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SECRETARY CHEONG SAYS CANCELLATION OF TIANANMEN EXHIBITION NOT BASED ON POLITICAL REASONS; PRO-DEMOCRATS DISAGREE

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Singaporeans were able to get a haircut at the barber or pop in to their favorite bakery yesterday as the government loosened restrictions three weeks before a partial lockdown ends. Despite an upsurge in cases due to an outbreak among foreign workers staying in crowded dormitories, the government says transmission in the local community has dropped and plans a phased reopening of the economy.



Philippines President Rodrigo Duterte said the lockdown that has restricted millions of Filipinos to their homes will be eased, but he warned that people who return to work must follow safeguards to avoid more illnesses and deaths. More than 50 provinces and cities will no longer be under quarantine after May 15 and restrictions will be eased in the rest of the archipelago. Metropolitan Manila and two other high-risk areas will remain under a lockdown to the end of May.



India is set to run limited train service as the country looks at easing its nearly seven-week lockdown. Special trains are departing from select cities. Passengers must be asymptomatic and maintain social distancing on board. Indian Railways also mandated a government-run contact tracing app that has been criticized over civil liberties concerns.

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STRAIT OF RISING TENSIONS

China's cooling down 'nationalistic fever' amid calls for the invasion of Taiwan during the pandemic, while Taipei fights Beijing for a seat in WHO

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696,100

POPULATION

INCREASE

MAINLY DUE

TO TNRS



GAMING BOSS

PAULO CHAN

TO RELINQUISH

TOP JOB

OPINION

AS MACAU BANS ANNUAL TIANANMEN MASSACRE EXHIBITION, HONG KONG SHOULD BE WARY OF CHINA EXPORTING CENSORSHIP

JORGE MENEZES*

CHINA'S Communist Party is continuing to export its repression of free speech. After more than 20 years of photographic exhibitions and vigils recounting the 4 June 1989 Tiananmen Massacre in Macau – displayed every year with no exception – the Macau authorities have shamelessly changed course.

José Tavares, the head of the Macau SAR's Municipal Affairs Bureau (IAM), outlawed a series of open-air photographic exhibitions planned for June 4 in different areas of the city. The exhibitions, requested by the Democratic Development Union – headed by long-time democratic legislator Ng Kuok Cheong – had been approved by the IAM at the end of April. It has gained approval consistently for two decades.

However, the IAM suddenly U-turned and informed Mr Ng that the exhibitions were no longer authorized. Considering how embarrassing the whole narrative was, Mr Tavares sounded adamant in his convoluted justification to Macau's TDM Radio: "Our Board of Directors decided to standardize applications. That is, applications for the use of our spaces must match our attributions and competencies". He added that regarding "activities that do not match our attributions or competences – we will not yield. It is simple."

He went on to say that, in late April, the IAM "did not go over things" and that "the Board of Directors understood that it should have a more concrete scope in these attributions". Freedom of expression seems to be an overly abstract concept for the IAM.

This decision was illegal, firstly, because the IAM attributions include precisely "promoting civic education" and issuing "authorizations concerning acts, events and activities." Secondly, the applicable administrative law does not allow, in these circumstances, a public

DANIEL BEITLER, MDT ARCHIVE



entity to revoke its decisions once the right has been granted to those who have requested it. Thirdly, and more importantly, this is a frontal violation of freedom of expression – a fundamental right enshrined in Macau's Basic Law.

Should the IAM believe that allowing for free expression in the public sphere was not within its competences, it should have advised Mr Ng Kuok Cheong to knock on the door of the competent governmental department. If this is just a matter of lack of competence, it is a minor issue, and IAM could just advise Mr Ng or deliver the application to the competent department and inform him accordingly. However, it is plain to see that all other doors will be closed to a Tiananmen related request. It is not about IAM being the wrong door, it is about Tiananmen being the "wrong" topic. All

the official doors would surely be locked down, most likely in an Orwellian manner.

Mr Ng Kuok Cheong said, quite rightly, that this was a politically motivated decision and that the IAM was just "playing with words." That's precisely

"Macau's economy could still somehow succeed in the absence of a system based on the rule of law and protection of fundamental liberties. But it wouldn't thrive as an engaging, creative and diverse city."

what it is. Mr Tavares' statement is not only wrong. It is foolish, nonsensical, and difficult to follow. The mock-heroic style denoted in his astonishing sentence "we will not yield" – when addressing an application for a photographic exhibition – betrayed his choreographed mes-

sage of plainness ("it is simple").

The IAM decision is not an expression of the Rule of Law, but the Rule-of-Whoever-Told-Mr-Tavares-Off. We have just learned that criticism of the Tiananmen crackdown is one more exception to the growingly moribund freedom of expression. There is "freedom" of expression, of course, as long as one doesn't express what the government doesn't like seeing expressed. The censure is on content. Therefore, it is political. There is no issue with the law here beyond its reckless violation. As different as the two SARs are, Hong

Kong should still be wary. Browsing quickly through the recent past, one watches Democratic legislator Sulu Sou being found guilty of illegal assembly for having walked off-route to deliver a letter that the then-Chief Executive didn't like (I was his lawyer). All assemblies called

in solidarity with the millions of Hongkongers committed to protecting rights and liberties were outlawed and passers-by harassed by the police. Now, recounting the Tiananmen brutality through a form of art and visual narrative – photography – was prohibited and censored.

What's next? Will criticizing chairman Xi's personality, the CCP's policy or discussing the hundreds of thousands detained in Chinese secretive internment camps for their religion or distinctive culture, be barred from public space? The earth is revolving around the sun so fast in Macau, that the 50-year period is shrinking to the point of starting to taste like 2049.

To succeed, Hong Kong and its financial center depend crucially on the rule of law and judicial independence, professional competence and outstanding universities, as well as on a way of life that upholds liberties and rights. Sadly, that is not so much the case with Macau. Its economy depends on gaming and gaming depends on mainland gamblers. Its destiny is ultimately a side-product of the PRC. Depending on the degree of erosion, it could hurt foreign investment, but not Chinese investment.

Hence, Macau's economy could still somehow succeed in the absence of a system based on the rule of law and protection of fundamental liberties. But it wouldn't thrive as an engaging, creative and diverse city. It could become just like another Chinese town with gaming, Portuguese churches and restaurants: a historical failure with economic attainment. We are still in time to stop this growing insobriety.

Let's hope that Macau's rulers know better and understand that autonomy, the rule of law, liberties and fundamental rights are necessary ingredients of Macau's uniqueness. That there is more to a flourishing life beyond money and material comfort.

