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**MASK USE GETS IN THE WAY OF PHYSICAL EDUCATION OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES, EXPERTS SAY**

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**DRAGON BOAT RACES IN JUNE WITHOUT FOREIGN TEAMS**

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**HIGH COURTS HAVE DISMISSED NINE APPEALS REGARDING IDLE LAND PLOTS, RULING IN FAVOR OF THE GOVERNMENT**

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AP PHOTO



**China-US** Daniel Hsu is a U.S. citizen. He has not been convicted of any crime in China, yet he was detained there for six months in solitary confinement under conditions that could qualify as torture under international conventions. Authorities from Anhui placed exit bans on Hsu and his wife, Jodie Chen, blocking them from returning home to suburban Seattle in August 2017 and effectively orphaning their 16-year-old daughter in America. [More on macaudailytimes.com](#)

**China** reported only a single new case of coronavirus and no new deaths, marking three weeks since it recorded a COVID-19 fatality. The National Health Commission said 395 people remained under treatment in hospitals, while 949 people were under isolation and observation. [More on p 8](#)

**Australia's** prime minister still suspects the coronavirus originated in Chinese wildlife. Prime Minister Scott Morrison said he has written to Group of 20 government leaders calling for a "proper assessment" of the origin of and government responses to the pandemic. Pompeo has contended without offering proof that the virus began in the Wuhan Institute of Virology. China has dismissed calls for an independent inquiry.

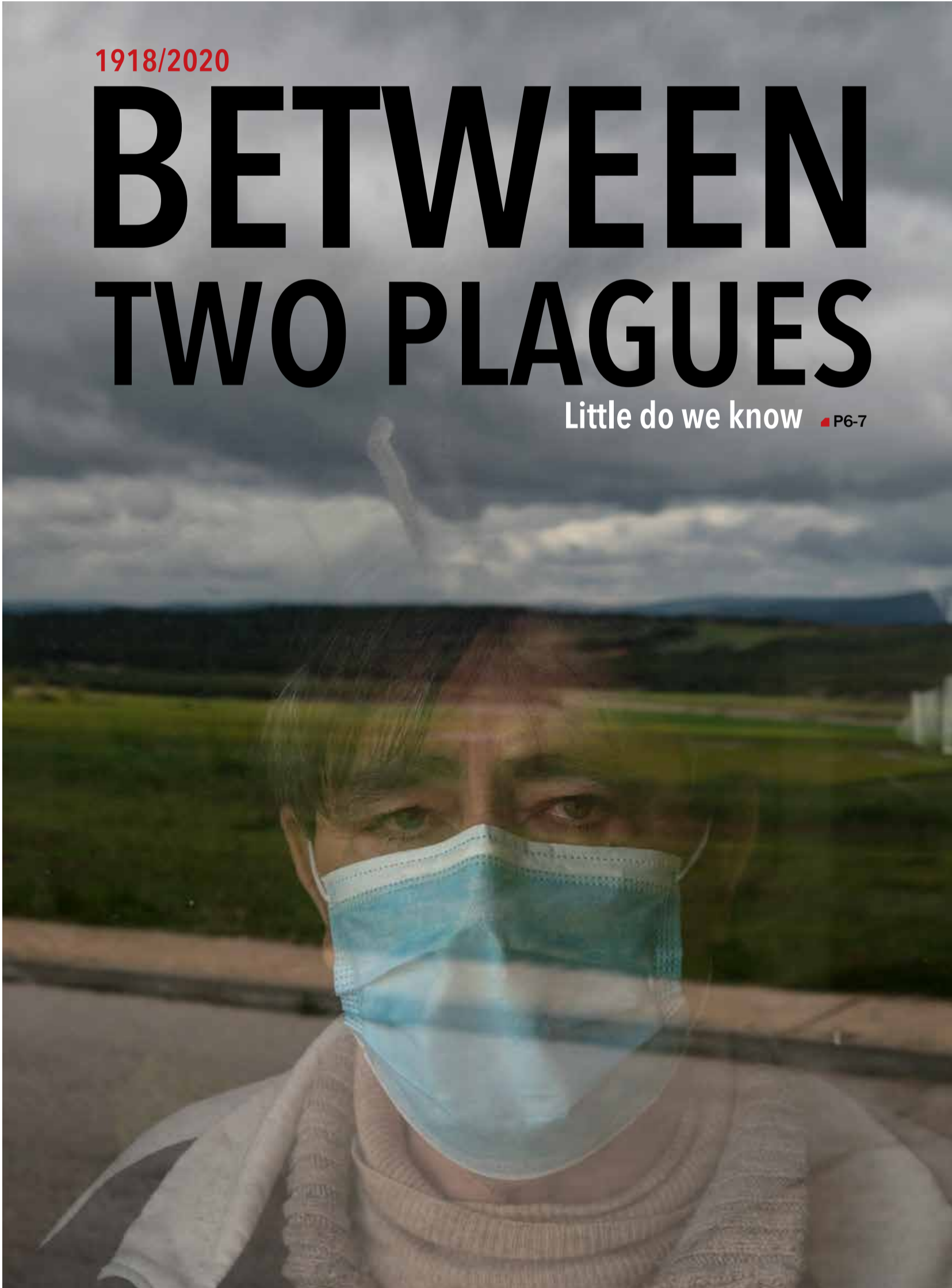
AP PHOTO



**Sri Lanka** Hundreds of people stranded in Colombo by a blanket curfew have been allowed to return to their homes. Police said 500 were selected from among the thousands stranded with priority given to pregnant women, mothers with small children and people with prolonged sicknesses. They must undergo a 14-day quarantine when they reach their homes. The curfew imposed on March 20 bans non-essential travel.

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AP PHOTO



1918/2020

# BETWEEN TWO PLAGUES

Little do we know P6-7



# MASK USE GETS IN THE WAY OF PHYSICAL EDUCATION OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES

ANTHONY LAM

**O**UTDOOR activities during physical education classes should be suspended for the time being, Wong Ka Ki, head of the Education Department of the Education and Youth Affairs Bureau (DSEJ) said yesterday. Schools should instead conduct physical education lectures in classrooms, he said.

The education official also said that the DSEJ recommends schools cover sport theory when physical education classes are conducted.

"We have recommended schools to decrease outdoor activities during physical education classes," Wong said. "Or even suspend such activities. Maybe they should transform classes to discuss sport theory."

According to the education bureau department head, apart from hands-on training and activities that must be conducted out of the classroom, physical education lessons should also cover sport theory.

"During this special period, we recommend schools to conduct the [physical education] lessons in this manner," Wong explained.

The DSEJ advice is in alignment with a medical expert in Beijing. According to a report by Hong Kong's Ming Pao Daily, the Bei-



jing medical expert suggests that schools and students avoid intense sports activities during the early phase of schools resuming.

When competitive sports are practiced or played, facemasks should be avoided to ensure ventilation and breathability.

Afterwards, when questioned about resumption of primary education levels, the department head reiterated that details would be announced in due course. "We have been in close contact with the Health Bureau, the educators and other stakeholders with regards to

the contingencies," Wong added.

Yesterday afternoon, neighboring Hong Kong announced school reopening dates for all levels of education. Schools there will resume classes starting from May 27 to June 15. Kindergarten levels will not resume this school year.

As summer has arrived, journalists have expressed concerns over the durability of facemasks, as people tend to sweat in the hot weather. Lo Iek Long, medical director of the Conde São Januário Hospital, admitted that the mois-

ture on the inside of the facemasks could limit the effectiveness of masks.

With respect to when a used mask should be replaced, Lo explained that this would depend on the condition of the mask. "If the person has sweated a lot and has made the mask wet, it should be discarded," the medical doctor explained. In this case, a person may need to use more than one mask a day.

On the other hand, "if a person stays indoor for most of the time in a day, the mask may be used for

one whole day," the medical doctor clarified.

Lo addressed that fact that some people may find it slightly more difficult to breathe with a mask on but did not think that it would be life-threatening.

"Members of the public should not be worried about wearing masks in the summer," Lo said. "Suffering heat stroke due to mask wearing should also be unlikely."

It was reported recently that the authorities from Macau, Hong Kong and Guangdong are in discussions to mutually recognize the quarantine procedures and health declaration requirements of each jurisdiction.

Meanwhile, Macau has transformed its online health declaration system to a new one, which is in many ways similar to the one currently enacted in Mainland China. The new system in Macau determines a person's eligibility to enter public venues using colored QR codes.

Leong Iek Hou, coordinator at the local Center for Disease Control and Prevention, disclosed yesterday that work is being done with regards to the mutual recognition between the three regions. She stressed that it is not a decision that can be solely made by Macau. As such, the official said she hopes details on any cooperation can be disclosed very soon.

# Nine appeals dismissed by the courts regarding expired lands

RENATO MARQUES

**T**HE Court of Second Instance (TSI) and the Court Final Appeal (TUI) have dismissed nine appeals regarding idle land plots that the government sought to reclaim following the expiration of the relevant land concessions.

According to a statement from the Office of the President of the TUI, the courts have considered the nine appeals to be unfounded, ruling in favor of the government.

The cases concern seven land plots that the government reclaimed after the

contracts of concession expired without the land being used, and two cases in which the government ordered the eviction from the land plots after the users had refused to comply with the order to vacate the plots.

