERS

Price-hiking or profiteering will hurt the credibility of businesses in the long term, Lao Chi Ngai, lawmaker, academic and head of the Macau Economic Association, has said. The loss will eventually outweigh the gain, the lawmaker added. He said he has seen reports on supermarkets that have irrationally-priced pork knuckle and luncheon meat. Sellers should have proactively explained whether the hikes were caused by typos or a rise in cost, he said. He also reminded sellers to be extra cautious with pricing during this special period so as to protect their reputations.

NEW HEALTH CODE SYSTEM USED MORE THAN 500,000 TIMES

The new color health code system has recorded 530,000 instances of use by 216,000 people, as of 4 p.m. yesterday, the second day of operation. The Health Bureau and the Public Security Police Force jointly reminded people who need to cross the border to obtain the health code in advance to avoid hassles at border checkpoints. Even so, obstructions were still recorded yesterday at the step of obtaining a mobile verification code. The Health Bureau attributed yesterday's failure to the fact that such people were not on Macau's cellphone network so could not receive the code. The new code requires real-name registration, which was absent in the old system.

Award-winning cartoonist calls for simpler gov't subsidy applications

LYNZY VALLES

LOCAL comic writer and cartoonist Angela Lao's recent animation "Desireland, Multiverse" has won the LA Shorts Awards Best Short Film - Diamond Award.

The 13-minute animated story was created in February and was inspired by the situation the city faced during the pandemic outbreak.

The recently awarded animation is the first story in her planned series under the name "Andrew's Parallel Worlds." Lao is also working on a second short film which will shed light on travel restrictions in Macau, while the third will tackle the pandemic outbreak. According to Lao, she plans to create a total of 12 animations under the "Andrew's Parallel Worlds" series.

In "Desireland, Multiverse," she expresses the hope that people will give up harboring too many desires, and instead have a "heart of thanksgiving to people who treat them nicely, and to show [...] care to these people in return."

"Due to the Covid-19 outbreak, I spent most of my time animating, and it was also inspired by this problem," said Lao.

As the cartoonist community in the city is rather small, and Lao said that she is seeking job opportunities abroad as there is a lack of prospects for the cartoonist community in the Macau, unless one is successful in gaining a sponsorship budget for making animated films from the government.

She said that those working as cartoonists in the city could never work as full-time cartoonists due



Angela Lao

to limitations on income.

"Whenever I won awards in my animation career, some people would ask me to teach their kids drawing or would ask me to draw their cartoon faces. However, this provides very limited income," Lao explained.

The comic writer also expressed her hope that the government could launch subsidy application forms in English for those local residents who have difficulties in typing and writing in Chinese characters.

She expressed her hope that the city will use English for such applications in future. She said that this is possible in, for example, Sri Lanka, which allows residents to submit government applications in English. In Sri Lanka, English is not an official language but holds the status of "recognized language."

"The administration works [...] to get support from the government are complicated [in Macau], which also made it very hard for me to get sponsorships from them," said Lao.

"Artists are artists, they're not clerks or administrative assistants, but the government expects every artist to work all these admin jobs for sponsorship applications. I am cooperating with someone to handle this part. He sent nearly twenty [subsidy] applications but just one [was] accepted," she added.

In the meantime, Lao hopes that the government will create opportunities for them to work as full-time cartoonists and not work in schools as art teachers, which according to her is what usually happens.

Since 2019, she has published 100 short animation films, many of which are in English, while

others are dubbed.

She has also received several awards, including from the Hollywood International Moving Pictures Film Festival, the Los Angeles Asian Pacific Film Festival, the Gold Movie Awards and the Macao Annual Visual Arts Exhibition.

Most of her animations are drawn and edited by her, as well as featuring her own music and melodies.

Lao writes stories about the city's social issues, including her winning animation series, "CaCa: Tell You Jokes!" which features issues such as traffic congestion and the lack of parking spaces in Macau.

The short film won an "Award of Recognition" in the Hollywood International Moving Pictures Film Festival (HIMPFF) in its May 2016 competition series.

HK considers mutual health status recognition with Macau, mainland

HONG Kong government officials say that they are in discussions with their Macau and mainland counterparts regarding the possibility of mutual recognition for the health status of cross-border travelers.

The move, which seeks to avoid the necessity of doubling quarantine periods for travelers moving between the three regions, comes as the greater China region appears to have brought

the spread of Covid-19 under control.

The South China Morning Post reported that Hong Kong's Secretary for Food and Health Sophia Chan Siu-chee had said the three governments were discussing the possibility of crafting a joint mechanism that would shorten the quarantine time for travelers.

"For instance, [if] someone has already completed a 14-day quarantine

on the mainland and is coming to Hong Kong with valid proof of this, then the director of health could shorten the quarantine period here for this person [if the test results] are negative," Chan told a radio program, as cited by the SCMP.

Travelers moving between Macau and Hong Kong must undergo a mandatory quarantine period of 14 days. Although Macau allows tourists from the mainland to

enter the city without the need to undergo quarantine, neighboring Guangdong Province requires all arrivals, even its own residents, to do so.

On Sunday, the Macau government adopted the use of a color code health system, which combines and replaces the previous two health declaration systems required at the entrance of certain public facilities. The new form of declaration is similar to the color code

health system that has been in use in mainland China since February.

Under the new system, users must complete a quick health survey to be issued with a colored QR code in either green, yellow or red.

Green means that the user does not have Covid-19, has never had the disease, nor have they been in close contact with anyone who has. They are allowed entry to public facilities.

A red code means that the holder either has or likely has the coronavirus, while yellow indicates possible contact with another infected person. **DB**



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ANALYSIS

UNLIKE 2008
CRISIS, PANDEMIC
HAS NO LEADER,
NO GLOBAL PLANEDITH M. LEDERER,
UNITED NATIONS

WHEN financial markets collapsed and the world faced its last great crisis in 2008, major powers worked together to restore the global economy, but the COVID-19 pandemic has been striking for the opposite response: no leader, no united action to stop the spread of the new coronavirus, which has killed over 200,000 people.

The financial crisis gave birth to the leaders' summit of the Group of 20, the world's richest countries responsible for 80% of the global economy. But when U.N. Secretary-General Antonio Guterres proposed ahead of their summit in late March that G-20 leaders adopt a "wartime" plan and cooperate on the global response to suppress the virus, there was no response.

In an April 6 letter to the G-20 following the summit, former U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon and 164 other current and former presidents, prime ministers, scientists and global figures urged the group's leaders to coordinate action "within the next few days" and agree on measures to address the deepening global health and economic crises from COVID-19. Again, no response.

A clearly frustrated Guterres told reporters last week that instead of "solid leadership" to fight the pandemic, each country went ahead with a different strategy,

increasing the risk that the virus would not disappear, but rather spread and then return.

"It is obvious that there is a lack of leadership," he said. "It is obvious the international community is divided in a moment where it would be more important than ever to be united."

Guterres said what is key is leadership combined with power.

"We see remarkable examples of leadership, but they are usually not associated with power," he said. "And where we see power, we sometimes do not see the necessary leadership. I hope this will be overcome sooner rather than later."

But the 21st century has seen increasing fractures in global unity and cooperation.

In his state of the world speech last September, Guterres warned of the risk of the world dividing between the United States and China at a time of rising populism, increasing xenophobia, spreading terrorism, "exploding" inequality and a lingering climate crisis. He said there is a severe erosion in multilateralism — the foundation on which the United Nations was founded 75 years ago after the devastation of World War II.