* **LAWYER AND POLITICAL COMMENTATOR**

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Cheong: cancellation of Tiananmen exhibition not for political reasons

LYNZY VALLES

SECRETARY for Administration and Justice, André Cheong Weng Chon, said that the cancellation of the photo exhibition that showcases the history of the 1989 Democracy Movement and the June 4th incident was solely driven by the need to contain the pandemic outbreak, refuting the idea that it was politically motivated.

Last week, the Union for Democracy Development received a letter from Municipal Affairs Bureau (IAM), noting that the latter had revised the guidelines for approving venues, and decided to forbid them from setting up the exhibition in the planned public area.

According to the bureau, the "1989 Democratization Movement Photo Exhibition," which is organized by lawmaker Ng Kuok Cheong, was "not in line with relevant standards."

The exhibition is normally held alongside an annual vigil in Senado Square on the evening of June 4. The event calls on the public to remember Beijing's violent crackdown on pro-democracy activists in 1989.

Cheong told the press yesterday on the sidelines of the inauguration ceremony of the newly appointed judges that the decision to cancel the exhibition was not due to any political concern.

"The decision was not juridical, let alone political. The decision was precisely made because of the pandemic situation," the official clarified.

The IAM's new decision contradicts that which was made last month when the bureau authorized the use of public spaces. According to organizers, the IAM did not provide any justification for its change of position.

However, Cheong implied yesterday that it is normal for public services to change their decisions, adding that the deci-



Secretary for Administration and Justice André Cheong (left) and lawmaker Sulu sou



sion of IAM is "reasonable and adequate" to control the spread of Covid-19.

The exhibition is held annually in Senado Square, which, according to Cheong is a place prone to congestion, which is what prompted IAM to reverse its decision.

"All public services, when they verify that there was a mistake, can change their previous decision," he said.

IAM President José Tavares had previously justified the decision by noting that the move was to heed the call of health authorities, who have discouraged social gatherings.

The New Macau Association (ANM) is condemning the government for reversing its decision.

ANM said that the group is "shocked" by the action of the IAM and expresses strong disa-

greement with the decision.

"The IAM's prohibition is obviously based on political reasons. It is using administrative means to suppress freedom of expression and to minimize the space for the civil society," ANM added.

According to the statement, the association believes that the decision was an attempt to "hide ideals of the patriotic democratic movement and the historical crimes of the bloody suppression of the regime at that time."

The association urged IAM and other government departments not to continue to suppress any related activities, in particular the June 4 vigil which has 30 years of history.

The organizers have appealed against the IAM's decision and seek to continue with the exhibition.

Last year, an assembly in Senado Square was blocked from being held by the Public Security Police Force (PSP). The assembly sought to silently protest against the "violence used by the police forces in Hong Kong,"

However, the PSP refused to authorize the assembly because it was "not in accordance with the law."

The justifications given by the PSP were later validated by the Court of Final Appeal.

IAM REFUSES AU KAM SAN'S APPEAL

THE Municipal Affairs Bureau (IAM) has declined an appeal filed by Au Kam San regarding the decision to revoke permission to display an exhibition dedicated to the events that occurred in Tiananmen Square on June 4, 1989. The bureau issued a reply to lawmaker Au, who is one of the organizers of the event, stating that the criteria for IAM venue use have been reviewed. Consequently, only activities related to "culture, leisure, the environment, health, etc.," will be allowed in the future, as cited in the

statement posted on Au's Facebook account. "As the exhibition will likely attract crowds, the IAM revoked the previous permission on venue use, pursuant to Article 130 of the Code of Administrative Procedures," IAM stated, adding that the reversal of decision is not against the principle of goodwill. The bureau said the reversal of decision has not violated the Code of Administrative Procedures, especially not the principles of legality and equality. It added that the organizer has the right to file a judicial appeal.

CE appoints Portuguese judges to lower courts

THE Chief Executive has appointed two judges to the lower two courts; the Court of First Instance (TJB) and the Court of Second Instance (TSI). An inauguration ceremony was held at the Court of Final Appeal yesterday.

Chief Executive Ho Iat Seng attended yesterday's ceremony, where the newly

appointed judges, Rui Carlos dos Santos Pereira Ribeiro and Jerónimo Alberto Gonçalves Santos, took an oath in Portuguese.

On May 4, the SAR government published an executive order announcing their appointment. The decree explicitly addressed and defined the two judges as judges "of foreign ethnicity".

In 2019, the Legislative Assembly (AL) approved the Basic Law of Judicial Organization, which excludes judges "of foreign ethnicity" from handling matters of national security.

The two judges were recommended for the position by the Independent Commission responsible for the recommendation

of judges.

Rui Carlos dos Santos Pereira Ribeiro has been appointed as a judge of the TSI and Jerónimo Alberto Gonçalves Santos steps into the position of presiding judge at the TJB. Before the new appointment, the former was the presiding judge at the TJB and the latter was a panel judge of TJB.

Both newly appointed judges are under two-year employment contracts with their respective courts.

Together with Rui Carlos dos Santos Pereira Ribeiro, the TSI now has a total of nine judges including the presiding judge. Rui Carlos dos Santos Pereira Ribeiro is the only judge from a foreign background among

the nine judges. The other eight judges are Lai Kin Hong (presiding judge), Choi Mou Pan, Chan Kuong Seng, Fong Man Chong, Tam Hio Wa, Ho Wai Neng, Tong Hio Fong, Chao Im Peng.

The TJB court has eight judges: Teresa Leong, Lam Peng Fai, Cheong Un Mei, Kan Cheng Ha, Lou Ieng Ha, Leong Fong Meng, Cheong Weng Tong and Jerónimo Alberto Gonçalves Santos. **JZ**

MAN CHARGED FOR STEALING MACAU PASS CARD

The Public Security Police Force (PSP) charged one man for appropriating a Macau Pass electronic payment card, the PSP reported yesterday. The case took place in February, when the owner of the card topped up his pass in a convenience store but subsequently forgot to take it with him. When the card owner returned to the store to retrieve his card, it was missing. The shop's CCTV surveillance showed that another man illicitly appropriated the card. The 54-year-old local suspect used 500 patacas from the card's credit. Upon police inquiry, the man admitted to the theft. The PSP has already forwarded the man to the prosecution authority. According to Macau's crime code, this particular crime is subject to a maximum penalty of one year in prison or a maximum fine equivalent to 120 days.