Among the several lands plots distributed across the Peninsula (3), Taipa Island (5) and Coloane (1), comprising a total area of 184,096 square meters, the highlight is the land plot of the former "Ocean World" theme park, situated at Taipa's waterfront across from Regency Art Hotel.

The government an-

nounced the annulment of the land concession in December 2018 due to its long-overdue development, which had been granted almost three decades ago to the company, Chong Va - Entretenimento Limitada. The grant of the concession was for the development of a theme park, "Ocean World." Construction work for Ocean World never began.

The TSI dismissed the appeal from the former concessionaire, who, over one year ago, was notified by dispatch from the Secretary of Transport and Public Works, Raimundo

do Rosário to vacate the plot within 60 days.

This land plot has an area of approximately 135,000 square meters.

The TUI also decided in favor of the government's repossession of another significant piece of land, located in Taipa, at the Baía de Nossa Senhora da Esperança. The 19,245 square meter plot was in the possession of the concessionaire, Companhia de Investimentos Chee Lee Limitada, and had been recalled by the government on September 30, 2015. The reason behind the recall was its complete

idleness over the 25-year period of the concession contract. The initial con-

tract for this plot had specified a 36-month period for its development.

## PORTUGUESE JUDGES APPOINTED TO NEW POSTS

Chief Executive Ho Iat Seng has appointed, by suggestion of the independent committee responsible for appointing judges, Rui Ribeiro to the post of judge of the Court of Second Instance. In the same order, and to fulfill the position vacated by Ribeiro, the Chief Executive also appointed Jerónimo

Santos, judge of the Court of First Instance, to the position of the presiding judge of the Court of First Instance. Both appointments, published in Monday's edition of the government's Official Gazette, are done by contract and for a period of two years. The new commissions are effective from May 12.

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# Dragon boat races going ahead in June, but without foreign teams

ANTHONY LAM

**D**ESPITE many other activities having been canceled or postponed this year, the annual International Dragon Boat Competition is still running to schedule, the Sports Bureau (ID) announced yesterday at a dedicated press conference.

The majority of the event's details will remain unchanged, as announced by Pun Weng Kun, director of the ID, at the press conference, however foreign teams will not be invited to participate because of the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic. Although this year's event will not be as international as previous years, Pun has decided to retain the name of the event.

In response to the current pandemic, the ID has decided not to invite foreign teams to Macau to compete in the races.

In previous years, the first two days of the event have focused on local teams with only local races. The third day of the event – always

on the day of Tun Ng Festival (Dragon Boat Festival) – has featured foreign and mainland China teams, making the races much more competitive.

It may not be possible for some teams to travel to Macau for this year's competition, given the current global situation and travel restrictions.

As a result, the duration of this year's event will be reduced to two days. Races will be staged on Saturday, June 21, and Thursday, June 25, which is a public holiday

for the Tun Ng Festival.

However, the ID has also decided to maintain the atmosphere of the event by adding one extra day to the calendar. June 20 will see no races, but will feature a carnival targeted at educating children about the Festival.

Athletes usually wait on the side of the Nam Van Lake Nautical Center, near the Legislative Assembly building, before and after matches. Asked about the risks of athletes waiting at the waiting area, Pun introduced the measu-

res the ID will impose on all those participating in the event, including spectators.

Crowd management measures will be implemented in all areas of the Nautical Center. Body temperature will be taken for all people entering the venue, on top of the presentation of the Macau Health Color Code. According to Health Bureau requirements, only green and yellow codes will be accepted.

With that said, "all athletes will be required to wear masks while in the waiting area," Pun explained. "They are only allowed to take off their masks when they proceed to their matches."

On the other hand, extra restrictions will be put into place to further ensure safety. The Times has previously received comments about the waiting area being too crowded. Although fans have been installed, ventilation has still been insufficient. During this special time, "more fans will be installed in the waiting area this year," the director said.

In addition, Pun expects this year will see around 1,000 fewer athletes than in previous years, as the organizer has decided to reduce the number of teams participating in each group.

In previous years, an entity could register more than one team to compete in the event. As this year sees a lower cap on the number of teams, the question arose as to whether the ID would also cap the number of teams registered under a single entity.

"We haven't thought about that," Pun answered. "It may be unfair to the casinos as they have so many employees." He added that interested entities should act fast to register, as quotas are strictly limited.

## MUST to collaborate with global firms on AI computerization

**T**HE Macau University of Science and Technology (MUST) has recently launched its new generation Artificial Intelligence (AI) Supercomputer Center, with the support of the Macao Science and Technology Development Fund, the university announced in a statement.

In the statement, MUST added that the need for AI computerization has been growing, and the Center is intended to satisfy this need.

In addition to the government funding, MUST has also commissioned the Macau

office of Automated Systems Limited to tailor-make a group of graphics processing units (GPUs) that render computer images.

The university explained that the new AI computer system would be capable of handling a wide range of research-oriented settings, such as the medical diagnosis of cancer or cardiovascular diseases, facial recognition and crowd management, cyber security management, as well as research on space.

The supercomputer center is capable of performing 4,000 trillion – or 4 quadrillion – cal-

culations per second with the help of the 32 NVIDIA GPU cards installed in the three supercomputers.

Memory is also a key part in AI learning. The Center is equipped with high-capacity and -speed SSD memory to store computerized results rapidly. The current storage speed is seven gigabytes per second, with a capacity to be increased to 150 gigabytes per second in the future.

The building that houses the supercomputers is equipped with Internet routers providing a connection speed up to 100Gbps,

which is 100 to 1,000 times faster than common household Internet connection speeds. Back-up power supply and double air conditioning systems are also installed to facilitate an environment for the work of the supercomputers.

"The new Artificial Intelligence Supercomputer Center will assist MUST to foster greater achievements in related fields," Du Zhang, dean of the university's Faculty of Information Technology said. "It is likely that our new Center is the most cutting-edge of its kind in Macau." AL

## MGTO LAUNCHES ONLINE LEARNING FOR CATERING PROFESSIONALS

**T**HE Macao Government Tourism Office (MGTO) launched online learning videos for catering professionals yesterday in order to advance the city's development as a Creative City of Gastronomy amid the current pandemic outbreak.

According to a statement, the online videos cover practical topics including food and occupational safety for the catering industry, fundamental service skills in restaurants, star-rated service skills, and culinary knowledge about ingredients and cuisines.

From May to September, the tourism bureau will run two new videos each month on the Macao Tourism Industry Net website to enhance the workplace competitiveness of Macau's catering professionals.

The videos are mostly delivered in Cantonese, with some available in both Cantonese and Mandarin.

The learning videos comprise five series in total. The first two videos are themed after Macanese cuisine, as well as wine knowledge and serving skills.

"With the launch of the online learning videos, the MGTO seeks to provide continuing education opportunities for members of the trade to enhance their expertise during the pandemic," the tourism bureau said in a statement.

The MGTO also encourages catering employees and those aspiring to a career in catering to upskill themselves by watching the freely available videos on the platform. LV



CRIME

# POLICE UNVEIL FAKE MARRIAGE SCHEME INVOLVING SISTERS FROM MAINLAND

RENATO MARQUES

**T**HE Public Security Police Force (PSP) has unveiled a complex case involving multiple fake marriages aiming to secure Macau residency permits for at least seven people.

The PSP spokesperson disclosed the case during yesterday's joint press conference for Macau's police forces.

According to the report, the investigation was triggered by suspicions from the Identification Bureau (DSI), who forwarded the case to the PSP for further investigation.

The police identified a series of crimes involving false declarations and document forgery by four main suspects.

The case goes back to 1994, when a local resident surnamed Wong married a mainland resident surnamed Lok. While living in Macau, the couple requested residency for the wife and eventually for their two children born in Macau in 1994 and 1997 res-



pectively.

In 2011, the couple divorced after 17 years of marriage. By then, Lok had already obtained permanent residency in Macau.

Four years later, Wong married

another woman from the mainland surnamed Cheong who was later discovered to have just divorced her husband surnamed Leong. She was also the sister of Wong's ex-wife, Lok.

Two years later, Lok married Cheong's ex-husband and Lok's former brother-in-law.

In the case of both second marriages, the couples requested residency in Macau for their new

spouses. Lok also requested residency for her new husband's children from his previous marriage with Cheong – a son, and a daughter – claiming family reunion as the reason.

Further investigation also revealed that in 2018, Cheong, while married to Wong, gave birth in Macau to a child of whom Wong pretends to be the father and registered as his own so the child could immediately obtain the Macau residency card. It is believed that the child's father is Cheong's ex-husband Leong.

The investigation also revealed that the fake marriage between Leong and Lok had been arranged through a third person, acting as an agent. This man, also surnamed Leong, was found to be the brother of the man who married Lok. According to statements from the agent, to accept the fake marriage with Leong, Lok had received RMB50,000 in compensation. The police said that both admitted to having committed the crime.

While Wong and Lok have already been presented to the Public Prosecutions Office (MP) to be charged with crimes related to providing false declarations and document forgery, Leong and Cheong, also suspects in this case, are still at large.

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CRIME

# Two charged over the appropriation of lost property

RENATO MARQUES

**D**URING yesterday's joint police forces press conference, the Public Security Police Force (PSP) spokesperson revealed that two locals have recently been charged with the appropriation of lost property.