The COVID-19 pandemic has put that warning into sharp focus, both in the world's inability to come together in tackling the

coronavirus and in the difference in health care, treatment and testing in G-20 nations compared with what exists in developing countries.

The failure has been playing out in the U.N. Security Council, the U.N.'s most powerful body, which has been impotent in addressing the pandemic — a crisis that Germany's U.N. ambassador, Christoph Heusgen, calls "the biggest challenge that civilization has faced since the Second World War."

UN Secretary-General Guterres said what is key is leadership combined with power

The council has been unable to adopt a resolution that would endorse the secretary-general's call for pandemic cease-fires in conflicts including Syria, Yemen, Libya and Afghanistan because of a dispute between the United States and China over including a reference to the World Health Organization.

After weeks of praising Chinese President Xi Jinping for his handling of the initial outbreak of the coronavirus, U.S. President Donald Trump is now accusing China of not acting quickly to inform the world of what was

happening. He has also suspended U.S. funding to the WHO, accusing the U.N. health agency of parroting Beijing.

Security Council diplomats say China is insisting on a reference to the WHO in any resolution while the U.S. wants no mention of the agency and instead wants the text to demand "transparency" about COVID-19.

When the council discussed the pandemic on April 9, Germany's Heusgen criticized its "deafening silence" and reminded members that during the 2008 financial crisis the G-20 displayed "both the leadership and the power" to deal with it.

"Here we do not have it," Heusgen said. "We do not have leadership and power coming together."

Estonian Ambassador Sven Jürgenson, the council president for May, told reporters Friday, "I think it's a shame that we have not been able to take the leadership."

Since mid-March, Guterres has been speaking out, warning of the global threat posed by the pandemic, especially in the developing world. He launched a \$2 billion appeal to help vulnerable and conflict-torn countries on March 25 which has received about \$1 billion.

David Beasley, head of the U.N. World Food Program, has warned of "a hunger pandemic"

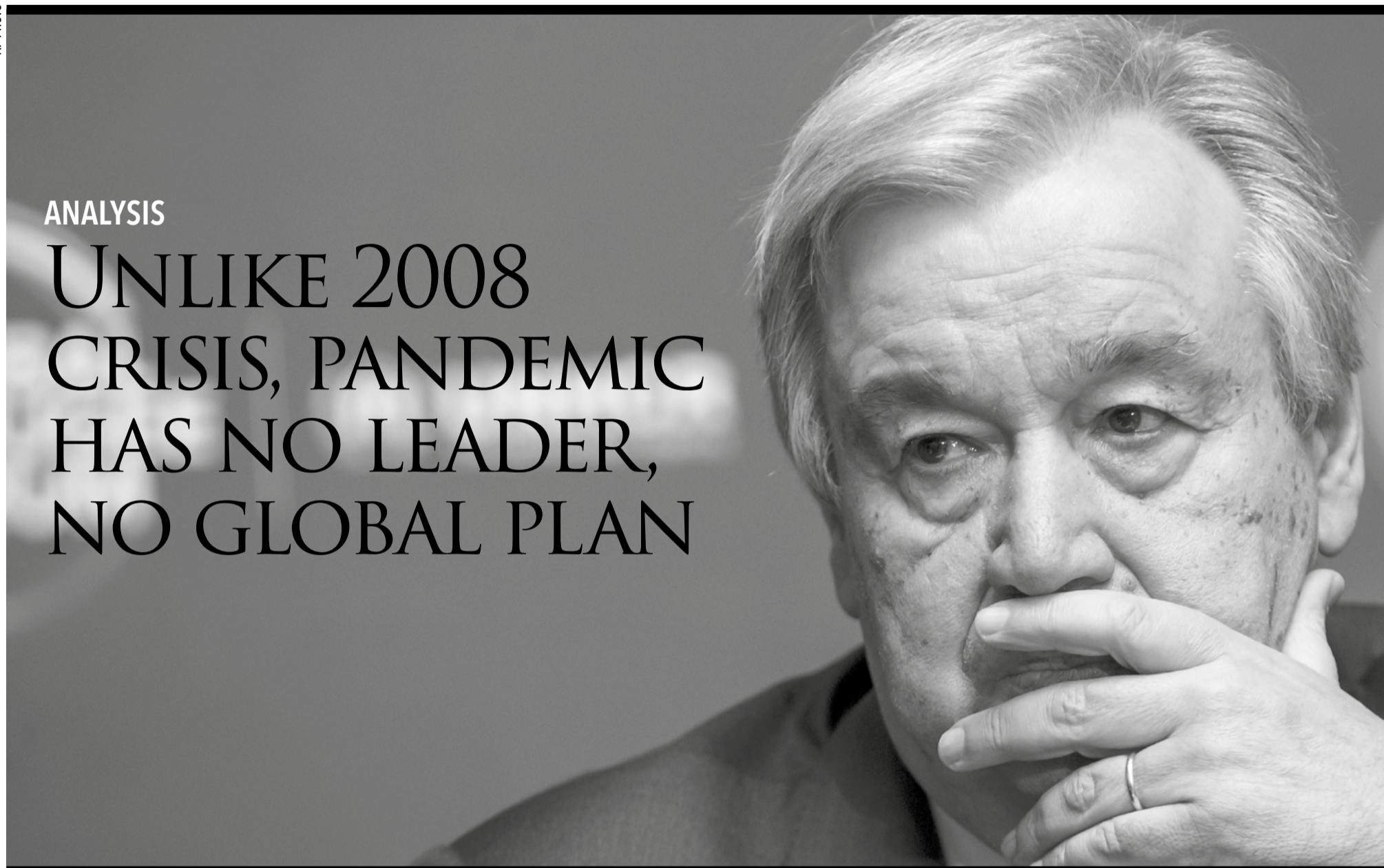
that could push 265 million people "to the brink of starvation by the end of 2020."

U.N. humanitarian chief Mark Lowcock said most experts agree the pandemic may not peak in the poorest parts of the world for three to six months. He said \$90 billion could provide income support, food and a health response for 700 million of the world's poorest and most vulnerable people in 30 to 40 countries — a price tag just 1% of the \$8 trillion stimulus package that the G-20 countries put in place for helping the global economy.

Robert Malley, president and CEO of the International Crisis Group think tank, said at a recent briefing, "It's clear that we're facing a crisis of international leadership" and it's unclear who can take over — the G-20 now led by Saudi Arabia, the Group of Seven major industrialized countries led by the United States, the United Nations or anyone else. That's because the powers are all looking inward, and are less interested in being generous when their own citizens are facing crises, he said.

Malley said there shouldn't be nostalgia for the past "when there was virtually a unilateral or Western or U.S. domination" of global power which many countries resented.

"But," he warned, "it's one thing to have a different kind of leadership, it's another thing to have no leadership at all." AP



Leaders aim to drum up billions for virus vaccine research

LORNE COOK, BRUSSELS

AN alliance of world leaders is holding a virtual summit hoping to drum up billions of dollars to fund research into a vaccine for the new coronavirus as well as develop better treatments and more efficient testing.

Governments have reported around 3.5 million infections and more than 247,000 deaths from the virus, according to a count by Johns Hopkins University. But deliberately concealed outbreaks, low testing rates and the strain on health care systems mean the true scale of the pandemic is much greater.