WOMAN LOST 165,000 TO ONLINE FRAUD

A local woman in her 40s reported to the Judiciary Police a total loss of 165,000 yuan to an online fraudster. According to her, she had been engaging with an online friend for two years. In May this year, her online friend posted investment-related content on a social network. The woman said that she was intrigued and contacted her friend to learn more. However, it turned out that the online friend was deceiving other people. The victim said she made multiple investments through one online investment platform provided by the online friend, transferring the money to a designated bank account. Later, the investment platform's customer service convinced the woman that she should make further investments by sending more money to that specific bank account. Only at this time did the woman suspect that the arrangement was a fraud.

900 VEHICLES FOUND RELATED TO TAX VIOLATION

Since April 1, the Transport Bureau (DSAT) has found over 900 vehicles running on Macau streets without having settled their motor vehicle tax. The deadline to pay motor vehicle tax for the last taxation period was April 1, with over 13,500 vehicle owners failing to settle the tax, representing 5.6% of the city's registered licenses. In response to the unpaid tax, the DSAT deployed inspectors to investigate the situation on the road in April. The inspectors found a total of 912 vehicles that had with unpaid tax records, did not have the paid tax confirmation attached to the vehicle, or had had the car license canceled. According to the DSAT, not attaching paid tax signs on the vehicle's body represents 73% of the aforementioned number of cases, totaling 663 vehicles. Car owners with unfulfilled tax responsibilities are subjected to an additional 3% of tax and are obliged to pay double the concerned penalties as well.

DICJ LEADERSHIP TO CHANGE HANDS

RENATO MARQUES

THE office of the Secretary for Economy and Finance has confirmed that Paulo Martins Chan will leave his post as director of the Gaming Inspection and Coordination Bureau (DICJ) at the end of this month.

Chan is stepping down from the helm of the DICJ to return to the Public Prosecutions Office (MP).

The move, first reported by Macau Business, comes at Chan's request, the government has said.

Chan has served as head of the DICJ since December 2015, and his secondment was extended last year for another year, until December 2020. Chan's decision shortens his tenure by a total of seven months.

While Chan's successor has not yet been officially announced, Secretary for Economy and Finance Lei Wai Nong has stated that this will be announced in due course.

Macau Business has suggested that Adriano Marques Ho, a current advisor to Secretary for Security, Wong Sio Chak, would be chosen to replace Chan head-

RENATO MARQUES



Paulo Martins Chan

ding the DICJ. According to the same source, Ho is to take office as early as June.

Ho's experience and previous job positions make him a strong candidate.

Working as an advisor to the Office of the Secretary for Security since 2014, he gained notoriety when he headed the Macau branch of China's National Central Bureau of Interpol

for six years between 2004 and 2010. After that, he took a post as head of the Judiciary Police (PJ) Criminal Investigation Department for a period of two years, until being appointed to head PJ's Gaming and Economic Crimes Investigation Department.

Ho has extensive experience in the field as he has been representing the Security office in meetings for a year, held by the

DICJ where all gaming operators and the security sector discuss topics related to casinos security measures. In this capacity he has acted as the link between the DICJ, the gaming operators and the security forces.

Macau Daily Times yesterday contacted Chan who confirmed that he is leaving the DICJ but deferred any comment for a later occasion.

ZHUHAI POLICY MISTAKE INCONVENIENCES MACAU WORKERS ACROSS THE BORDER

JULIE ZHU

ON Monday, Zhuhai residents who work in Macau but reside in Zhuhai were finally able to return to Macau for work.

These residents were told they only required four documents in hand: the Zhuhai resident document, the Macau work document (typically a blue card), a negative Covid-19 test result, and their travel card.

However, despite the policies explicitly outlining these conditions, some qualified workers found that would not be able to circumvent the quarantine after all.

Before Monday, the China Employment Agency Association was entrusted to inform concerned Zhuhai residents of the conditions. After qualified Zhuhai residents filled out the form and submitted it to the association, it was found that some of these residents had not been "selected" for publication on a special list. That meant that they could not be exempted from

Zhuhai's 14-day quarantine policy after all.

According to Zhuhai's policy, a person who meets the abovementioned conditions will be exempted from the quarantine. However, entrusting the association to make a list has inconvenienced some Zhuhai residents.

The association told these qualified Zhuhai residents that, even if they met the requirements, they would have to be enlisted by the association in order to be exempted.

Later, on Monday, after many qualified Zhuhai residents requested an explanation for the association's "list", the association acknowledged that it had made a mistake.

Zhuhai's tendency to announce new policies overnight has troubled both Zhuhai and Macau residents, both now and in the past.

In March, the Guangdong government suddenly announced the 14-day mandatory quarantine policy. The sudden announcement caused issues

for many Macau residents who live in Zhuhai because many of them did not have a temporary residence card issued by Zhuhai government. Only Macau residents with a Zhuhai residence card are eligible for the exemption.

Secretary for Security Wong Sio Chak also considered this particular policy "rushed" and "not very clear."

"We fully understand mainland China because, there, they need multiple 'layers' of approvals to implement a policy," said Wong, adding that "we hoped they could have tried to provide us with more information on time."

In addition to the above, Zhuhai's entry policies have been criticized for being discriminatory and representing a double standard, because Zhuhai gave exemptions to Macau residents in late March in respect of the quarantine requirements, but exemptions were not granted to Zhuhai residents until Monday.

POPULATION INCREASE MAINLY DUE TO TNRS

THE total population as of end-March 2020 rose by 16,500 quarter-to-quarter to 696,100, driven by an increased number of non-resident workers living in the city.

Due to entry restrictions imposed by the SAR government to deter the spread of Covid-19, some individuals living outside Macau moved to the city before the restrictions took effect on February 20.

Previously, the local government encouraged employers to provide housing for those living in Zhuhai.

Among the total Macau population, 52.2% (363,400) were female, according to data from the Statistics and Census Service.

A total of 1,383 live births were delivered in the first quarter of 2020, a decrease of 201 quarter-to-quarter.

Mortality decreased by 8 quarter-to-quarter to 530 in the first quarter. The top three underlying causes of death were neoplasms (170), diseases of the circulatory system (159) and diseases of the respiratory system (80).

In the first quarter of 2020, new arrivals from mainland China with one-way permits (633) and individuals granted right of abode (167) decreased by 264 and 83 respectively quarter-to-quarter.

The number of non-resident workers at end-period (189,518) dropped by 7,020.

This decrease is likely due to the layoffs that occurred amid the pandemic outbreak. LV



Macau's F3 World Cup, not season finale this year

RENATO MARQUES

RUMORS previously anticipated what several teams have now confirmed: the FIA Formula 3 World Cup will not be held this year as the season finale, but instead the F3 championship will run at least two or three events after the Guia Circuit.