In the first case, a woman is accused of taking and using cash left at an Automatic Teller Machine (ATM). In the second case, a man has admitted to having used a Macau Identification Card (Macau ID) that he had found to acquire facemasks under the government mask distribution scheme.

In the first case, a 60-year-old male resident experienced difficulties at a cash machine while trying to withdraw money from his bank account. Believing there had been a malfunction, he left the scene without taking the HKD6,000 that he had attempted to withdraw from the ATM.

After filing a complaint with the bank, ATM surveillance camera footage showed that a woman, iden-

tified as a 62-year-old resident, had found the money and taken it.

Around noon on April 29, the PSP found and intercepted the suspect on Avenida da Longevidade. Questioned by the police, she admitted to having found and used the money. The case has been forwarded to the Public Prosecutions Office (MP), who will charge the suspect with the offence of appropriation of lost property.

In the second case, a resident discovered that his lost Macau ID card had been used by another person to acquire facemasks under the government's distribution scheme.

The man had reportedly lost and replaced the card in early April. When he went to a pharmacy to buy facemasks on April 17, he discovered that someone had used his old ID card to acquire the same product five days earlier in a different location.

On April 24, he tried once more to acquire the facemasks, but was informed that his ID had been recorded in the system as having

acquiring facemasks two days earlier. He then reported the unlawful use of his ID to the police.

Reviewing the surveillance footage of the second pharmacy, the police were able to identify the suspect.

The 48-year-old resident was then intercepted a few days later while attempting to reenter Macau at the Border Gate checkpoint.

Upon interception, the man admitted to the unauthorized use of the ID to acquire facemasks on two occasions.

The suspect also told the police that he had found the ID on the ground in the area between the two checkpoint controls at the Gongbei border. He added that on the same occasion, his wife had found another document, this time from a Hong Kong resident, that he also used on four occasions to acquire cigarettes at Gongbei's Duty-free shop.

Both ID owners of Macau and Hong Kong informed the police that they are seeking to press charges for the unlawful use of their IDs.



# Hong Kong inches toward normalcy with move to open schools, bars

IAIN MARLOW  
& NATALIE LUNG

**H**ONG Kong leader Carrie Lam moved to loosen curbs on social gatherings and reopen shuttered schools, as a lull in coronavirus infections set the stage for fresh political battles over the future of the Asian financial hub.

Lam raised the number of people allowed to gather in groups to eight, from four currently, and said gyms and movie theaters would be allowed to reopen. Bars will also reopen with capacity restrictions - and live music performances and dancing won't be permitted. The changes go into effect Friday. Schools will also start resuming later this month in phases.

"Experts are of the view it's time to relax some of the measures to some extent," she told reporters yesterday. "But I must stress that the epidemic may flip flop in a way, and we must remain vigilant continuously."

While relaxing social distancing measures vindicates Hong Kong's strategy to fight the virus, it could also facilitate the return of pro-democracy protests that rocked the former British colony last year. Activists have already held several demonstrations inside malls in recent days, and the opposition lawmakers are hoping to rebuild the political momentum needed to secure a majority

AP PHOTO



on the city's elected Legislative Council in September.

Lam hinted at future battles to come in remarks to reporters before announcing the measures. She said she hoped that the Legislative Council would resume debate over a controversial bill that would make disrespecting the Chinese national anthem a crime, a measure that could prompt more protests.

Even as Lam prepared to loosen the virus curbs, two of her predecessors led a news conference to announce a new "Hong Kong Coalition" of some 1,500

business leaders and pro-establishment figures. The group led by former Chief Executives Tung Chee-hwa and Leung Chun-ying said they wanted to promote economic recovery, oppose violence and support the "one country, two systems" China has used to govern the city since the British left in 1997.

The group's supporters include the city's richest man, Li Ka-shing and his sons Victor Li and Richard Li, as well as members from the Kwok family, which owns the city's largest developer Sun Hung Kai Properties Ltd. It was unclear

what role the organization would play in the upcoming elections, although it planned an event Saturday to distribute masks.

"It's for election purposes, of kind of help street-level mobilization and also on the government campaign theme against the democrats," said Ma Ngok, a professor at Chinese University of Hong Kong's department of government and public administration. "They're trying to take advantage of the economic situation," Ma said, adding, "that's kind of a conservative tone, which I think is in line with the propaganda of

the pro-Beijing press in recent weeks."

The Asian financial hub, which just suffered its worst economic quarter on record, has mostly contained Covid-19 through a mix of early social distancing measures starting in late January, travel restrictions, contact tracing and mandatory quarantines. Hong Kong has reported zero new daily cases for 10 of the past 16 days and hasn't seen a virus-related death since mid-March. Almost all of the newer infections were found in people with a recent travel history. **BLOOMBERG**

## Royal Supermarket apologizes for pricing errors

**R**oyal Supermarket issued a statement yesterday apologizing for pricing errors that prompted an outcry on social media and Macau's Consumer Council (CC) to revoke its "Certified Store Quality Symbol".

Netizens took to social media over the long Labor Day holiday last weekend to denounce suspected cases of price gouging at several supermarkets in Macau. On Sunday, the government said it had received nearly 400 reports of suspected price gouging, which allegedly coincided with the start of the e-voucher subsidy scheme.

By Sunday, product prices at several supermarkets visited by the Times appeared normal, with many discounts offered at the major retailers.

"We apologize for causing public concern due to the confusion of our pricing, and not being able to care about the most urgent livelihood issues," Royal Supermarket wrote in its statement yesterday, without directly responding to the online accusations.

The supermarket chain said that it would review discount schemes in the near future and make its discounts and privileges more transparent and straightforward. Royal is also deploying more staff to double check the price tags at their supermarket outlets.

The decision to revoke the accreditation on Monday night came a day after the CC had said that the allegations of supermarket price inflation were

due to pricing errors without the intent to overcharge.

Kong Son Cheong, the Head of the Licensing and Inspection Department of the Economic Bureau (DSE), had also 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.

On Monday night, the CC issued a statement saying it rejects unreasonable price increases resulting from the pandemic, especially since the launch of the electronic consumer card.

No mention has been made of Macau's other supermarkets, which have also been criticized by netizens for the same practices. **DB/AL**

## GAMING OPERATOR SJM'S NET PROFIT FELL 148% IN Q1

**S**JM Holdings Ltd experienced a net loss of HKD409 million in the first quarter, a plunge of 148.1% from HKD850 million in profit over the same period last year.

According to the financial report of the gaming operator, the group's total net revenue fell by 60% year-on-year to HKD3.47 billion.

The group's first quarter results were severely impacted by the Covid-19 outbreak, which led to the closure of Macau casinos for 15 days in February.

Other factors include the ongoing restrictions on entry from the

mainland, Hong Kong and other locations, curtailment of transportation channels, and quarantine requirements.

During the first quarter, the group's VIP gross gaming revenue was HKD1.19 billion, a decrease of 69.6% from HKD3.93 billion in the same period in 2019, while mass market gross gaming revenue was HKD2.6 billion, a decrease of 57.9% from HKD6.19 billion.

Vice-chairman and CEO of SJM Holdings Limited, Ambrose So, commented, "we are optimistic, however, about the potential for our market to begin re-

covering later this year, particularly given the successful policies of the Macau and Central Government authorities in controlling the outbreak."

When the market returns to growth, So said that SJM will be a "major contributor" due to the participation of its new resort, the Grand Lisboa Palace.

The gaming operator also disclosed that the group had begun the inspection and application process with the Macau government. Subject to obtaining the necessary operating permits, the project is expected to open by the end of 2020. **LV**



CALVIN WOODWARD,  
WASHINGTON

# Virus-afflicted 2020 looks like 1918

**D**ESPITE a century's progress in science, 2020 is looking a lot like 1918.

In the years between two lethal pandemics, one the misnamed Spanish flu, the other COVID-19, the world learned about viruses, cured various diseases, made effective vaccines, developed instant communications and created elaborate public-health networks.

Yet here we are again, face-masked to the max. And still unable to crush an insidious yet avoidable infectious disease before hundreds of thousands die from it.

As in 1918, people are again hearing hollow assurances at odds with the reality of hospitals and morgues filling up and bank accounts draining. The ancient common sense of quarantining is back. So is quackery: Rub raw onions on your chest, they said in 1918. How about disinfectant in your veins now? mused President Donald Trump, drawing gasps instead of laughs over what he weakly tried to pass off as a joke.

In 1918, no one had a vaccine, treatment or cure for the great flu pandemic as it ravaged the world and killed more than 50 million people. No one has any of that for the coronavirus, either.

Modern science quickly identified today's new coronavirus, mapped its genetic code and developed a diagnostic test, tapping knowledge no one had in 1918. That has given people more of a fighting chance to stay out of harm's way, at least in countries that deployed tests quickly, which the U.S. didn't.

But the ways to avoid getting sick and what to do when sick are little changed. The failure of U.S. presidents to take the threat seriously from the start also joins past to present.

Trump all but declared victory before infection took root in his country and he's deliv-

AP PHOTO



In this 1918 photo, volunteer nurses from the American Red Cross tend to influenza patients in the Oakland Municipal Auditorium.

ered a stream of misinformation ever since. President Woodrow Wilson's principal failure was his silence.