People in many countries across the globe, and notably in Europe this week, are cautiously returning to work, but authorities remain wary of a second wave of infections, and a vaccine is the only real silver bullet to allow something like normal life to resume.

The video-conference's aim is to gather around 4 billion euros (\$4.37 billion) for vaccine research, some 2 billion euros for treatments and 1.5 billion (\$1.64 billion) for testing. Officials say that amount is just the start, as

AP PHOTO



much more will be needed in the months ahead to scale up production and distribution.

In a statement ahead of the meeting, the leaders of France, Germany, Italy, Norway and top European Union officials said that the money raised will be channeled mostly through recognized global health organizations. No new structure would be set up to

handle the funds raised.

"If we can develop a vaccine that is produced by the world, for the whole world, this will be a unique global public good of the 21st century. Together with our partners, we commit to making it available, accessible and affordable to all," the leaders said.

Leaders from Australia, Canada, Israel, Japan, Jordan, South

Africa and Turkey are also due to speak, along with China's EU ambassador. The EU had been in contact with the White House and was keen for the United States, where more than 67,000 people have died, to take part but no U.S. official will speak at the event.

In her weekly video message, German Chancellor Angela Merkel said that "anyone can fall

ill with the virus and that is why we have the task of acting together worldwide. It is therefore not only an opportunity for joint action but I would say it is a must, and Germany is facing up to this responsibility."

A British government statement said that British Prime Minister Boris Johnson will say that "the race to discover the vaccine to defeat this virus is not a competition between countries, but the most urgent shared endeavor of our lifetimes."

About 100 research groups are pursuing vaccines, with nearly a dozen in early stages of human trials or poised to start. But so far there's no way to predict which — if any — vaccine will work safely, or even to name a front-runner.

Dr. Anthony Fauci, the U.S. government's top expert, has cautioned that even if everything goes perfectly, developing a vaccine in 12 to 18 months would set a speed record

Even if a first useful vaccine is identified, there won't be enough for everyone. A growing number of vaccine makers say they're already starting to brew tons of doses — wasting millions of dollars if they bet on the wrong candidate but shaving a few months off mass vaccinations if their choice pans out.

EU officials say that pledges made toward vaccine research since Jan. 30, not just yesterday, will be counted as donations toward the 7.5 billion euro (\$8.2 billion) target of this conference. **AP**

DHS REPORT

China hid epidemic's severity to hoard supplies

WILL WEISSERT,
WASHINGTON

U.S. officials believe China covered up the extent of the coronavirus outbreak — and how contagious the disease is — to stock up on medical supplies needed to respond to it, intelligence documents show.

Chinese leaders "intentionally concealed the severity" of the pandemic from the world in early January, according to a four-page Department of Homeland Security intelligence (DHS) report dated May 1 and obtained by The Associated Press. The revelation comes as the Trump administration has intensified its criticism of China, with Secretary of State Mike Pompeo saying yesterday that that country was responsible for the spread of disease and must

AP PHOTO



be held accountable.

The sharper rhetoric coincides with administration critics saying the government's response to the virus was slow and inadequate. President Donald Trump's political opponents have accused him of lashing out at China, a geopolitical foe but critical U.S. trade partner, in an at-

tempt to deflect criticism at home.

Not classified but marked "for official use only," the DHS analysis states that, while downplaying the severity of the coronavirus, China increased imports and decreased exports of medical supplies. It attempted to cover up doing so by "denying the-

re were export restrictions and obfuscating and delaying provision of its trade data," the analysis states.

The report also says China held off informing the World Health Organization that the coronavirus "was a contagion" for much of January so it could order medical supplies from abroad — and that its imports of face masks and surgical gowns and gloves increased sharply.

Those conclusions are based on the 95% probability that China's changes in imports and export behavior were not within normal range, according to the report.

China informed the WHO of the outbreak on Dec. 31. It contacted the U.S. Centers for Disease Control on Jan. 3 and publicly identified the pathogen as a novel coronavirus on Jan. 8.

Chinese officials muffled doctors who warned about the virus early on and repeatedly downplayed the threat of the outbreak. However, many of the Chinese government's missteps appear to have been due to bureaucratic hurdles, tight controls on information and officials hesitant to report bad news. There is no public evidence to suggest it was an intentional plot to buy up the world's medical supplies.

In a tweet, the president appeared to blame U.S. intelligence officials for not making clearer sooner just how dangerous a potential coronavirus outbreak could be. Trump has been defensive over whether he failed to act after receiving early warnings from intelligence officials and others about the coronavirus and

its potential impact.

"Intelligence has just reported to me that I was correct, and that they did NOT bring up the Coronavirus subject matter until late into January, just prior to my banning China from the U.S.," Trump wrote without citing specifics. "Also, they only spoke of the Virus in a very non-threatening, or matter of fact, manner."

Trump had previously speculated that China may have unleashed the coronavirus due to some kind of horrible "mistake." His intelligence agencies say they are still examining a notion put forward by the president and aides that the pandemic may have resulted from an accident at a Chinese lab.

Speaking on ABC's "This Week," Pompeo said he had no reason to believe that the virus was deliberately spread. But he added, "Remember, China has a history of infecting the world, and they have a history of running substandard laboratories." **AP**

MACAU'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

FLYING to a faraway beach might seem like the perfect way to escape a pandemic, but for isolated Pacific islands, controlling the coronavirus means cutting off tourism.

Hawaii has among the lowest COVID-19 infection and mortality rates in the U.S. As cases rose in March, Gov. David Ige did something no other state can — effectively seal its borders. People who do come face a two-week quarantine, stopping the flow of tens of thousands of tourists who typically arrive every day.

“We are the most isolated community on the planet,” Ige told The Associated Press last week. “As such, we’ve got to be more self-reliant, but we also had the opportunity to enact a quarantine, make it meaningful and most importantly, know that we could really dramatically reduce the number of visitors we get.”

With more than 2,000 miles of ocean separating it from the rest of the world, Hawaii has an advantage over other remote states with low rates of infection and death. Unlike Alaska, Montana and Wyoming, there’s no driving or taking a train to the islands, so fewer people will be arriving and spreading the disease as businesses begin to reopen.

But the travel restrictions have walloped an economy dependent on tourism, and they will be among the last to end, officials

HAWAII, OTHER ISLANDS TAMP DOWN VIRUS

ISOLATED BY OCEANS



say. Hawaii now has one of the nation’s highest unemployment rates.

“The sacrifice of keeping our community safe and healthy,” Ige said, “has come at the expense of more than 225,000 residents who are now unemployed” — about a third of Hawaii’s workforce.

Of the few places in the world

with no confirmed COVID-19 infections, nearly all are islands in the Pacific.

American Samoa, a U.S. territory west of Hawaii, is the nation’s only jurisdiction with no cases to date. Officials have asked Hawaiian Airlines to halt daily flights from Honolulu to try to stay virus-free, and travelers must

quarantine for two weeks.

Every other U.S. state and territory, including the islands of Guam and Puerto Rico, have the virus. Once there, it’s hard to contain, especially if visitors keep arriving.

Hawaii became the first state to require travelers to quarantine, and others have followed, though

enforcement has been spotty.

Hawaii has arrested several tourists for breaking quarantine, which can mean a \$5,000 fine and up to one year in jail. More than 200 visitors arrived on Friday.

Travelers must give Hawaii airport officials an address they will go for quarantine, which is verified, and their cellphone number. If the number doesn’t ring in front of an agent, the visitor is turned over to police. National Guard troops also check people for fevers and other signs of illness at airports.