The Times has learned from two racing teams included in this season's paddock that the governing body of automobile motorsports decided during the latest meeting of the World Motor Sport Council that the FIA F3 World Cup in Macau, slated to take place in November this year, would proceed as part of a new tentative calendar for the FIA F3 Championship. The teams requested not to be identified as they are not authorized to speak to the media about the arrangements which have yet to be made public.

Already, three races from the season have been postponed: Sakhir in Qatar, Zandvoort in the Netherlands and Barcelona in Spain.

Besides the confirmation that the F3 race will move forward, the decision to host the event mid-season should imply that contrary to what happened last year, the event in Macau will only stage racers listed in the F3 Championship. In other words, it will not allow the participation of "single-race" drivers who usually take this opportunity to show off their skills and earn a seat on a team for the following season.

The 2020 F3 season paddock counts a total of 10 teams and 30 drivers, in which many famous names of the Guia Circuit are included. Among them is last year's surprise winner Richard Verschoor, as well as 12 other participants from the 2019 edition, including Enzo Fittipaldi, Jake Hughes, Jack Doohan, Frederik Vesti, Max Fewtrell, Oliver Caldwell, David Schumacher, Logan Sargeant, and Sophia Flörsch.

Although the final version of the

F3 season calendar has not yet been made public, the two racing teams contacted by the Times have confirmed that they have already been notified that a new season calendar will be announced soon.

The 2020 season had been initially scheduled to be running until the last weekend of September but was interrupted by the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic.

For the time being, the F3 Championship season is aiming to kick off on July 3-5 in Spielberg, Austria, in an event that will be held behind closed doors and with limited access to the media and team members to avoid crowding and the potential risk of transmission of Covid-19.

In a previous reply to the Times several weeks ago, the Macau Grand Prix Organizing Committee stated that the event, due to take place from November 19-22, was being organized according to the initial plans and without any delays or postponements to note.

ENTRY TO 2020 RACES

THE Macau Touring Car Cup, the most prized competition of the Macau Grand Prix among local and regional participants, will be held this year without the usual classification races, the Times has learned. According to information disclosed by race participants, the Macau Racing Festival will not be held this year. The Festival normally begins in May and comprises a series of competitions that are part of the local motorsports calendar and grant some racers entry to the Macau Grand Prix. Due to the impact of the novel coronavirus, the local motorsports association has decided to grant access to this year's Grand Prix to the same drivers qualified in 2019. This was the solution adopted so that the race could continue to be included in the program of this year's GP, the participants told the Times.

AD

Skills upgrading and employment training programme



Roads to development of new professional opportunities



To keep in line with the current arrangements of the Government of the Macao Special Administrative Region (MSAR) of increasing the input of infrastructure and public works and people's livelihood and consumption, under the premise of self-reliance and with reference to the information on job vacancies, by means of subsidized training, the Labour Affairs Bureau (DSAL) introduces subsidized training items of major categories, including "construction and maintenance of facilities", "heavy-duty machinery", "catering", "retail", "personal care services" and "hotel" a maximum subsidy of MOP6,656 may be given to the citizen. Through each one month targeted professional skills training, participants are able to master the basic skills within a short period of time and employment opportunities are enhanced.

Programme target: Macao residents aged 18 or above who were unemployed as a result of the epidemic and persons engaging in specific occupations

Documents required for registration

► For unemployed persons

- Copy of MSAR Resident Identity Card
- Documents required by individual courses. For details, please read the course description.
- Record of payment of contributions to the Social Security Fund (FSS) in 2019 as a beneficiary under the obligatory system (one may authorize the DSAL to make enquiries to the FSS)

Copy of first page of bank book (applicable to cases of receiving the subsidies by automatic transfer)

Photocopy of dismissal letter / termination of employment letter (Unemployed in the fourth quarter of 2019 or later), if you serve two or more companies before losing your job (Have two or more mandatory contribution records in Social Security Fund), the dismissal letter / termination of employment letter of two or more companies must be submitted at the same time.

► For persons engaging in specific occupations

Tour bus drivers, taxi drivers, tour guides and convention and exhibition workers

- Copy of MSAR Resident Identity Card
- Documents required by individual courses. For details, please read the course description.
- Copy of first page of bank book (applicable to cases of receiving the subsidies by automatic transfer)
- Copy of taxi driver identification card or tour guide card (applicable to relevant industries)

Copy of category D driving license (applicable to tour bus drivers)

Employment certificate issued by the travel agency or a personal declaration stating the travel agency that one is currently working for (applicable to tour bus drivers)

Worker's certificate issued by the groups of convention and exhibition industry (applicable to the convention and exhibition industry)

- Please check whether the documents uploaded comply with the requirements; failure to comply with the requirements shall not be eligible for registration.
- Once the registration is confirmed, submission of supplementary documents will not be accepted. The eligibility vetting conducted by our bureau will be based on the documents submitted.
- Courses are conducted in Chinese.
- Selection of participants will be made by our bureau according to different course requirements; enrollment will be arranged to the selected persons in accordance with the registration sequence.

Requirements for receiving the subsidy

- During the courses, trainees should follow the arrangements for job registration.
- Attain 80% or above attendance rate and take the exam.
- Trainees must cooperate with the employment referrals provided by our bureau in accordance with their abilities. If they do not need to be referred for reasons of establishment of new labour relations or running their own businesses, relevant proofs are required.
- Those who have completed the training and are employed will receive the training subsidy (a maximum of MOP 6,656) according to the attendance rate.

Programme details



In-person registration / Enquiries

DSAL service locations

- Istmo de Ferreira do Amaral, n.º 101 - 105A, Edifício Industrial Tai Feng, 1.ª Fase, R/C, Macau Tel: 82914888
- Endereço: Avenida do Dr. Francisco Vieira Machado nos 221-279, Edifício Advance Plaza, Macau Tel: 28564109

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Office hours

- **Macao Construction Industry General Union**
Estrada Marginal do Hipódromo NO.64 EDF. Industrial Lee Cheung 1-Andar, Macau Tel: 28482621
- **FAOM vocational skills training center**
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Saturday
14:00-20:00

Monday to Friday
09:00-12:30, 14:30-18:00
Saturday
09:00-12:30



MACAU EMERGENCY MEDICAL TEAM TO HELP IN ALGERIA

ANTHONY LAM

THE China International Emergency Medical Team (Macao) is deploying five members to Algeria to assist in a 15-day Covid-19 response mission, the Health Bureau (SSM) announced yesterday at its daily press briefing.

The five local medical personnel will set off from their trip today. They will depart Macau on a chartered flight to Algeria, with a stopover in Chongqing, where they will be joined by 15 medical professionals from mainland China.