Not once, historians say, did Wilson publicly speak about a disease that was killing Americans grotesquely and in huge numbers, even though he contracted it himself and was never the same after. Wilson fixated on America's parallel fight in World War I like "a dog with a bone," says John M. Barry, author of "The Great Influenza."

The suspected ground zero of the Spanish flu ranges from Kansas to China. But it was clear to

## The failure of US presidents to take the threat seriously from the start also joins past to present

U.S. officials even in 1918 that it didn't start in Spain.

The pandemic took on Spain's

name only because its free press ambitiously reported the devastation in the disease's early 1918 wave while government officials and a complicit press in countries at war — the U.S. among them — played it down in a time of jingoism, censorship and denial.

Like COVID-19, the 1918 pandemic came from a respiratory virus that jumped from animals to people, was transmitted the same way, and had similar pathology, Barry said by email. Social distancing, hand-washing and masks were lea-

ding control measures then and now.

Medical advice from then also resonates today: "If you get it, stay at home, rest in bed, keep warm, drink hot drinks and stay quiet until the symptoms are past," said Dr. John Dill Robertson, Chicago health commissioner in 1918. "Then continue to be careful, for the greatest danger is from pneumonia or some kindred disease after the influenza is gone."

In the manner of the day, there just had to be a catchy rhyme in circulation, too: "Cover up

AP PHOTO





# 3 despite science's march



ium, used as a temporary hospital.

each cough and sneeze. If you don't you'll spread disease."

But there were also marked differences between the viruses of 1918 and 2020. The Spanish flu was particularly dangerous to healthy people aged 20 to 40 — the prime generation of military service — paradoxically because of their vibrant immune systems.

When such people got infected, their antibodies went after the virus like soldiers spilling from the trenches of Europe's killing fields.

"The immune system was

throwing every weapon it had at the virus," Barry said. "The battlefield was the lung. The lung was being destroyed in that battle."

Young soldiers and sailors massed at military camps in the U.S., sailed for Europe on ships stuffed to the gunwales with humanity, fought side by side in the trenches and came home in victory to adoring crowds. The toll was enormous, on them and the people they infected. The Spanish flu could just as easily have been called the U.S. Army or U.S. Navy flu instead. Or the

German or British flu, for that matter.

Among those who died in the pandemic was Friedrich Trump, Donald Trump's paternal grandfather. Among those who contracted it and recovered were the wartime leaders of Britain and Germany as well as of the United States, British and Spanish kings and the future U.S. president, Franklin Roosevelt, when he was assistant Navy secretary.

But the toll was heavier on average people and the poor, crowded in tenements, street cars and sweaty factories.

They could not all live by the words of the 1918 U.S. surgeon general, Rupert Blue: "Keep out of crowds and stuffy places as much as possible. ... The value of fresh air through open windows cannot be overemphasized. ... Make every possible effort to breathe as much pure air as possible."

An estimated 675,000 Americans died in the pandemic, which is thought to have infected one-third of the global population.

## BAD SCIENCE

In 1918, the surgeon general noted in a handbill that "a person who has only a mild attack of the disease himself may give a very severe attack to others." The warning is just as applicable to the coronavirus, especially as scientists learned large numbers of people with COVID-19 may spread it despite no obvious symptoms. Exactly how often the new virus kills can't be determined without better counts of the infected; some estimates put the 1918 flu's death rate at 2.5%.

Blue's public notice also warned people to avoid charlatans and only get medicine from doctors.

Physicians, though, didn't

always know what they were doing. Medical journals at the time describe a rash of unusual treatments, some in the league of Trump's amateur theories about disinfectant, blasts of lights and an unapproved drug that has both potential benefits and risks.

One 1918-era doctor recommended that people sniff a boric acid and sodium bicarbonate (baking soda) powder to rinse out nasal passages. Others prescribed quinine, strychnine and a poisonous garden plant called Digitalis to help circulation, as well as drugs derived from iodine for "internal disinfection," according to Laura Spinney, who wrote the 2017 book "Pale Rider: The Spanish Flu of 1918 and How it Changed the World."

**In 1918, the surgeon general noted that 'a person who has only a mild attack of the disease himself may give a very severe attack to others.' The warning is just as applicable to the coronavirus**

Popular theories spread that warming your feet would prevent infection, or gobbling brown sugar, or getting the onion rubdown. A "clean heart" was one supposed preventive, though it is not clear whether that meant the organ or the heart of love.

"There was no Tony Fauci back then," Barry said in a remote Library of Congress interview in April.

We have Fauci now — a federal immunologist who has been regarded as the truth-teller in White House briefings, singularly immune to Trump's positive spin and falsehoods. Plus, we know so much more than people did in 1918.

Yet we're still hearing lots of Dark Ages nonsense.

Conspiracy theorists have blamed COVID-19 on the development of 5G networks, just as they say radio waves caused the 1918 flu. Arsonists recently torched more than a dozen British cell towers after that falsehood circulated.

Over the months of this pandemic, The Associated Press has debunked a series of bogus remedies that spread on Facebook, Twitter and the like. No, blasting hot air up your nose from a hair dryer won't protect you. Nor will drinking tonic water, eating high-alkaline foods, stuffing antibiotic ointment up your nose, downing vodka or

any home elixir.

No, it's not true that if you can't hold your breath very long, you have COVID-19. Or that a vaccine from a lab only works on a disease created by a lab.

Social distancing has not come with social-media distancing. Over a century of science, we haven't gone back to the future, but ahead to the past.

## LESSONS OF 1918 (AND 1919)

In September 1918, as the Spanish flu's second and by far deadliest wave hit in the U.S., Philadelphia's public health chief disregarded advisers and let a massive war-bond parade proceed through downtown. The H1N1 virus raced through the masses in what has been called the world's deadliest parade.

As officials insisted there was nothing to be alarmed about, people were seeing neighbors sicken and die with astonishing speed and mass graves being dug.

"It's just the flu" had worn thin as the mantra of officialdom.

Late that November, sirens wailed in San Francisco to sound the all-clear after six weeks of lockdown and tell people they could remove their masks. San Francisco, like many cities in the West, had been largely

spared the first wave and spent the interval preparing for Round 2, mandating masks and jailing people who didn't comply.

They had a rhyme for that, too, of course: "Obey the laws, and wear the gauze. Protect your jaws from septic paws."

The precautions paid off with a death rate lower than in afflicted cities elsewhere. But the city relaxed too soon.

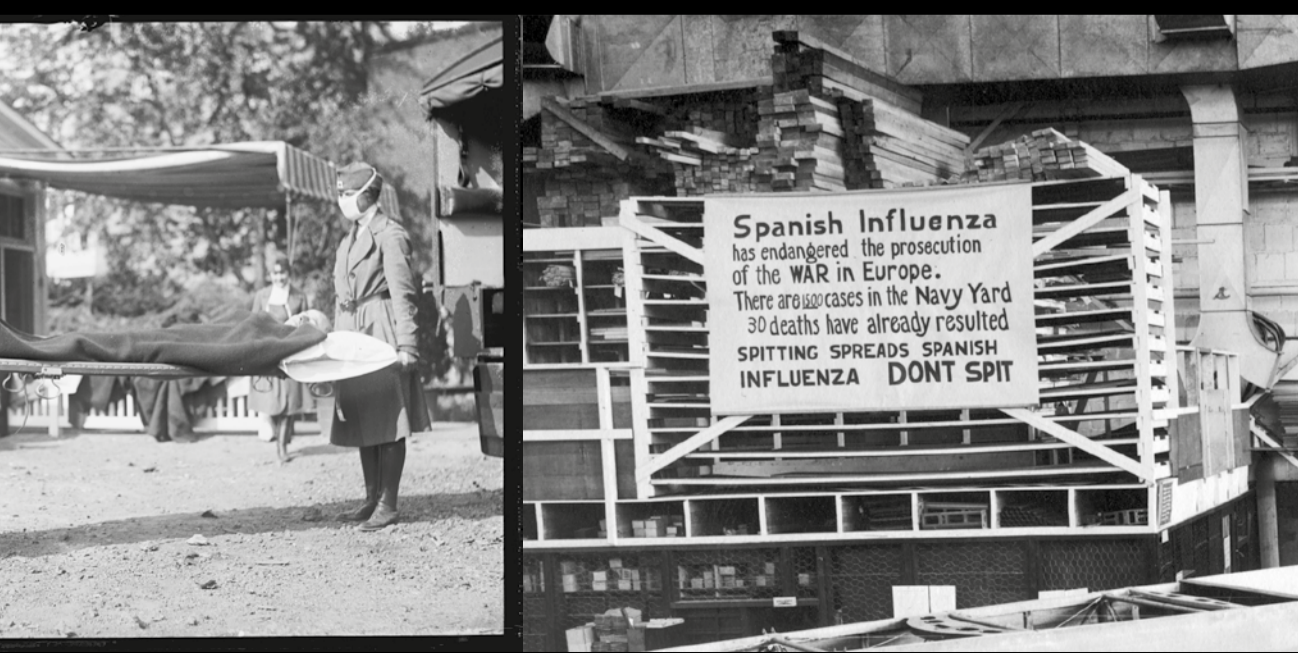
In December, thousands of new cases erupted. A wave spilling into the new year was underway. San Francisco's death toll mounted by more than 1,000. It was the last lashing by the Spanish flu, and a less lethal one.