The state has at least 16 deaths and more than 600 confirmed cases. For most, the coronavirus causes mild or moderate symptoms like fever or cough. For some, especially older adults and people with existing health problems, it can cause more severe illness.

Hawaii has prevented wide community spread despite some clusters of cases, including at a Maui hospital and a fast food restaurant on the Big Island.

Its strategies are familiar: stay-at-home orders, social distancing and business closures. But the mandatory quarantine for travelers made the biggest impact.

Average daily arrivals for this time of year plummeted from about 30,000 people a day to a just few hundred. Most are returning residents. AP

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AP PHOTO



U.S. President Donald Trump speaks during a Fox News virtual town hall from the Lincoln Memorial

Trump pushes economic reopening, ups virus death projection

DARLENE SUPERVILLE
& JONATHAN LEMIRE,
WASHINGTON

ANXIOUS to spur an economic recovery without risking lives, President Donald Trump insists that “you can satisfy both” — see states gradually lift lockdowns while also protecting people from the coronavirus pandemic that has killed more than 67,000 Americans.

The president, fielding questions from Americans yesterday [Macau time] in a virtual town hall from the Lincoln Memorial, acknowledged valid fears on both sides of the issue. Some people are worried about getting sick; others are reeling from lost jobs and livelihoods.

Trump increased his projection for the total U.S. death toll to as many as 100,000 — up by as much as 40,000 from what he had suggested just a few weeks ago.

“Look, we’re going to lose anywhere from 75,000, 80,000 to 100,000 people,” Trump said. “That’s a horrible thing. We shouldn’t lose one person out of this. This should have been stopped in China.”

But he struck a note of urgency to restart the nation’s economy, declaring, “We have to get it back open safely but as quickly as possible.”

After more than a month of being cooped up at the White House, Trump returned from a weekend at the Camp David presidential retreat in Maryland for the virtual town hall hosted by Fox News Channel.

The president said of his monumental backdrop: “We never had a more beautiful set than this.”

As concerns mount about his reelection bid, Trump stuck to his relentlessly optimistic view of the nation’s ability to rebound soon.

“It is all working out,” Trump said. “It is horrible to go through, but it is working out.”

Many public health experts believe the nation cannot safely reopen fully until a vaccine is developed. Trump declared that he believed one could be available by year’s end.

U.S. public health officials have said a vaccine is probably a year to 18 months away. But Dr. Anthony Fauci, the nation’s

leading expert on infectious diseases and member of the White House coronavirus task force, said in late April that it is conceivable, if a vaccine is soon developed, that it could be in wide distribution as early as January.

Trump declared that he believed one vaccine could be available by year’s end

Though the administration’s handling of the pandemic, particularly its ability to conduct widespread testing, has come under fierce scrutiny, the president tried to shift the blame to China and said the U.S. was ready to begin reopening.

“I’ll tell you one thing. We did the right thing and I really believe we saved a million and a half lives,” the president said. But he also broke with the assessment of his senior adviser and son-in-law, Jared Kushner, saying it was “too soon to say” the federal government had overseen a “success story.”

While noting that states would go at their own pace in

returning to normal, with ones harder hit by the coronavirus going slower, Trump said that “some states, frankly, I think aren’t going fast enough.” He singled out Virginia, which has a Democratic governor and legislature. And he urged the nation’s schools and universities to return to classes this fall.

Federal guidelines that encouraged people to stay at home and practice social distancing expired late last week.

Debate continued over moves by governors to start reopening state economies that tanked after shopping malls, salons and other nonessential businesses were ordered closed in attempt to slow a virus that has killed more than 66,000 Americans, according to a tally of reported deaths by Johns Hopkins University.

The U.S. economy has suffered, shrinking at a 4.8% annual rate from January through March, the government estimated last week. And roughly 30.3 million people have filed for unemployment aid in the six weeks since the outbreak

forced employers to shut down and slash their workforces.

The president’s advisers have nervously watched Trump’s support slip in a number of battleground states and he was told last month that if the election were held that day, he would lose to Democrat Joe Biden. The president’s aides believe restarting the economy, even with its health risks, is essential to a victory in November and are pushing for him to pivot away from discussions about the pandemic and onto an American comeback story.

To that end, Trump will begin traveling again, with a trip to a mask factory in Arizona planned for Tuesday. The president also is set to speak in June at commencement for the U.S. Military Academy at West Point. Returning to campus for commencement will require graduates to self-isolate for 14 days, but Trump insisted the event poses no risk to the cadets.

The town hall, which included an appearance by Vice President Mike Pence, included a rare mea culpa: The vice president said he should have worn a face mask during a visit last week to Minnesota’s Mayo Clinic. Pence’s failure to wear a mask violated the clinic’s guidelines and drew significant criticism.

Elsewhere in Washington, the Senate planned to reopen Monday, despite the area’s continued status as a virus hot spot and with the region still under stay-at-home orders. The House remains shuttered as debate continues on what the next stage of the economic recovery may look like.

State and local governments are seeking up to \$1 trillion in coronavirus costs, which has been met with some objections by congressional Republicans.

Trump said that while he thought common ground could be found with Democrats over an infrastructure package, “we’re not doing anything unless we get a payroll tax cut. That is so important to the success of our country.”

The leaders of California and Michigan are among governors under public pressure over lockdowns still in effect while states such as Florida, Georgia and Ohio are reopening.

Trump yesterday singled out Michigan Gov. Gretchen Whitmer and Washington Gov. Jay Inslee, also a Democrat, for criticism even as he praised the federal coordination with most governors. He also complained that some Democrats would rather “people get sick” than given him any credit for pushing the use of a malaria drug for treating COVID-19, though it has not been proven to be safe and effective for that use. AP

National traumas familiar for virus-hit, unscathed countries

TAMER FAKAHANY,
LONDON

NATIONAL traumas or major political convulsions have been familiar and bloodied territory in the latter 20th and early 21st centuries for some of the countries currently ravaged by the coronavirus.

Whether by long and brutal wars, invasions, civil wars, revolutions, terror attacks, assassinations of leaders and anti-mafia judges, or natural disasters, distress has often shaped nations psyches. So it is for — among others — the United States, China, Iran, Italy, Spain, France, Britain and India.

There are also nations that have suffered disproportionately in recent decades, with death tolls in the tens or hundreds of thousands, who have been relatively unscathed by the pandemic — such as Lebanon, Syria, Iraq or Bosnia.

Dealing with the aftermath of the human devastation wrought by the virus will be another seismic chapter in some painful national journeys. In many places, the numbers tell the story; in others, upheaval or single deaths altered national trajectories forever.

WARS, INVASIONS AND REVOLUTIONS

Perhaps nothing is quite as ruinous as war in all its forms. For the United States, the enduring wound of the Vietnam War tore apart the nation. The U.S.' coronavirus death toll last week surpassed the 58,220 American service members killed in Vietnam, which suffered over 1 million civilian and military deaths. Vietnam has reported no virus deaths and fewer than 300 infections.

Mao Zedong's Cultural Revolution from the mid-1960s to the mid-1970s — an anti-intellectual purge — caused the deaths of up to 2 million and affected all parts of Chinese society, setting the nation back years. Today, Beijing has been both lauded for its initial lockdown and denounced for not acting quickly enough by not war-



Al-Qaida's 9/11 attacks against the U.S. killed almost 3,000 people in 2001

ning the public during the earliest days.