All five members going to Algeria have experience containing the spread of the disease in Ma-

cau, which is an advantage for them on the mission. The team comprises two doctors and a nurse from the public Conde São Januário Hospital (CHCSJ), as well as two officers; one from the local Center for Disease Control and Prevention and the other from the Office of the director of the SSM.

Mio Chi Fong, leader of the Macau team and doctor at the Accident and Emergency Department of the CHCSJ, expressed a feeling of honor on behalf of the team for being able to take part in the mission and believes that the team is well prepared.

Mio expects that their experience will help the response to the virus in the north African country.

The leader of the Macau team expects that the mission's experience will help the coronavirus response in the north African country

Given the geographic and other differences, he believes they may acquire new knowledge or be otherwise inspired in the mission.

Furthermore, he noted that the north African country is heavily affected by the disease, with an infection count of more than 4,000 people and a death rate of about 9%.

With respect to the work they will do in Algeria, Mio said that the team will share its Covid-19 response experience with Algerian medical personnel and conduct academic exchange with medical professionals.

In addition, they will assist in the review and refinement of Algerian epidemic control measures and procedures. They will also

conduct research in some cities, and train local civil servants and members of the public on measures to control and prevent Covid-19.

Last year, the Macau team obtained accreditation from the WHO, making it the fifth of its kind in the People's Republic of China, as well as the 25th in the world. Prior to being accredited, members of the team underwent training to equip them with the capability of handling emergency situations.

On top of the deployment of the Macau emergency response team, other topics were covered at the press conference. The panel of officials was asked whether nurseries and daycare services for senior residents would resume, considering school levels from primary school will have resumed by mid-June.

Dr Alvis Lo Iek Long, medical director of the CHCSJ, responded on behalf of the government by reading from a paper he said was delivered by his colleagues in the social welfare departments.

The Social Welfare Bureau (IAS) noted that it has no plan to reopen subsidized nurseries across the city. Those not taking government subsidies have been discouraged by the bureau to reopen, although some of them have disregarded this advice.

When it comes to daycare services for senior residents, the IAS stated that strategies have been provided to service providers. "In the foreseeable future, daycare services for senior residents will resume for those with special needs and only at limited capacity," the bureau disclosed.

Similar to the resumption of all services of public interest, there will be a two-week buffer period between the announcement and services resuming, the IAS noted.

Not present at the press conference, the Cultural Affairs Bureau announced yesterday that certain cultural facilities would be reopened from May 15. Such facilities include libraries, galleries, as well as leisure and study venues.

12th round of government's facemask distribution kicks off

THE 12th round of the centralized facemask supply scheme initiated by the government has begun and will last until May 21. According to information previously presented by health authorities, this may be the scheme's second-last round. The scheme began in late January, when the first Covid-19 case was detected in the city.

Secretary for Social Affairs and Culture, Elsie Ao Ieong U, has told the Legislative Assembly that the scheme will likely run un-

til the end of May, adding that the government is debating the necessity of its continuation in the months that follow.

The health authority has reiterated its stance leading to the scheme's possible termination. The authority said that the scheme was instigated to ensure supply of the crucial resource at the start of the outbreak, when few in the city were prepared and the mainland was off work because of the Lunar New Year holidays.

Given now both the outbreak and private mask supply have stabilized, the government thus started to prompt residents "to consider whether the centralized supply should run indefinitely," Dr Alvis Lo Iek Long, medical director of the public Conde São Januário Hospital, has said.

As the scheme enters its 12th round, details have remained unchanged from the previous round. All Macau ID holders and legal non-resident workers are entitled to 10 masks for the

price of 8 patacas. Points of sale include designated pharmacies and the offices of certain associations.

In addition, children's masks are available for purchase with a different quantity from adult masks. For the same price, a child aged between 3 and 8 is entitled to collect five children's masks and five adult masks, or 10 adult masks.

In the previous 11 rounds, a total of 65.7 million masks were sold by the scheme, with 6 million sold in the 11th round alone. **AL**



China and Taiwan at odds amid pandemic

U.S.-CHINA relations have never been worse. Verbal sparring between a Trump administration determined to find someone to blame for the pandemic and China's aggressive diplomats pushing conspiracy theories [...] has exacerbated tensions and overshadowed previous pandemic cooperation," including donations of tons of equipment and antiviral medicines to Wuhan, and Chinese exports of personal protective equipment to major American cities, Drew Thompson, a former U.S. Defence Department official responsible for managing bilateral relations with China, Taiwan and Mongolia wrote this in Foreign Policy this week.

In his argument, Thompson explains that with bilateral trade crashing, diplomatic relations at their worst, and a politically divided United States fighting an epidemic, this seems like an opportune time for Chinese President Xi Jinping to achieve a critical element of his "China Dream" and call on the People's Liberation Army (PLA) to force Taiwan to unify with the People's Republic. But despite "a recent outbreak of jingoistic language, the chances of China's military crossing the Taiwan Strait to subdue the self-governing island still remain small."

China has flexed its military muscles on the periphery of its territory throughout the pandemic, flying fighters across the centerline of the strait and bomber encirclement missions around Taiwan, the diplomat points out.

Maritime missions in the South China Sea have included deploying an aircraft carrier, a survey ship now operating in Malaysia's exclusive economic zone, and coast guard vessels ramming and sinking a Vietnamese fishing boat, he recalls.

China's threats directed at Taiwan "go beyond demonstrations of military might." On January 15, a spokesperson for the Beijing-run Taiwan Affairs Office noted that calls for "reunification by force" were growing on the mainland, and on April 15, the office published an article articulating China's long-standing triggers for a military attack on Taiwan.

Taiwan, however, is not playing along with China's plans, "with all trends on the island pointing to political, social, and economic divergence from the mainland."

Taiwanese President Tsai has just been elected to a second term and remains committed to engaging the mainland from a position of equality without acknowledging Beijing's "One China" policy.

AP PHOTO



Taiwan's citizens increasingly identify themselves as Taiwanese, and Taiwan's businesses are joining a global trend in reducing their reliance on China by shifting production to cheaper Southeast Asia or back home to Taiwan itself.

"Twenty years of military buildup gives Xi a military option to solve a policy problem that his predecessors didn't have. What had been impossible in the past is theoretically possible now," Thompson says.

Corroborating this theory, the Taipei Times recently warned in a headline: "Taiwan must prepare for attack."

The Chinese Communist Party (CCP) might act aggressively toward Taiwan amid the chaos of the Covid-19 pandemic. While no one is seeking a war, the Republic of China and its friends should responsibly prepare for various contingencies and enhance deterrence against China, the newspaper says.

Chinese President Xi Jinping's visit to maritime ports in Zhejiang, China, raised eyebrows among China-watchers.