The brutal lessons of 1918 and 1919? To Barry, who was enlisted 15 years ago in a Bush administration drive to prepare all levels of government for pandemics, they are to respond early, relax cautiously, tell people the truth.

Instead he has seen denial followed by a chaotic federal response and leadership vacuum as Washington and the states compete for the same medical essentials and now move fitfully toward reopening.

"Now we have plans, even war-gamed the plans, spent billions preparing for just what is happening, federal agencies have been tasked to handle all these things, and we get ... next to nothing," he said.

Not even a jingle. AP







Dystopian season: Spectators' seating are covered with pictures of fans at the opening of baseball season in South Korea

# Four new cases in South Korea; China show work on containment

NICK PERRY,  
WELLINGTON

**C**HINA and South Korea, which had early, intense outbreaks of the coronavirus, together reported only four new infections yesterday and were slowly resuming public events after months of containment efforts.

Meanwhile, the U.S. was taking halting steps to lift some restrictions even as thousands of new cases continue to be reported each day.

In Washington, the Supreme Court heard arguments by telephone and allowed the world to listen in live for the first time ever. And the Senate convened for the first time since March, though prospects for quick action on a new aid package are uncertain.

South Korea's three new cases represented the lowest daily jump in nearly three months. More than 10,000 people have been infected in the nation's outbreak, and more than 250 have died.

As cases slow, South Korea will start reopening schools in phases starting with high school seniors next week, and its professional baseball league began its new season yesterday. Pictures were placed in the stands depicting absent fans, and the stadium

was quiet enough to hear cheers and shouts from the dugout.

In China, it has been three weeks since any new deaths have been reported in the country where the pandemic began in December. Just one new case of infection was confirmed, and fewer than 400 patients are still being treated for COVID-19, health officials said. Strict travel restrictions, testing, quarantining and case tracing policies appear to have stemmed the virus as warm weather arrives in much of the country.

Other places in the Asia-Pacific region have also had success in suppressing outbreaks, including Hong Kong, Taiwan, Vietnam, Thailand, Australia and New Zealand, which has had zero new cases for two days. But some countries like India have escalating outbreaks, and experts say the country with its 1.3 billion population has yet to see its peak.

In the U.S., a shuttered pork processing plant in South Dakota took its first steps toward reopening after more than 800 employees were infected with the virus. California Gov. Gavin Newsom, one of the first governors to impose a statewide stay-home order, announced that some businesses can reopen as early as Friday, with restrictions.

In Louisiana, state lawmakers were restarting their legislature — but feuded over whether they should return at all. Political battles have become increasingly embedded in U.S. coronavirus policy.

The moves to open U.S. states come even as daily new infections continue to exceed 20,000 and daily deaths 1,000, according to figures from Johns Hopkins University.

Governments around the world have reported 3.5 million infections and more than 251,000 deaths, including more than 68,000 deaths in the United States. Deliberately concealed outbreaks, low testing rates and the severe strain the disease has placed on health care systems mean the true scale of the pandemic is undoubtedly much greater.

With pressure growing in many countries for more measures to restart the economy, politicians were trying to boost funding for research into a vaccine for COVID-19. There are hopes one could be available in months, but many scientists warn it could take much longer.

Developing a vaccine will be the key to returning to less restricted everyday life. An alliance of world leaders on Monday pledged to give 7.4 billion euros (\$8 billion) for the effort, but the U.S. and

Russia were notably absent.

The money raised will be channeled mostly through recognized global health organizations. French President Emmanuel Macron said he was convinced the U.S. would at some point join the initiative.

Carnival Cruise Line, which saw outbreaks on several ships, plans to start cruises again in August, leaving from Florida and Texas. The Caribbean trips will be the company's first since the pandemic forced a near-total pause in the cruise industry.

In Brazil, President Jair Bolsonaro said he twice tested negative for the coronavirus. Many people, including a federal judge, are demanding he share the actual results, but he has refused.

The standoff is the latest flashpoint in a broader battle between a president who has repeatedly tested the limits of his power and democratic institutions. There are concerns it could spark a constitutional crisis.

Bolsonaro has consistently downplayed the coronavirus pandemic and has fiercely criticized local attempts to control its spread, instead advocating for most people to get back to work. More than 108,000 people have been infected in Brazil and more than 7,300 have died. AP

## this day in history



### 1997 BROWN SETS BANK OF ENGLAND FREE

The Chancellor, Gordon Brown, has given the Bank of England independence from political control.

His surprise announcement - coming only four days after Labour's landslide election win - is being described as the most radical shake-up in the bank's 300-year history.

Mr Brown has also announced a loan rate rise of a quarter-point to 6.25%. The increase was decided after Mr Brown's first and last meeting with the Governor of the Bank of England, Eddie George.

The chancellor went straight from that meeting to a news conference at which he unveiled his plans to give the bank freedom to control monetary policy.

He said: "I want to set in place a longterm framework for economic prosperity... I want to break from the boom bust economics of previous years."

Labour MPs have applauded the chancellor's announcement - but the Conservatives were divided, with former chancellor Norman Lamont congratulating Mr Brown while former home secretary Michael Howard deplored it.

Business chiefs have broadly welcomed Labour's decision to give the bank its independence.

Under the new regime, a monetary policy committee will be set up to decide interest rates with a view to achieving an initial inflation target of 2.5% or less.

The committee will be made up of the Governor, his deputy, a new second deputy, two bank executive directors and four experts, appointed from outside the bank.

It will meet monthly and each member will be entitled to one vote.

In the past, the chancellor held a monthly meeting with the governor at which interest rates were agreed.

It means the bank will now be free to decide monetary policy without taking the short-term wishes of politicians into account.

It is understood Mr Brown and his economic adviser, Ed Balls, put the final touches to their plans to give the bank independence over interest rates in a London hotel only 36 hours before the party's election victory.

Within hours of celebrating the party's win, Mr Brown was at the Treasury. Officials had to work through the bank holiday weekend to get the paperwork ready for the most sweeping reform in the bank's history.

The regular monthly meeting between the Chancellor and the Mr George was brought forward by one day but details of the final announcement were kept secret until the news conference.

Courtesy BBC News

## IN CONTEXT

The decision to give the Bank of England its independence was seen as a decisive move, the swiftness of which took many by surprise.

Arguments that it was a first step towards achieving European Monetary Union were quickly rejected on the basis further legislation would be needed before the bank achieved the total independence required by the Maastricht Treaty.

Mr Brown quickly developed a reputation as an iron chancellor and "prudence" became his watchword. He said he wanted to put an end to Labour's reputation for boom and bust economics.

On 15 June 2004 he became the longest-serving modern day chancellor, beating the previous record set by David Lloyd George of seven years and 43 days between 1908 and 1915.

In the nineteenth century, William Gladstone was Chancellor for a total of 12 years and four months between 1852 and 1882.



MACAU'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

**YOUR STARS**

**ARIES**  
Mar. 21-Apr. 19  
If you're looking for a new dose of romance in your life, playing hard to get isn't advisable right now. You have nothing to lose by advertising your urge to get to know someone better.

**TAURUS**  
Apr. 20-May. 20  
The universe cautions you against impetuosity. Give your temper some time to cool off before you cause any friction with an authority figure.

**GEMINI**  
May. 21-Jun. 21  
You could get a great chance to add your unique flair to something drab. In fact, you've been wanting to rework this thing for quite a while. Get ready to work your magic and impress some tough cookies.

**CANCER**  
Jun. 22-Jul. 22  
Coasting through life for a while might be a good idea for you, even though your energy is pushing you to get out and get active. You could be entering a very busy time, full of unfamiliar entities and personalities.

**LEO**  
Jul. 23-Aug. 22  
You can't plan everything. If you did, when would you ever be surprised in life? Your creativity is in need of a big boost, and the only thing that will deliver the blast you need is uncertainty.

**VIRGO**  
Aug. 23-Sep. 22  
This day is all about perspective, and yours could be a bit too narrow right now. Too much of what you see is what you want to see, and it's high time that you widened your horizons.

**LIBRA**  
Sep. 23-Oct. 22  
While you're in this mode, look for areas where you can cut back, and not just monetarily. Also, widen your attention and make an effort to catch up with someone outside of your main circle of friends.

**SCORPIO**  
Oct. 23-Nov. 21  
If you're not in the mood to be social right now, don't be. It's much more important to be content than it is to get along well with others right now. Besides, you aren't going to tick anyone off by laying low.

**SAGITTARIUS**  
Nov. 22-Dec. 21  
All books, websites, and television shows can offer general concepts to follow. The specifics are up to you. As long as you feel like you're getting what you deserve, that's all that matters!

**CAPRICORN**  
Dec. 22-Jan. 19  
Today might be extremely busy for you, but it doesn't have to be all work and no play! There's nothing wrong with adding a little fun to spice up a business situation. Don't feel the need to take everything so seriously.

**AQUARIUS**  
Jan. 20-Feb. 18  
Point people in the right direction, give them an objective, and delegate responsibilities. Being a leader is something you're quite skilled at, even though it doesn't always give you pleasure.