The Iran-Iraq war launched by Iraq's Saddam Hussein after the Iranian revolution resulted in around 500,000 dead and the decimation of a generation in both countries. The U.S.-led invasion of Iraq in 2003 and its spinoff internal conflicts, including the rise and fall of the murderous Islamic State group, have claimed hundreds of thousands of lives on all sides. Now, Iran is one of the nations hit hardest by the outbreak, with more than 6,200 reported dead. Iraq's woes are more focused on the loss of oil revenue.

Such protests, against a corrupt political class and a financial inferno, have ignited again this week in Lebanon as lockdown restrictions loosen. A relatively low two dozen virus deaths means the country may have avoided cataclysm so far, but the greater fear is national meltdown. The tiny nation lived through a 1975-1990 civil war that killed more than 100,000 people and featured Israeli invasions, bombardment, political assassinations, and occupation during and after that period. Syria was also an occupying force, some years later im-

ploding into a civil war of its own with around half a million killed. Damascus has reported few virus deaths. But there are concerns from the U.N. that "tragedy beckons," particularly in crowded, rebel-held Idlib.

TERROR ATTACKS

Al-Qaida's 9/11 attacks took terror to a level previously unseen — in terms of deaths, shock value and the reverberations that followed in Afghanistan, Pakistan, Iraq and beyond. Just under 3,000 people perished in the attacks. New York City, one of the world's worst virus hotspots, has many thousands more deaths than those killed in and around the twin towers. Bali, Madrid, London, Paris, Brussels and Mumbai were all targeted in extremist attacks in the years that followed, not to mention countless attacks in Syrian, Iraqi, Pakistani and Afghan cities. The deaths in each attack, from scores to hundreds, left indelible marks.

ASSASSINATIONS

The 1960s in America saw the lives of two Kennedys, the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. and Malcolm X snuffed out by assassins. In India, where infections are still rising daily and a

lockdown has taken a punishing toll on the impoverished, Prime Minister Indira Gandhi was slain in 1984; her son Rajiv, a former premier, met the same fate in 1991. In neighboring Pakistan, where the country this weekend reported its biggest one-day spikes in new infections, Benazir Bhutto was assassinated in 2007 at a political rally as she sought a third term as premier after returning from exile.

Italy has the second-highest outbreak fatalities after the U.S., and failures unleashed a trail of death in Lombardy. The vulnerable generation suffering the worst of Italy's contagion has painful memories of the Marxist Red Brigade group kidnapping and killing former prime minister Aldo Moro during the "Years of Lead" in the 1970s. National trauma was palpable after the mafia assassinated two judges and prosecuting magistrates Giovanni Falcone and then Paolo Borsellino in Palermo, Sicily within two months of each other in 1992. Italy was shocked into confronting the mafia in all-out struggle. But the state never won that battle, and the mafia profits today in the time of the pandemic. AP

this day in history



2001 SUN SHINES ON FOOT-AND-MOUTH CRISIS

Many of Britain's tourist attractions are hoping the start of the bank holiday weekend and predicted good weather will attract visitors to areas previously closed due to the continuing foot-and-mouth crisis.

On Friday 4 May Agriculture Minister Nick Brown urged local authorities to re-open footpaths in areas where there have been no cases of foot-and-mouth found in cattle.

His call came the day after the prime minister declared that the battle against the disease was in the "home straight", clearing the way for an expected general election on 7 June.

Easter saw a huge decline in visitor numbers to some of the countryside's top tourist areas and many businesses face financial ruin if the situation does not improve soon.

As many as 250,000 tourism jobs are still at risk because of the outbreak, according to the English Tourism Council (ETC).

With ministers anxious to see the countryside start returning to normal, Mr Brown said councils should, where possible, consider allowing walkers back on to paths which are currently closed.

"These decisions have to be made on a case-by-case basis, but where whole counties haven't had a single case I think they should look very hard at re-opening the footpaths," he told the BBC.

"We want to keep people away from farms and livestock, but I cannot believe it is necessary to keep all the footpaths closed in a county that hasn't had a single outbreak of the disease."

While Mr Brown insisted the disease was being brought under control, he acknowledged there was still an area of "intense infectivity" in Cumbria and stressed there was no room for complacency.

The ETC has said that without special aid, English tourism overall is likely to lose £5bn this year, £2.5bn next year and £1bn in 2003. It has urged the government to do more to rescue struggling businesses.

Courtesy BBC News

IN CONTEXT

The foot-and-mouth crisis began in February 2001 and resulted in the slaughter of about six million animals. Altogether, there were 2,030 confirmed cases of the disease in the UK and Northern Ireland.

The cost to farming was put at more than £900m. Tourism and the rural economy is estimated to have suffered losses of £5bn.

Compensation for farmers whose animals were slaughtered to prevent the virus spreading or for welfare reasons topped £1.34bn.

The last confirmed case of foot-and-mouth was in September 2001 but there have been numerous false alarms since then.

The government has been criticised for its handling of the crisis by farmers.

A report by the National Audit Office in June 2002 said warnings of a shortage of vets to deal with such an outbreak went unheeded.

YOUR STARS

ARIES
Mar. 21-Apr. 19
You can make headway in the workforce if you put your mind to it. Don't hesitate to take short trips. You can expect to have some problems with skin, bones, or teeth if you haven't taken proper care of them.

TAURUS
Apr. 20-May. 20
Don't let relatives get the better of you. Attend seminars that will bring you in contact with the right people. Keep your thoughts to yourself for the time being.

GEMINI
May. 21-Jun. 21
You will have excellent ideas and you should be able to help your partner get ahead. You will find that social activities will be enjoyable and will promote new connections.

CANCER
Jun. 22-Jul. 22
You can expect opposition at work. Don't let your competition be privy to information that could be incriminating. You can dazzle members of the opposite sex with your quick wit and aggressive charm.

LEO
Jul. 23-Aug. 22
Don't sign up for too many extra activities or you'll have trouble fulfilling your obligations. A romantic infatuation from your past may surface if you frequent places that you both used to go.

VIRGO
Aug. 23-Sep. 22
Past partners may try to come back into your life. Use your ingenuity to manipulate things to get what you want. Someone you live with will be impossible. Try to avoid serious discussions with loved ones.

LIBRA
Sep. 23-Oct. 22
You can pick up some overtime today. Your greatest gains will come through your creative ideas. You can make drastic changes in your professional direction today.

SCORPIO
Oct. 23-Nov. 21
Catch up on your reading and correspondence. Such over indulgence due to emotional upset will be your downfall. You can gain valuable cultural knowledge through dealing with foreigners.