According to Taipei Times, some experts have said that Xi conducted the trip to signal the economy's reopening or to offer assurances to the Zhejiang faction, while others have said that the province is home to the East Sea Fleet, "which would figure prominently in any blockade or even invasion of Taiwan."

On the other side of the Strait the warnings are more bellicose. On Saturday, Beijing accused the "Taiwan independence" secessionists about recent attempts to challenge the mainland's bottom line, Xinhua state news agency reported.

Ma Xiaoguang, a spokesman for the State Council Taiwan Affairs Office, made the remarks when asked about a recent proposal from Taiwan's ruling Democratic Progressive Party to delete "national reunification" in amending the "regulations on people's relations across the Taiwan Strait."

"Do not underestimate the strong will and firm determination of the 1.4 billion Chinese people to defend our national sovereignty

and territorial integrity," Ma stressed.

Beijing is trying to calm this rising nationalist sentiment, the South China Morning Post (SCMP) reported yesterday.

A number of commentators on social media have called for the island to be reunified by force, something Beijing has never ruled out. However, some analysts believe the authorities want to play a longer game and are now trying

to cool the "nationalist fever" of a growing chorus of voices calling for China to take advantage of the Covid-19 pandemic by invading Taiwan.

SCMP recalls an article published earlier this month in the magazine of the Central Party School, which trains senior officials, drawing on historical parallels with the Qing dynasty's conquest of the island in the 17th century to highlight the importance of patience and careful planning.

The Qing, who came from Manchuria, seized power in Beijing and northern China in 1644 and gradually consolidated their control over the Chinese mainland in the following decades.

The last remnants of the defeated Ming dynasty fled to Taiwan in 1662 and expelled the Dutch colonists.

The 5,000-word article in Study Times, written by historian Deng Tao, said the Qing had spent the next 20 years preparing for the invasion and conquest of the island and argued that they had also used political, diplomatic and economic measures to achieve their goal rather than just relying on force.

The Post also quoted a Beijing-based military source as saying "the mainland authorities still hope the situation can be resolved peacefully and the majority of Taiwanese still want to maintain the status quo." **PC**

US SENATE JOINS CALLS FOR TAIWAN TO REGAIN WHO STATUS

THE U.S. Senate unanimously approved a bill seeking the restoration of Taiwan's observer status with the World Health Organization, escalating an international campaign to push back against Chinese efforts to isolate the island.

The bipartisan measure calls on the State Department to report about Taiwan's participation as an observer at the World Health Assembly -- a key WHO decision-making body set to meet next week. The bill, which hasn't yet been passed by the U.S. House, would also direct Secretary of State Michael Pompeo to explain any department plans to help Taipei reclaim its observer status.

The Senate vote yesterday [Macau time] is part of a push by China's critics in the U.S. and elsewhere to use the coronavirus pandemic to strengthen Taiwan's official and unofficial diplomatic relationships. Beijing, which considers island part of its territory, has blocked its participation in the WHO since Taiwanese President Tsai Ing-wen was elected in 2016 and refused to accept that both belong to "one China."

The measure's approval comes days after Taiwan urged the WHO to allow it to rejoin the assembly, an effort Beijing has denounced as separatist. Senate Armed Services Chairman James Inhofe, an Oklahoma Republican, is sponsoring the bill.

"I applaud Secretary Pompeo for the steps he's already taken to ensure Taiwan can attend the WHO Summit on the coronavirus pandemic later this month, and look forward to his strategy that will

restore Taiwan's observer status," Inhofe said in a statement.

Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Zhao Lijian told reporters yesterday that 24 medical and health specialists from Taiwan had participated in WHO technical events since last year under a 2005 memorandum of understanding that established exceptional arrangements for the island.

Zhao said that China didn't need an agreement "with any international organization to clarify the fact that Taiwan is part of China." "There is but one China in the world and the Taiwan region is an inseparable part of China's territory," he said.

"We urge the United States to strictly abide by the one-China policy, honor the commitments it made in three joint communiques and take concrete measures to prevent relevant bills from becoming law," the Ministry of Foreign Affairs says in a statement in response to a Bloomberg query on Tuesday, adding that the U.S. should "stop using the pandemic to manipulate Taiwan-related issues."

Last week, China criticized Pompeo and similar calls by New Zealand over efforts to get Taiwan back in the assembly. Taiwan Affairs Office spokesman Ma Xiaoguang said Tsai and her Democratic Progressive Party were exploiting the issue "out of a political plot rather than concern of public health."

Taiwanese Health Minister Chen Shih-chung said last week that the island needed a seat at the WHA to give it firsthand information about the pandemic's spread. **BLOOMBERG**

AP PHOTO



Seasonal worker James Wodyatt at Stocks Farm in Suckley, Worcestershire

FORETASTE OF BREXIT

Virus cuts off much of UK farm labor

SYLVIA HUI, LONDON

BITAIN'S fruit and vegetable farmers have long dreaded their country's exit from the European Union, worrying that it would keep out the tens of thousands of Eastern European workers who come every year to pick produce.

Now, the coronavirus pandemic has brought that feared future to the present: Travel restrictions imposed to slow the virus' spread are blocking laborers just as the harvest season for lettuces and berries begins in earnest.

In June, 1 million heads of lettuce will need to be picked in Britain every day, then trimmed and transported to supermarkets — all without bruising and before they wilt. It takes experience and a lot of hands.

Without the necessary workforce, crops could be left to rot and growers may eventually decide to move some of their operations overseas, farmers warn.

"It may be a foretaste of what next year will look like," said Jack Ward, chief executive of the British Growers Association. "Except that if the economy picks up again, we'll get to the situation where there isn't even the unemployment to make good the shortfall of people coming from Eastern Europe. We'll have to move

production to where the workers are."

Britain — which grows over 50% of its vegetables and just under 20% of the fruit — is heavily reliant on seasonal farm workers from abroad. An estimated 70,000 to 90,000 people are needed between April and October each year to plant, pick and pack the produce. The overwhelming majority come from Eastern Europe, most just for the season before returning home. Britons make up just 1% of the workers.

Many of the migrants from EU states Romania, Bulgaria and Poland return year after year, and are highly valued by farmers for their skill and speed.

But with most flights grounded, only about a third of the migrant workers who would normally be in Britain are here, according to Environment Secretary George Eustice.

"Normally we would have 12 to 16 Polish workers here in the spring. Only four of our team made it, and they arrived before lockdown," said Ali Capper, who grows apples and hops — a key ingredient for beer — with her husband at their family farm in Worcestershire, western England. "For the harvest in September we will need about 70 people. I don't know where they're going to come from at the moment."