**PISCES**  
Feb. 19-Mar. 20  
The world isn't aware of all of the skills you possess, so why not give them a sneak preview today? You can use your hidden talents to entertain, persuade, and negotiate - whatever you need to accomplish.

**The Born Loser by Chip Sanson**



**SUDOKU**

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

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

**WEATHER**

	MIN	MAX	CONDITION
<b>CHINA</b>			
Beijing	13	26	clear
Harbin	4	20	clear
Tianjin	14	23	clear
Urumqi	9	21	cloudy
Xi'an	18	30	overcast
Lhasa	4	18	overcast
Chengdu	21	30	cloudy
Chongqing	25	34	cloudy
Kunming	15	29	clear
Nanjing	15	24	cloudy
Shanghai	19	23	overcast
Wuhan	19	26	drizzle
Hangzhou	19	25	overcast
Taipei	23	27	drizzle
Guangzhou	26	35	clear
Hong Kong	27	33	cloudy
<b>WORLD</b>			
Moscow	13	22	drizzle
Frankfurt	5	18	clear
Paris	10	21	clear
London	6	18	clear
New York	6	21	cloudy

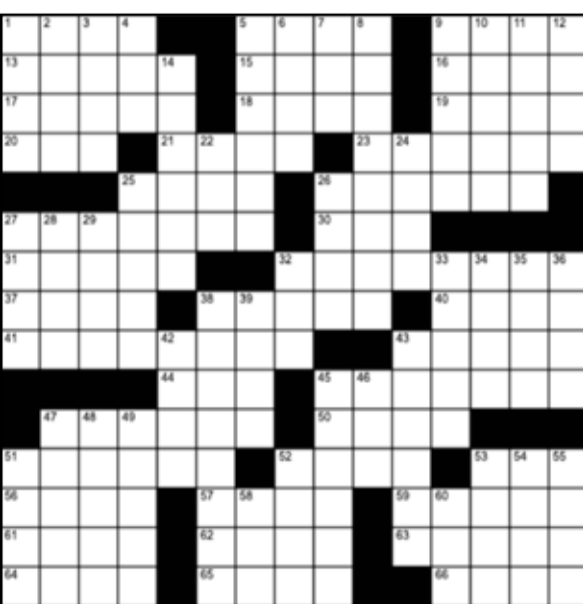
**CROSSWORDS**

**ACROSS:** 1- North Sea feeder; 5- I've Got \_\_\_ in Kalamazoo; 9- Easy to manage; 13- Dawdle; 15- Full of energy; 16- Ancient Greek coin; 17- Alert; 18- Tatum's dad; 19- Breaks bread; 20- Compass dir.; 21- Scope; 23- Singer Kitt; 25- Factual; 26- Feathered fisher; 27- Fell; 30- Refusals; 31- Harass; 32- Many; 37- School founded by Henry VI; 38- Farm layers; 40- Art Deco artist; 41- Having ears that droop; 43- Continental identity of a Chinese person; 44- Comrade; 45- Vertical; 47- Merriment; 50- Control; 51- Threat finale; 52- Nile wader; 53- Loud noise; 56- Actress Singer; 57- Goat's milk cheese; 59- Enlighten; 61- Capital city of Western Samoa; 62- \_\_\_ arms (angry); 63- \_\_\_ Ark; 64- Give eats; 65- Emit coherent light; 66- Away from the wind;

**DOWN:** 1- JFK postings; 2- Rules; 3- Highland hillside; 4- Go off course; 5- Consented; 6- Spanish painter; 7- Turkish title; 8- Bereft of company; 9- Start of a saying on forgiveness; 10- Ease up; 11- Like an unprotected sweater?; 12- Socialite Maxwell; 14- On an annual basis; 22- Wish undone; 24- Semicircular recess; 25- Steak order; 26- Responsibility; 27- Chinese weight; 28- A law \_\_\_ itself; 29- Queue before Q; 32- Homer's neighbor; 33- Gum; 34- Not a dup.; 35- Mormon state of western USA; 36- Mailed; 38- Thankful; 39- Slippery; 42- Simians; 43- Out of bed; 45- Sophisticated; 46- Architect I.M.; 47- Search blindly; 48- Lofty nest; 49- Greek epic poem; 51- Minnesota's St. \_\_\_ College; 52- How sweet \_\_\_; 53- Clock face; 54- \_\_\_ Walked Into My Life" (song from "Mame"); 55- Wall St. letters; 58- Clean air org.; 60- 1950 film noir classic;

**Yesterday's solution**

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



Crossword puzzles provided by BestCrosswords.com

**USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS**

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



<p><b>FOR SALE</b></p> <p><b>The Entertainers Dream</b> Simplex Apartment w/ Outdoor Terraces <b>HK\$18,800,000</b> 4,080 ft<sup>2</sup> 2 1/2 3 1/2</p>	<p><b>FOR RENT</b></p> <p><b>Cute One Bedroom, Central Taipa</b> <b>\$12,500/mth</b> 805 ft<sup>2</sup> 1 1/2 1 1/2</p>	<p><b>FOR SALE</b></p> <p>[Macau] Waterfront Duet Studio apartment 1 1/2 1/2 469 ft<sup>2</sup> <b>\$4,980,000</b> (ref: 20016001)</p> <p>[Taipa] Chun Fuk apartment 2 1/2 2 1/2 834 ft<sup>2</sup> <b>\$8,998,000</b> (ref: 20036002)</p> <p>[Macau] Lakeview Tower 3 1/2 2 1/2 1,344 ft<sup>2</sup> <b>\$11,000,000</b> (ref: 19126001)</p> <p>[Taipa] Buckingham 2 1/2 2 1/2 1,439 ft<sup>2</sup> <b>\$11,770,000</b> (ref: 19045004)</p>	<p><b>FOR RENT</b></p> <p>[Macau] Vai Fung Triplex, Macau 2 1/2 2 1/2 1,065 ft<sup>2</sup> <b>\$15,800/mth</b> (ref: 19121001)</p> <p>[Taipa] Buckingham 2 1/2 1 1/2 1,100 ft<sup>2</sup> <b>\$15,900/mth</b> (ref: 20031002)</p> <p>[Taipa] Manhattan 3 1/2 2 1/2 1,626 ft<sup>2</sup> <b>\$20,800/mth</b> (ref: n/a)</p> <p>[Coloane] Ocean Garden 4 1/2 4 1/2 3,700 ft<sup>2</sup> <b>\$35,000/mth</b> (ref: 18040674)</p>	<p><b>jml</b> 卓雅物業 property since 1994</p> <p><b>(853) 2835 2699</b> hello@jmlproperty.com www.jmlproperty.com</p> <p>f jmlmacau @ jmlproperty</p>
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# HONG KONG RETAIL SINKS 42% IN MARCH AS CHINA CONSUMERS VANISH

ERIC LAM & JINSHAN HONG

**H**ONG Kong's retailers will need to get creative to survive the deepening recession that's enveloped the city as tourists from the mainland who fueled past rebounds are unlikely to come to the rescue this time.

The city's retail sales by value in March sank 42% from year earlier to HKD23 billion (\$2.97 billion), according to a government release. That was a slight uptick from February's record decline. By volume, sales dropped 43.8% from a year earlier.

The two straight months with declines greater than 40% is an unprecedented period of weakness. The city's wider economy contracted 8.9% in the first quarter from year-ago levels, suffering its worst quarter on record and extending the first recession in a decade. Private consumption sank 10.2% in the period while exports of services plummeted 37.8%, according to a government release Monday.

"People aren't buying because they are worried about their future," said Alicia Garcia Herro, chief Asia-Pacific economist at Natixis SA. "Why would you spend in such circumstances?"

## ALREADY IN RECESSION

While economies around the world are struggling with lockdowns from the coronavirus pandemic, the outlook for Hong Kong's consumption industries is particularly bleak with the acute downturn due to the virus coming on the heels of a recession from months of anti-government protests. That tension - which kept mainland tourists away - means that even as restrictions to contain the virus are

lifted, it's unlikely to spur a return to previous levels of cross-border traffic and spending.

"China tourists will probably be half of what they used to be," Michael Tien, a member of the Hong Kong Legislative Council and founder of fashion retailer G2000 Apparel Ltd., told Bloomberg Television. "The Chinese tourist will probably never come back because they obviously feel that with all the protests going on, there's going to be a deep divide with Hong Kong and they may not be completely welcome in the future."

With Hong Kong also stepping up border control measures due to the virus, visitor arrivals from China plummeted about 99% from a year ago in March to just over 30,000 people, according to figures from the Hong Kong Tourism Board. That's down from a peak of more than 5.5 million visitors from the mainland in January 2019, the data show.

"We are in a very difficult time," Hong Kong Chief Executive Carrie Lam said at a regular briefing yesterday. Lam also announced the city will soon relax some social distancing measures. "When compared with the financial crisis, the SARS crisis, the financial tsunami, it's worse than those occasions."

Removing some of the virus-related restrictions is a double-edged sword for retailers due to the threat of a resumption of the pro-democracy protests from last year.

AP PHOTO



"I don't think we can survive it for very long," said Douglas Young, co-founder and chief executive of lifestyle and fashion retail chain Goods of Desire, in an interview with Bloomberg TV.

## BLEAK FUTURE

The dire situation is prompting some retailers in the city to accelerate shifts in their business.