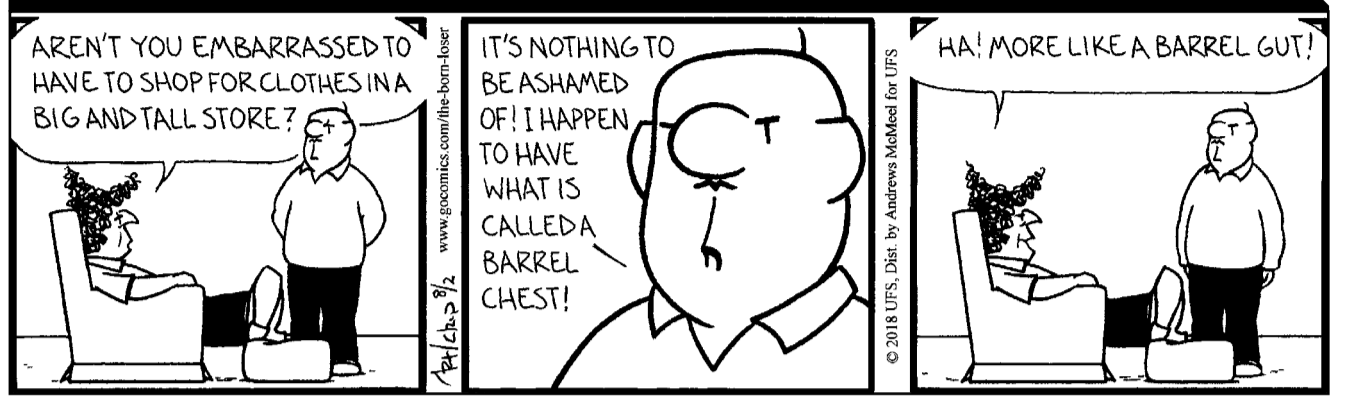
SAGITTARIUS
Nov. 22-Dec. 21
Don't let your emotions interfere with your professional integrity. You might be overly emotional when dealing with your partner. Go over your finances and figure out a solid budget.

CAPRICORN
Dec. 22-Jan. 19
You are best to tuck your money away where no one will be able to touch it, including yourself. You can visit clients and make a big impression just by giving them some hands-on help.

AQUARIUS
Jan. 20-Feb. 18
You must not let others talk you into doing things that will probably limit you financially at a later date. Discord could be unnerving. You may want to make plans to take a vacation together.

PISCES
Feb. 19-Mar. 20
Expect to have more people on your domestic scene. New relationships could evolve through group activities. Stop telling others about your problems.

The Born Loser by Chip Sansom



SUDOKU

EASY

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

EASY+

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

MEDIUM

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

HARD

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

WEATHER

	MIN	MAX	CONDITION
CHINA			
Beijing	10	26	clear
Harbin	4	17	cloudy
Tianjin	11	28	clear
Urumqi	14	25	cloudy
Xi'an	14	22	overcast
Lhasa	7	18	overcast
Chengdu	21	30	cloudy
Chongqing	22	33	cloudy
Kunming	14	28	clear
Nanjing	19	24	shower
Shanghai	19	24	drizzle
Wuhan	21	29	drizzle
Hangzhou	20	29	moderate to heavy rain
Taipei	23	28	moderate rain
Guangzhou	26	35	cloudy
Hong Kong	26	32	cloudy
WORLD			
Moscow	13	22	moderate rain
Frankfurt	3	18	overcast
Paris	10	20	moderate rain
London	6	18	cloudy
New York	6	23	clear

CROSSWORDS

ACROSS: 1- Match up; 5- Perched on; 9- Tip, as a hat; 13- Stead; 14- New Hampshire's state flower; 16- Switch back?; 17- Mimic; 18- Merrily; 19- Extremely; 20- Vivacious; 21- Granada gold; 22- Linen location; 24- Gillette brand; 26- Got off; 27- Burning; 29- Pretext; 33- Ring; 34- Entrance; 35- Seemingly forever; 36- "... the cows come home"; 37- Scapegoat; 38- Penlight battery; 39- Scandinavian capital city; 41- Confirmation, e.g.; 42- First prime minister of India; 44- Doesn't stay on topic; 46- Suckle; 47- New Orleans is The Big ___; 48- City in Western Nevada; 49- Third sign of the zodiac; 52- Morning moisture; 53- Adroit; 57- Golfer Aoki; 58- Failed to; 60- Robert of "The Sopranos"; 61- ___ accompli; 62- Sister of Thalia; 63- Roman emperor; 64- Ike's ex; 65- Tatum's dad; 66- Fellow;

DOWN: 1- Hit with an open hand; 2- Holy moly!; 3- ___-do-well; 4- Drape; 5- "Earth in the Balance" author; 6- Ornamental coronet; 7- Mixed bag; 8- Close friend; 9- Follow; 10- Minerals; 11- Golfer's "watch out!"; 12- Four-time Indy 500 winner; 15- Shop that sells two-wheelers; 23- On; 25- Song syllable; 26- "___ by any other name..."; 27- Spring up; 28- Gal's guy; 29- Annie of "Designing Women"; 30- ___ Ark; 31- Capture; 32- Son of Isaac and Rebekah; 33- Molecular component; 34- Pyramid category; 37- Act as chairperson; 40- The tiniest bit; 42- "Sister Act" extra; 43- Wearing; 45- Rockers Steely ___; 46- Unit of force; 48- Oscar de la ___; 49- Present; 50- Morales of "NYPD Blue"; 51- Chief; 52- June 6, 1944; 54- Gen. Robert ___; 55- Frond plant; 56- Horse's gait; 59- Like some vbs;

Yesterday's solution

W	A	C	K	O	U	S	E	S	W	A	L
A	N	E	R	A	N	E	S	T	S	E	L
R	E	L	E	T	C	R	A	Y	I	B	I
P	A	L	M	T	T	U	B	U	L	A	R
R	O	L	L	E	R	E	N	D	O	U	R
K	I	N	D	S	M	E	A	G	L	E	M
I	N	S	S	C	R	M	O	N	S	I	L
S	R	E	A	T	S	K	I	S	T	R	I
M	E	A	R	A	O	X	T	A	I	L	
E	S	C	A	P	E	A	T	R	E	S	T
D	E	V	A	L	U	E	C	L	E	F	
A	I	D	E	A	G	O	O	S	T	A	R
A	L	A	S	O	A	S	H	T	E	N	S
H	O	D	E	R	S	T	E	D	G	E	D

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



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Simplex Apartment w/ Outdoor Terraces
HK\$18,800,000 4,080 ft² 2 1/2 3 1/2

FOR RENT

Cute One Bedroom, Central Taipa
\$12,500/mth 805 ft² 1 1/2 1 1/2

FOR SALE

- [Macau] Waterfront Duet Studio apartment 1 1/2 1/2
469 ft² \$4,980,000 (ref: 20016001)
- [Taipa] Chun Fuk apartment 2 1/2 2 1/2
834 ft² \$8,998,000 (ref: 20036002)
- [Macau] Lakeview Tower 3 1/2 2 1/2
1,344 ft² \$11,000,000 (ref: 19126001)
- [Taipa] Buckingham 2 1/2 2 1/2
1,439 ft² \$11,770,000 (ref: 19045004)

FOR RENT

- [Macau] Vai Fung Triplex, Macau 2 1/2 2 1/2
1,065 ft² \$15,800/mth (ref: 19121001)
- [Taipa] Buckingham 2 1/2 1 1/2
1,100 ft² \$15,900/mth (ref: 20031002)
- [Taipa] Manhattan 3 1/2 2 1/2
1,626 ft² \$20,800/mth (ref: n/a)
- [Coloane] Ocean Garden 4 1/2 4 1/2
3,700 ft² \$35,000/mth (ref: 18040674)

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AP PHOTO



Women wearing masks as a precaution against the new coronavirus, walk at the Gyeongbok Palace, in Seoul

BATTERED GLOBAL TOURISM INDUSTRY MAKES REOPENING PLANS

DEE-ANN DURBIN

SIX months ago, the global tourism industry was celebrating a record year for travel. Now, it's decimated and facing a recovery that could take years.