The problem is most urgent for asparagus and lettuce farmers, whose crops are ready for harvest about now. One large salad producer, G's Growers, resorted to booking a 40,000-pound (\$49,000) charter flight to fly in 150 Romanian workers in April to pick the vegetables and help train less experienced recruits.

The company that operated that flight said it's fielded many similar calls from other British farms desperate for labor. Since mid-April, Air Charter Service has flown in 1,200 passengers from Romania to meet the needs of farms, said Matt Purton, director of commercial jets for the company.

Britain's government says it is acutely aware of the problem, and has expanded a temporary workers program to allow 10,000 migrants from outside the EU — mainly from Ukraine, Russia and Moldova — to work on British farms.

But air travel remains difficult and often expensive, and it's unclear how many have arrived under that program. Even if it reached its goal, that would still leave farms tens of thousands of workers short, so the government also headed a "Pick for Britain" hiring campaign in a bid to attract Britons to farms. Officials have urged millions of people who have been furloughed or unemployed during the pandemic

to help with the harvest.

Recruiters say the response from Britons has been enthusiastic, but nowhere near solving the problem.

Concordia, a leading recruiter of seasonal farm workers, says up to late April, 55,000 people applied for farm positions, but just 150 took up job offers. Many who explicitly rejected the roles cited the difficulty of traveling to the farms or the length of contracts as factors that put them off.

Capper, who is also the National Farmers' Union spokeswoman for horticulture, stressed that while she supports hiring British workers, "anyone who suggests that as a solution long term is just not being realistic."

"It's hard physical work, it's temporary, and it's seasonal," she said. "You have to be prepared to follow that work around the country to different crops and that really doesn't suit people who need to pay the rent or mortgage."

What farmers really need, she said, is clarity from the British government about its immigration plans after Dec. 31, when the current Brexit transition period ends and, with it, freedom of movement for EU citizens to Britain. Until that date, EU citizens are allowed to travel to and work in Britain without any restrictions, just as they did when the U.K. belonged to the union. But from 2021, people from the bloc seeking to work in Britain will likely need to meet the same requirements as any other immigrants.

But the rules have not yet been finalized, and that uncertainty is weighing on farmers. **AP**

this day in history



1981 THOUSANDS SEE POPE SHOT IN ROME

The Pope has been shot four times as he blessed the crowds in St Peter's Square in Rome.

Surgeons have performed a five-hour operation and say they hope he will make a full recovery.

At about 1715 local time, the Pope was being driven in his Popemobile through a crowd of about 20,000 worshippers when he was hit by four bullets fired from a 9mm pistol some 15 feet away.

Two struck him in the stomach, one in his right arm and the fourth hit his little finger.

Police arrested a 23-year-old man who said he was a Turkish citizen and gave his name as Mehmet Ali Hagca.

He kept repeating: "I couldn't care less about life."

The Turkish press has reported Hagca was jailed for the killing of Turkish newspaper editor Abdi Ipecki in February 1979. But he escaped from prison and left behind a letter vowing to kill the pontiff just before the Pope visited Turkey in 1979.

Many of those who witnessed the shooting in the crowded square burst into tears, or screamed and fell to their knees in disbelief.

The Pope collapsed and was driven at speed into the Vatican complex and from there by ambulance to hospital.

Vatican Radio has appealed to the world to pray for his survival.

The Queen and the Archbishop of Canterbury have expressed their shock and deep sympathy for the Pope and his followers.

Pope John Paul II, formerly Cardinal Karol Wojtyla of Poland, became Pope in 1978. He is the first non-Italian pope in 455 years.

He is also the most widely travelled pontiff in the Vatican's history. Vatican officials have often said in private that they feared for his safety during his frequent contacts with enthusiastic crowds wherever he goes.

Courtesy BBC News

IN CONTEXT

The Pope came out of hospital two weeks later but was re-admitted on 21 June with a lung infection. He did eventually make a full recovery and went on to visit 50 countries in the first decade of his pontificate.

Mehmet Ali Hagca was sentenced to life imprisonment in July 1981 for the shooting.

The Pope later publicly forgave Agca and even visited him in prison. In June 2000, with the agreement of the Pope himself, Agca was pardoned by the Italian president after serving 19 years.

On his return to Turkey he was re-arrested and forced to serve the rest of his sentence for the killing of a Turkish journalist in 1979. He was released in January 2006.

The Pope died at 2137 (1937 GMT) on Saturday 2 April 2005 after he failed to recover from a throat operation due to breathing problems.

YOUR STARS



ARIES

Mar. 21-Apr. 19

You'll feed off the energy of an audience, and you'll savor the adulation. There is a real sense that anything is possible when like-minded folks hang ten together.



TAURUS

Apr. 20-May. 20

You just might find yourself giving fences and walls dirty looks today, because any kind of barrier will definitely bug you! Why can't everyone just get along? Well, everyone hasn't met you!



GEMINI

May. 21-Jun. 21

Wrap up any unfinished projects as soon as you can today. There are some exciting distractions coming later in the afternoon, and you'll want as much free time in your schedule as possible.



CANCER

Jun. 22-Jul. 22

You're better than ever at simplifying complicated situations. That's why today is a great day to perform complicated negotiations, sign legal documents, or dig into a challenging novel.



LEO

Jul. 23-Aug. 22

By listening to their woes and helping them sort through their problems, you can gain greater insight into what you need to deal with and begin to prioritize your life.



VIRGO

Aug. 23-Sep. 22

Searching for perfection? You could get tantalizingly close today. Your plans could come together perfectly, and you could win some admirers along the way.



LIBRA

Sep. 23-Oct. 22

Romantically, someone is intent on making you understand just how much they care about you. Just make sure you're prepared to provide the feedback they expect. This could be the start of a new phase.



SCORPIO

Oct. 23-Nov. 21

You have absolutely no tolerance for busybodies, especially today when you have enough on your plate without reporting back to someone or sharing your opinions about every little thing.



SAGITTARIUS

Nov. 22-Dec. 21

Enjoy the effect you have on others. Your ego is going to get many small bursts of energy today, and you'll do good for the egos of everyone you come in contact with, too.



CAPRICORN

Dec. 22-Jan. 19

There's a major turning point coming in your life, and it may be causing you some stress right now. Either you're impatient for its arrival or nervous about what it will mean for you and the people you love.



AQUARIUS

Jan. 20-Feb. 18

Life isn't a race. It's an experience. There's no need to rush around from one adventure to another, trying to fill your days with action! Today, stop your engines and cool your jets.