Kidsland International Holdings Ltd., which sells toys for children, has begun ramping up online ordering and home delivery services in Hong Kong, said Sherman Hung, an executive director with the firm. The company's strategy had previously been adopted in China, but not in Hong Kong until the virus forced the company's hand.

"Covid-19 is an accelerator in promoting us to adopt and evolve quickly," Hung said on Bloomberg TV. "In the past, of

course, a significant portion of our businesses is represented by cross-border travelers coming to Hong Kong to consume. But there's also a very significant portion being represented by local demand."

Assuming the virus crisis improves, Hong Kong will come out of recession gradually toward the end of the year, Financial Secretary Paul Chan said at a press conference Monday. The city potentially faces its worst full-year performance on record with a contraction of as much as 7%, after the economy shrank 1.2% last year.

"Our economic situation is very challenging, we are deep into recession," Chan said. "Going forward, the second quarter, we believe that even if there is improvement, the improvement will be gradual and small." **BLOOMBERG**

**"The Chinese tourist will probably never come back because they obviously feel that with all the protests going on [...] they may not be completely welcome in the future."**

MICHAEL TIEN  
LAWMAKER

"I don't see how the retail sector or the tourism sector could survive another six months of this kind of unrest and downturn."

## CORPORATE BITS

### Melco unveils special summer offers for Macau residents



Melco Resorts & Entertainment is bringing special summer offers to Macau residents over the next three months.

Melco has announced the return of "Melco Loves Locals" offer for Macau residents, with a variety of exclusive offers for those presenting a valid Macau ID card. In addition to the 20% off at participating outlets from today to July 31, locals may also enjoy discounted room rates by booking their stay at Studio City Celebrity Tower, The Countdown Hotel, Grand Hyatt Macau or Altira Macau via Melco official sites until June 30 for

a staycation in town.

Meanwhile, until July 31, guests who spend at selected outlets at City of Dreams, Studio City, Altira Macau and Mocha Clubs may enjoy a variety of discounts and promotions.

With over 60 participating outlets across Melco's properties, guests may enjoy 25% off with full payment settlement by MPay or Macau Pass. On top of this, for any net transaction of MOP300 or above, MPay users may also enjoy an instant deduction up to MOP300 by scanning the official MPay Red Packet QR code.

The offer is available for premium restaurants and eateries, including but not limited to Voyages by Alain Ducasse featuring bistro-style French favorites and Pierre Herme Lounge featuring inspiring pastry creations and delicacies. Rossi Trattoria serving up rustic Italian cuisine and Michelin-starred Chinese restaurant Pearl Dragon, as well as refined Michelin-starred Cantonese restaurant Ying.

The summertime privileges are also available at entertainment facilities, including the popular entertainment show, The House of Dancing Water.



TECHNOLOGY

# Here come Covid-19 tracing apps - and privacy trade-offs

MATT O'BRIEN  
& CHRISTINA LARSON

**A**S governments around the world consider how to monitor new coronavirus outbreaks while reopening their societies, many are starting to bet on smartphone apps to help stanch the pandemic.

But their decisions on which technologies to use — and how far those allow authorities to peer into private lives — are highlighting some uncomfortable trade-offs between protecting privacy and public health.

"There are conflicting interests," said Tina White, a Stanford University researcher who first introduced a privacy-protecting approach in February. "Governments and public health (agencies) want to be able to track people" to minimize the spread of COVID-19, but people are less likely to download a voluntary app if it is intrusive, she said.

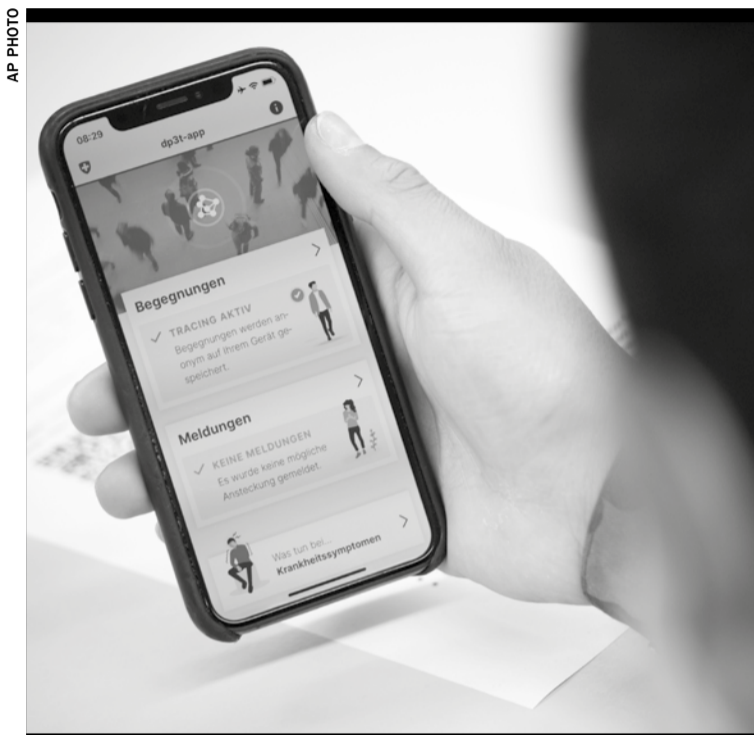
Containing infectious disease outbreaks boils down to a simple mantra: test, trace and isolate. Today, that means identifying people who test positive for the novel coronavirus, tracking down others they might have infected, and preventing further spread by quarantining everyone who might be contagious.

That second step requires an army of healthcare workers to question coronavirus carriers about recent contacts so those people can be tested and potentially isolated.

Smartphone apps could speed up that process by collecting data about your movements and alerting you if you've spent time near a confirmed coronavirus carrier. The more detailed that data, the more it could help regional governments identify and contain emerging disease "hot spots." But data collected by governments can also be abused by governments — or their private-sector partners.

Some countries and local governments are issuing voluntary government-designed apps that make information directly available to public health authorities.

In Australia, more than 3 million people have downloaded such an app touted by the prime minister, who compared it to the ease of applying



sunscreen and said more app downloads would bring about a "more liberated economy and society." Utah is the first U.S. state to embrace a similar approach, one developed by a social media startup previously focused on helping young people hang out with nearby friends.

Both these apps record a digital trail of the strangers an individual encountered. Utah's goes even further, using a device's location to help track which restaurants or stores a user has visited.

The app is "a tool to help jog the memory of the person who is positive so we can more readily identify where they've been, who they've been in contact with, if they choose to allow that," said Angela Dunn, Utah's state epidemiologist.

A competing approach under development by tech giants Apple and Google limits the information collected and anonymizes what it pulls in so that such personalized tracking isn't possible.

Apple and Google have pushed for public health agencies to adopt their privacy-oriented model, offering an app-building interface they say will work smoothly on billions of phones when the software rolls out sometime in May. Germany and a growing number of European countries have aligned with that approach, while others, such as France and the UK, have argued for more government access to

app data. Most coronavirus-tracking apps rely on Bluetooth, a decades-old short-range wireless technology, to locate other phones nearby that are running the same app.

## Some countries are issuing voluntary gov't-designed apps that make information directly available to public health authorities

The Bluetooth apps keep a temporary record of the signals they encounter. If one person using the app is later confirmed to have COVID-19, public health authorities can use that stored data to identify and notify other people who may have been exposed.

Apple and Google say that apps built to their specifications will work across most iPhones and Android devices, eliminating compatibility problems. They have also forbidden governments to make their apps compulsory and are building in privacy protections to keep stored data out of government and corporate hands and ease concerns about surveillance.

For instance, these apps rely on encrypted "peer to peer" signals sent from phone to phone; these aren't stored in government databases and are designed to conceal individual

identities and connections. Public-health officials aren't even in the loop; these apps would notify users directly of their possible exposure and urge them to get tested.

In the U.S., developers are pitching their apps directly to state and local governments. In Utah, the social media company Twenty sold state officials on an approach combining Bluetooth with satellite-based GPS signals. That would let trained health workers help connect the dots and discover previously hidden clusters of infection.

"It's unlikely that automated alerts are going to be enough," said Jared Allgood, Twenty's chief strategy officer and a Utah resident, citing estimates that the peer-to-peer models would need most people participating to be effective.

North and South Dakota are pursuing a similar model after a local startup repurposed its existing Bison Tracker app, originally designed to connect fans of North Dakota State University's athletic teams.

Regardless of the approach, none of these apps will be effective at breaking chains of viral infections unless countries like the U.S. can ramp up coronavirus testing and hire more health workers to do manual outreach.

Another big limitation: many people, particularly in vulnerable populations, don't carry smartphones.

In Singapore, for instance, a large migrant worker population lives in cramped dorms, makes about \$15 a day, and powers the city's previously booming construction industry — but smartphone usage in this group is low. When the Southeast Asian city-state launched its tracing app in March, total confirmed COVID-19 cases were well under 1,000. Then in early April, a rash of new infections in worker dormitories pushed that number to more than 18,000, triggering new lockdown policies.