Tourism Economics, a data and consulting firm, predicts global travel demand won't resume its normal pace until 2023.

When tourists do finally return, they will face a changed landscape that incorporates social distancing and other measures to calm residual fears over Covid-19, the disease that has so far killed more than 244,000 people worldwide and infected millions more.

"It takes time to shake fear from the hearts of people, not to mention the economy," said Mahmoud Hadhoud, founder of Egypt Knight Tours, who doesn't expect foreign tourists to start trickling back into Egypt until September.

Last week, Hilton, Marriott and Airbnb all announced enhanced cleaning procedures worldwide to ease travelers' minds. In Egypt, Hadhoud is removing cruises and hot air balloon rides from his packages and replacing them with tours of Egypt's vast western deserts, where travelers can keep their distance from one another.

At Universal Studios in Orlando, Florida, multiple teams are working on scenarios, including putting more space between riders on roller coasters, said John Sprouls, the resort's

chief administrative officer, at a recent virtual event for tourism officials.

Wynn Resorts CEO Matt Maddox said his company may sanitize dice between users, put fewer seats at blackjack tables and idle slot machines between players at its casinos in Las Vegas, Boston and Macau.

Gary Thulander, managing director of Chatham Bars Inn, a 106-year-old resort on Cape Cod, said the resort is planning many changes when it reopens this summer, including checking in guests via cell phones, letting them opt out of room service and lengthening dining hours so fewer guests will be eating at the same time.

The road to recovery will be long and hard for the tourism industry. The United Nations World Tourism Organization predicts global tourist arrivals — or visits from tourists who come to their destinations and stay at least one night — will fall 30% this year from the record 1.5 billion in 2019. Airlines have grounded nearly two-thirds of their planes as passengers vanish. Cruise ships are docked; some won't sail again until November.

Millions of people who depend on tourism are laid off or furloughed. In the U.S. alone, an estimated 8 million tourism-related workers are jobless right now, or about one-third of

total U.S. unemployment, said Roger Dow, the president and CEO of the U.S. Travel Association.

Alexandre de Juniac, CEO of the International Air Transport Association, the leading airline trade group, said carriers need to fill at least 70% of seats to break even on most flights. If they're required to block or remove many seats, they will either stop flying or raise prices 50%, he said.

When tourists do finally return, they will face a changed landscape that incorporates social distancing and other measures to calm residual fears over Covid-19

That will delay recovery for places like Israel, which sees almost all of its tourists arrive by air. Diklah Cohen Sheinfeld, chief of staff of the Israeli Tourism Ministry's director general's office, said the tourism industry — which employs 250,000 Israelis — was the first to be impacted and will likely be the last to recover.

"There are no tourists and no entry to the country for tourists. The gates are totally closed," she said.

In some places, governments are stepping in to help the sector. Serge Cachan, president of the Astotel hotel chain in Paris, closed his 17 properties in March and expects to lose 70% of his business this year. But the French government will help the chain get through it, he said. The government is paying around 80% of furloughed hotel workers' salaries.

Many destinations anticipate travelers' behavior will change in the virus's wake. Pornthip Hirunkate, vice president of the Association of Thai Travel Agents, thinks more people will come in small groups or seek personalized tours.

Ander Fuentes, who works as a tour guide in Spain's Granada province, thinks travelers will shift away from crowded beaches to the quieter interior mountains.

"It could be an opportunity to develop a new kind of tourism, which is going to be good for Spain, because in the last 10 years, the tourism boom has been in quantity but not in quality," Fuentes said. He hopes tourism there picks back up by mid-August.

But not everyone is comfortable with reopening. Marco Michielli, who owns the 67-room San Marco Hotel in Bibione, a beach resort east of Venice, Italy, said many hoteliers worry their businesses will be ruined if the

virus spreads on their properties. Some would rather reopen next year than serve guests this summer with desk staff and bartenders wearing masks.

"If we have rules approved by the ministry, some hotel owners would be convinced to start to open. But if the hotel must look like a Covid ward, many will refuse to open to guests," he said.

Others say they need reassurance from science — not just tourist sites — before they travel.

Ema Barnes visited a dozen countries last year, including Serbia, Vietnam and Chile. This year, she had planned trips to Jordan and South Korea.

But right now, Barnes is working remotely in a tiny town in her native New Zealand. Airports near her are closed, so she's not sure when she'll get back to New York, where she works in publishing.

Barnes said she needs some peace of mind — a Covid-19 vaccine, or testing to make sure she isn't a carrier — before she resumes her travels.

"I don't think my desire to travel and explore other places is worth my risking the health of people in those places," Barnes said.

Others remain optimistic. Dedy Sulistiyanto, the owner of a tour and adventure provider in Bali, Indonesia, has been promoting his business on social media while it's closed. He has received so many positive responses that he thinks tourism will resume quickly when restrictions are lifted. Most of his clients are domestic tourists from Indonesia.

"There are so many people out there very eager to do traveling," Sulistiyanto said. AP

DRIVE IN

A six-decade romance story in 'A Secret Love'

LINDSEY BAHR,
AP FILM WRITER

TERRY Donahue, the subject of the new Netflix documentary "A Secret Love," was a catcher for the All-American Girls Professional Baseball League. Yes, kind of like Geena Davis' character Dottie Hinson from Penny Marshall's "A League of Their Own." She wore those skirts, she went to charm school and she kept going even when a ball cracked her eyebrow open (the coaches tried to get her to stop, but she just put a band-aid on it and got back on the field). But this extraordinary fact is only a part of her story. There's a bigger one to tell and it's something that was not even alluded to in that 1992 film: Terry Donahue is gay.

"A Secret Love," which was directed by her great-nephew Chris Bolan and produced by Ryan Murphy and Blumhouse, is a story about Terry and Pat Henschel, partners for over 65 years who remained closeted to their families into their old age. They simply presented themselves as close friends and roommates and no one thought anything of it.



Pat Henschel (left) and Terry Donahue in a scene from "A Secret Love"

The documentary introduces Terry and Pat as they're entering their twilight years and deciding to come out to some family members while also figuring out where to live as they become more fragile. Terry, at 93, had recently been diagnosed with Parkinson's disease.

"A Secret Love" is a sweeping overview of two lives up to the present, but it can feel like two movies at times. One is a real-time portrait of the heartbreak of giving up independence for assisted living — the expense of it, the fraught conversations with family and the simple fact of having to give up a house that

you've loved for two decades. The other is a scrapbook style history of Terry and Pat from childhood on, with interludes about the realities for the LGBTQ community in Chicago in the 1950s. And then there's that whole baseball thing, which honestly could and probably should be a documentary of its own.

All the threads are worthy, and told with love and care, but it might have benefited from a little more focus on one aspect or another. You find yourself wishing for more on the police raids of the secret bar gatherings of the LGBTQ community or more details on what it was like for two women to run a very successful interior decorating business in the '60s.

The present-day story is a worthy one, and full of touching moments, like when Terry and Pat discover an old love letter among their things. Simply by nature of who is making the film, it does feel like Terry and her family get the more sympathetic lens, especially in a fraught moment when Pat is seen resisting a move to a Canadian assisted living facility.

But "A Secret Love" is guaranteed to pull at your heartstrings. It might be the quarantine or it might just be effective storytelling, but a scene near the end of the family coming together — not even a sad scene — left this reviewer in tears and I'm willing to bet I won't be the only one.

"A Secret Love," a Netflix release, is rated TV-MA. Running time: 83 minutes. ★★★★★

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OPINION

Our Desk

Anthony Lam



**QUE SERA, SERA;
 WHATEVER WILL BE,
 WILL BE**

The recent hot topic in town is apparently – if not undeniably or inevitably – the commencement of e-voucher use.

After the project's announcement, many applauded the government for supporting the development of e-payments, which has long been criticized for being too slow.

Viewing the case in Macau, the development of e-payment has not really been too slow; I remember many years ago I saw a poster in a Hong Kong shopping mall advertising discounts for shoppers paying by e-payment, by which it meant credit card.

By that standard, Macau has never been slow in developing e-payment method; credit cards have existed in the city for more than three decades already.

On top of that, the three most popular credit card brands in the city - Visa, MasterCard and UnionPay - have all developed their own contactless tap-card system. It was for unknown reasons that the three systems have not gained popularity in Macau, although recently I saw them being accepted at a greater number of vendors.

Mentioning e-banking in a discussion on e-payment seems inevitable. Many in town have complimented the online banking platform of the government's banker, the BNU, for the exceptional choice of functions provided by its platform.

Meanwhile, the user interface has also been applauded for its neatness and clarity, compared with many of its competitors.

The other government's banker, the Bank of China, Macau Branch, has greatly improved its online banking platform and mobile app over time. It has tried to make its platforms more user-friendly and multifunctional. A highlight of its app is the payment function, which allows users to pay for physical transactions with the app. Users can also transfer funds to friends simply by using a phone number. 'Going Dutch' is also a great feature, eliminating the need for calculations.

Here comes the "however." It has recently made an upgrade to the app and forced its users to update to the latest version – not officially on Google Play – on the bank's website by downloading an app file. The bank has always reminded its clients to remain vigilant about app downloads and always rely on Operating Systems' (OS) official channels for apps.

In unofficial channels, the bank has explained that it was due to the pandemic that the new app's approval was delayed by Google Play.

Of course, I'm not saying that the government's bank is trying to scam its users. What I want to say is that the older version should remain in operation and the bank should only require its clients to download an update when it's ready on Google Play (or the Apple App Store). Currently, if you don't download the new app directly from the bank, you have no way to continue using the app.

Given that banking security has been repeatedly emphasized everywhere, the bank should consider that its customers have many reasons not to download an update from a non-OS channel. In this case, these customers will be blocked from using "the modern mode of payment."

Not all banks are equal, though. There is a bank that charges its customers for internal transfers from other banks. In this era when the government – which often plays slow so as to play safe – is paying subsidies and "wealth partaking" cash directly by bank transfer, this practice is simply from Queen Victoria's era.

After all, when I think e-banking and e-payment are going to be common practices in the future, I want to ask: "Who is hindering the twos' developments?"

THE PRICE OF RICE... IS NOT QUITE RIGHT

THE BUZZ

A day after insisting that alleged supermarket inflation was due to pricing errors without intent to overcharge, the Consumer Council has now decided to revoke the "Certified Store Quality Symbol" from Royal Supermarket, saying it considers the justification given by the company to be "unacceptable".

The decision comes after representatives of the Consumer Council, together with their counterparts from the Directorate of Economic Services, met with Royal Supermarket asking for clarification on the recent complaints about inflated product prices.

In a statement yesterday, the CC said it rejects all acts of unreasonable price increases resulting from the pandemic, especially

since the launch of the electronic consumer card.

On Sunday, the government said it had received nearly 400 reports of supermarket overpricing, which allegedly coincided with the start of the e-voucher subsidy scheme.

Kong Son Cheong, the Head of the Licensing and Inspection Department, had said that most cases were found to be related to mistakes on the part of the establishments or their staff members, and the price hikes had been exaggerated by reports on social media.

No mention was made last night of Macau's other supermarkets, which have also been criticized by netizens for the same practices.

**AMID MOSCOW LOCKDOWN,
 SOME DOGS FIND NEW
 HOMES AND FRIENDS**



Anastasia Medvedeva, one of the organizers of the online adoption initiative called "Happiness Delivered At Home", sits with Ratna, 3 year old hunting dog and Goldy, 6 year mixed toy terrier

**KIRILL ZARUBIN,
 MOSCOW**

STUCK at home during Moscow's coronavirus lockdown, Alexandra Novatova opted to use a delivery service — a big decision, because she was ordering more than a pizza or a shipment of toilet paper.

She got a dog brought to her door.

She chose the mutt, a shepherd mix with a scythe-like curved tail, from a 12-hour online broadcast. Animal shelter volunteers showed dogs and cats to try to match them with humans.

The lockdown, which will extend at least through May 12, has been hard on dogs in some ways — their daily walks are supposed to go no farther than 100 meters from home, and owners 65 years and older are told to stay indoors except for buying groceries and medication. But it also has some bright spots.

People in isolation, looking for animal companionship, are adopting

dogs. And many dogs are making new friends, as volunteers walk the pets of elderly people.

"People are spending a lot of time at home during the pandemic. I realized that people now have more free time, they can adopt pets without taking a vacation or arranging extra days off," said Anastasia Medvedeva, one of the organizers of the online adoption initiative "Happiness Delivered At Home."

"Because when you adopt a pet, you need a certain amount of time for it to become accustomed to its new environment. Now it's a perfect time to adopt a cat or a dog," she said.

Medvedeva said her project tries to ensure that the animals aren't adopted just as a temporary salve to the tedium and loneliness of lockdown.

"We have quite experienced curators. ... They conduct rigorous interviews. We naturally ask: Do you understand what will happen next?" she

said.

That issue was on Novatova's mind, too.

"The first thing I did was ask myself whether I'm doing this for the time of the pandemic or for life, whether I'll be able to sit at home with a dog without the ability to take walks outside and get it used to the current situation. I decided that I'm ready for this," she said outside her apartment, after the dog was delivered.

Pensioner Margarita Donchenko knows how much attention a dog needs. And she's glad when volunteer Nadezhda Minyaeva shows up once a day to give her fluffy little black-and-white pooch a walk.

"I saw right away that the dog is crazy about her. As soon as she wakes up, she runs to the door and waits for the doorbell to ring. She waits by her leash for Nadya to come," she said.

"I tell her that Nadya will come soon and she replies with a woof-woof." AP

South Korea says it will start allowing students to return to their classrooms next week amid signs that its coronavirus outbreak is waning. Education Minister Yoo Eun-hae said yesterday that high school seniors will return on May 13 and students in lower grades in phased steps starting May 20. She said 5.4 million students have been studying online since April 9.



Vietnam started returning to their classrooms yesterday that had been closed to curb the coronavirus. "I am so excited to go back to school, to be with my teachers and my classmates after three months," said Chu Quang Anh, a sixth-grade student at Dinh Cong secondary school in Hanoi. Students are required to wear masks, among other measures to minimize the spread of the virus.



Malaysia Many business sectors reopened in parts of Malaysia as Prime Minister Muhyiddin Yassin's government sought to balance curbing the virus and reviving the hard-hit economy. But the move has split public opinion amid fears that the sudden reopening of economic activities could spark a new wave of infections



India has relaxed some lockdown restrictions as the pace of infections has slightly accelerated. Some economic activities resumed after a near-total 5-week halt. Normal life, albeit with masks, social distancing and stringent hygiene standards, has started to return in low-risk areas, while constraints on movement and work continues elsewhere. India has about 42,500 confirmed cases, including 1,373 deaths.