"If we can find a way to automate some of the detective work with technology, I think that would be a significant help," said Nadia Abuelezam, a disease researcher at Boston College. "It won't be all we need." AP



Lucinda Williams, "Good Souls, Better Angels" (Highway 20/Thirty Tigers)

TUNES

## Lucinda Williams channels her anger into song

SCOTT STROUD, AP

**L**UCINDA Williams has come up with an album for our times — at least if you're as angry as she is.

"Good Souls, Better Angels" is anything but subtle. Williams takes on "fools and thieves and clowns and hypocrites" — and that's just on one song, "Bad News Blues."

Oh, and she gets after the devil, too. And President Donald Trump, in "Man Without a Soul."

That song's hook isn't especially clever, and the politics aren't for everybody. The starring role, though, goes to Williams' spectacular band. Guitarist Stuart Mathis, bassist David Sutton and drummer Butch Norton jam out as Williams repeatedly shouts, "It's coming down." Comparisons are risky, but the playing evokes Neil Young of "Like a Hurricane" vintage.

It's fiery, righteous and emphatic, like the soundtrack to someone leaving a murder scene.

Williams is less blunt on "Big Black Train," a song about depression, and "Wakin' Up," which touches on domestic violence. Even then, it's the band that elevates an ordinary hook — "I'm waking up from a bad dream" — to something more.

The mellower cuts are more constructive. On "When the Way Gets Dark," the band matches the unsettled mood of Williams' languid, encouraging vocals. On "Good Souls," a gorgeous prayer of a song, Williams recaptures the Velvet Underground-influenced magic she harnessed a few years ago with her cover of J.J. Cale's "Magnolia."

Superlatives can be tricky with new music. Sometimes you have to let it sink in a little, see how it holds up over time. You might be left to wonder later what everybody was so mad about.

The bet here, though, is that Williams and her band have captured the spirit of the moment. Not everyone will see things as she does, but no one will miss the point.



**OPINION**

**World Views**

Karl W. Smith, Bloomberg

**PAY CUTS ARE BETTER THAN LAYOFFS IN THIS RECESSION**

Economists have long explained recessions in part by pointing to the reluctance of employers to reduce workers' pay. This so-called market rigidity reverberates throughout the economy, creating waves of unemployment and declining growth that are worse than any pay cut.

That's one reason that the recession caused by the response to Covid-19 might be different: Many companies are actually cutting pay, providing a glimmer of hope that the economy will rebound faster than usual.

It's important to remember that recessions are complex. Even in a well-functioning economy, there will be times when shocks such as crop failures, oil embargoes or pandemics cause widespread hardship and declines in real income.

The key feature of modern recessions has been sharply rising unemployment, which creates a self-reinforcing spiral. Unemployed workers spend less, while those who still have jobs increase their savings out of fear that they might be next. This widespread decline in spending reduces the revenue businesses take in — leading to more layoffs and further spending declines. Recessions can cause unemployment to double or triple in matter of months, damage that takes even a healthy economy years to repair.

The pain could be mitigated substantially if, instead of cutting jobs, employers cut wages and prices at the same time. Businesses would have less revenue, but also lower costs. Employees would have lower incomes, but also spend less.

So why doesn't that happen? Most economists believe that businesses are reluctant to reduce pay because it violates an implicit (and sometimes explicit) employment contract: If an employee comes into work, does a good job and budgets expenses responsibly, then her employer will pay her enough to meet her expenses.

If this understanding is broken, morale will collapse, productivity will fall and the most experienced and valuable workers will look for more secure opportunities once the economy recovers. By laying off a portion of the workforce, an employer is able to maintain its relationship with those that remain, who are often its most prized employees.

Covid-19 has changed this dynamic. In general, the sense of widespread sacrifice — which goes beyond any single business or industry — means that the damage of pay cuts to any employer-employee relationship is less than it might be. More specifically, federal payroll-support programs have allowed some businesses to reduce labor costs without shedding employees. The combination of more generous unemployment benefits and the (hopefully) limited duration of the shutdown has allowed the majority of employers to put workers on furlough rather than resorting to permanent layoffs.

All these factors imply that a strong economic rebound is possible — if there is some certainty about the duration of the crisis. Simply relaxing formal restrictions is not enough, and in some cases could be counterproductive. If businesses attempt to reopen but find themselves with few customers, the ordinary dynamics of a recession will take hold.

The key to avoiding that scenario is coordination, similar to the coordinated shutdown in the U.S. in mid-March. That shutdown wasn't driven by stay-at-home orders — and the reopening won't be, either. What is required is widespread agreement about the conditions that make reopening the economy safe, as well as a trusted authority (like the U.S. Centers for Disease Control) judging whether those conditions have been met.

America doesn't have that level of agreement yet. But the consensus on shutting down the economy evolved rapidly over a few weeks, and so could one on opening it back up. If that happens, then the U.S. economy might well get out of this recession without the crippling long-term job losses that marked the last one.

The Senate reopened in a Capitol largely shuttered by the coronavirus, but prospects for quick action on a new aid package are uncertain with a deepening debate over how best to confront the deadly pandemic and its economic devastation.

The 100 senators are convening for the first time since March, while the House is staying away due to the health risks, as the conflicted Congress reflects an uneasy nation. The Washington area remains a virus hot spot under stay-home rules.

Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell opened the session, defending his decision to focus the agenda on confirming President Donald Trump's nominees rather than the virus outbreak.

Senate Republicans are trying to set the terms of debate, frustrated that House Speaker Nancy Pelosi was able to fill up earlier aid bills with Democratic priorities. They're reluctant to unleash federal funds beyond the nearly \$3 trillion Congress already approved.

**FORMER HONG KONG LEADERS LAUNCH PRO-BEIJING COALITION**

ZEN SOO, HONG KONG

Two of Hong Kong's former leaders launched a pro-Beijing alliance yesterday to uphold China's "one country, two systems" policy and work to revive the city's economy following months of anti-government protests.

The move by former chief executives Tung Chee-hwa and Leung Chun-ying comes ahead of key legislative elections in September. The ruling pro-Beijing government took a drubbing in district elections held last year amid demonstrations calling for greater democracy.

Tung and Leung said the new Hong Kong Coalition will support employment by creating jobs, providing internships and offering volunteer work to fresh graduates. They did not provide details of how they would do that.

"We will give full play to 'One Country, Two Systems' and recover our economy, and continue to safeguard the rule of law so that we can achieve stability and prosperity in Hong Kong," said Tung, who led the city from 1997 to 2005.

Hong Kong was riven by anti-government protests last year against what critics see as growing Chinese influence in the city's affairs. The former British colony was handed back to China in 1997 under the "one-country, two-systems" framework in which Hong Kong was given freedoms not enjoyed on the mainland and promised a high degree of autonomy over local affairs for 50 years.

During the protests, hundreds of thousands took to the streets and



Former Hong Kong chief executives Leung Chun-ying (right) and Tung Chee-hwa attend a press conference in Hong Kong yesterday

violent clashes erupted between police and hard-line demonstrators. Among the protesters demands was the direct election of the city's leader, currently picked by a committee.

**The move by former chief executives Tung Chee-hwa and Leung Chun-ying comes ahead of key legislative elections in September**

The launch of the coalition comes a day after Hong Kong said its economy contracted 8.9% year-on-year for the first three months of 2020, the largest decline on record. The city's unemployment rate in March hit 4.2%, the highest in over nine years and an increase for the sixth consecutive month.

The city's economy has taken a battering since the protest movement, which affected the tourism, retail and restaurant industries, and has been further battered by the coronavirus

pandemic.

"If we look back to the history of Hong Kong, we see that our people are resilient and we always rise from hardship," said Leung, who was the city's chief executive from

2012 to 2017.

"I believe, with joint effort, we will solve every one of these social problems."

The coalition says it has 1,545 members from all walks of society, including health workers responding to COVID-19 and young people.

Hong Kong chief executive Carrie Lam said yesterday that the economic contraction was "worse than expected," but pledged to keep up government expenditure and investment to safeguard the economy.

Lam said Hong Kong would relax some of its social distancing measures, allowing businesses such as gyms, cinemas and beauty salons to reopen and doubling the number of individuals at public gatherings to a maximum of eight. Some students will also resume classes from the end of May. AP



Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte apologized to two tycoons he once threatened to arrest and thanked them for helping in the coronavirus pandemic, which he says "humbled me." The president asked Jaime Augusto Zobel de Ayala and Manuel Pangilinan for forgiveness. Both have arranged financial aid for thousands of their employees and helped the government deal with the contagion.



India About 200 Pakistanis stranded in India's coronavirus lockdown have been able to go home. Border security forces allowed the Pakistanis, wearing masks and riding in private vehicles, to cross the Attari-Wagah border that separates the sprawling Punjab region between Indian and Pakistan. The border opened yesterday for the first time since the lockdown began.

Australia Businesses have been told to prepare safety plans before pubs, restaurants and other businesses reopen in the booziest part of Australia. The Northern Territory has the highest rate of alcohol consumption per capita and is on track to become the first to reopen bars since a national lockdown began March 23. When they reopen in the territory May 15, alcohol can only be served with food and patrons can't linger more than two hours.



South Yemen A bid by separatists funded by the United Arab Emirates to assert control over southern Yemen has reopened a dangerous new front in Yemen's civil war and pushed it closer to fragmentation at a time when the coronavirus pandemic poses a growing threat. The separatists' recent declaration of self-rule over the key port city of Aden and other southern provinces.