PISCES

Feb. 19-Mar. 20

Today could be full of signs and affirmations that you're on the right path despite what other people may say. Even if you feel unsure about the next steps, it's all part of the process.

The Born Loser by Chip Sansom



SUDOKU

EASY

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

EASY+

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

MEDIUM

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

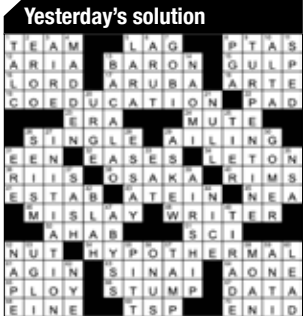
HARD

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

CROSSWORDS

ACROSS: 1-Mawkish sentimentality; 5- Defense covering; 10- Clinton's birthplace; 14- Rights org.; 15- Funny Anne; 16- Genesis victim; 17- Dear, dear!; 18- Colorado resort; 19- Anger; 20- Something that occupies space; 22- Asexual reproductive cell; 24- Bruce ___ was a famous kung-fu movie star; 25- Paradise lost; 26- Academic session; 30- Vestige; 35- South American tuber; 36- Leaves in a bag; 37- Transform; 38- Intoxicating liquor; 41- Premier player; 43- Analyze a sentence; 44- Be in the red; 45- Enzyme ending; 46- Simple seat; 47- Stated; 50- Alley; 53- French possessive; 54- Free; 58- Naked-faced Amazon monkey; 62- Rescue; 63- Diamond flaw?; 66- Bad time in the Senate; 67- "Peter Pan" pirate; 68- Together; 69- Mudville complement; 70- Diamond cover; 71- Rod used to reinforce concrete; 72- Movable barrier;

DOWN: 1- Polite address; 2- Bruins' home; 3- Strip of wood; 4- Disco ballroom dance; 5- Almond liqueur; 6- In medias ___; 7- Road guide; 8- Echo, for one; 9- Scope; 10- Injury; 11- Drama award; 12- Hide; 13- Gen. Robert ___; 21- Some M.I.T. grads; 23- Conductor Dorati; 25- Big time; 26- Lathers; 27- Dazzling display; 28- PC shortcut; 29- Sushi choice; 31- Literary monogram; 32- Fragrant oil; 33- Discontinue; 34- Made a mistake; 39- Barcelona bear; 40- Greeting; 41- Wow; 42- Academic teacher; 44- Form of poem, often used to praise something; 48- Pasture used for grazing; 49- Kind of price; 51- Lend ___; 52- Like Loki; 54- Hey, over here!; 55- Hindu hero; 56- Superior to; 57- Page; 59- 1998 Sarah McLachlan hit; 60- 1996 Tony-winning musical; 61- Of course!; 64- Steal from; 65- ___ roll;



USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

Emergency calls 999

Fire department 28 572 222

PJ (Open line) 993

PJ (Picket) 28 557 775

PSP 28 573 333

Customs 28 559 944

S. J. Hospital 28 313 731

Kiang Wu Hospital 28 371 333

Commission Against

Corruption (CCAC) 28326 300

IAM 28 387 333

Tourism 28 333 000

Airport 59 888 88

Taxi 28 939 939 / 2828 3283

Water Supply - Report 2822 0088

Telephone - Report 1000

Electricity - Report 28 339 922

Macau Daily Times 28 716 081



AD

FOR SALE



Fragrant Court, Ocean Gardens
HK\$24,000,000 3,500 ft² 4 1/2 3 1/2

FOR RENT



Buckingham, Taipa
\$15,900/mth 1,100 ft² 2 1/2 1 1/2

FOR SALE

[Macau] Retail space, Area Preta
170 ft² \$3,200,000 (ref: 19096003)

[Macau] One Central 2 1/2 2 1/2
1,269 ft² \$12,000,000 (ref: 19070000)

[Macau] One Central lakeview 2 1/2 2 1/2
1,269 ft² \$12,500,000 (ref: 19070002)

[Taipa] Manhattan 3 1/2 2 1/2
1,720 ft² \$12,980,000 (ref: 19096006)

FOR RENT

[Taipa] Delightful 1 Bed 1 1/2 1 1/2
820 ft² \$9,500/mth (ref: 20051001)

[Macau] Vai Fung Triplex, Macau 2 1/2 2 1/2
1,065 ft² \$14,000/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)



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MACAU GAMBLING EXEC LINKED TO \$1 BILLION COHIBA CIGAR DEAL

THE buyers of Imperial Brands Plc's premium cigar business, including world-renowned Cohiba, have been shrouded in a smoky veil of secrecy. But one group of investors is being fronted by a Hong Kong businessman who helps run some of Asia's biggest gambling operations.

Last month, Imperial agreed to sell its premium cigar business outside of the U.S. to Allied Cigar Corp. for 1.04 billion euros (\$1.1 billion), part of a disposal of its high-end cigar portfolio that also includes the Romeo y Julieta and Montecristo brands. A spokesman for Imperial declined at the time to provide details on the suitor, while the cigarette maker's management described the acquirers as "the right long-term owners" for the cigar business in a statement.

Hong Kong corporate registry filings show that Allied Cigar, a private firm incorporated in the city on March 10, counts Chiu King-yan as one of three board members. He's the chief financial officer of SunCity Group Holdings Ltd., the publicly traded unit of



Macau's biggest junket operator, which extends credit to casino high rollers.

Other directors of Allied Cigar are Chiu Ping-shun and Joyce Lam. The record doesn't have any details on the ownership of Allied Cigar. Aside from Chiu King-yan's inclusion, there has been no evidence to suggest SunCity is directly involved in the Imperial Brands transaction. A representative for Imperial Brands declined

to comment for this report. A representative for SunCity said the Allied Cigar deal is not related to Suncity Group and any of its affiliated business, and declined to make Chiu available for an interview.

While the identities of parties in a deal can sometimes be obscured by layers of holding companies, it is exceedingly rare in a transaction as large as this for their identities to remain a secret.

The fact that the cigar deal includes the sale of Imperial Brands' 50-50 joint venture in Cuba, which distributes and sells the Cohiba, Romeo y Julieta and Montecristo brands, adds to the intrigue. Cuba has been isolated by U.S. sanctions for decades, making it difficult if not impossible for companies to do business in both countries.

Investors in Imperial Brands seemed unperturbed by the mys-

tery, bidding up the shares as much as 4.8% on April 27, the day the deal was announced. They have fallen nearly 14% in the year to date, less than the almost 22% plunge in the FTSE 100.

Chiu is also an executive director of Summit Ascent Holdings Ltd., the Hong Kong-listed firm behind Tigre de Cristal, a hotel and casino complex near Vladivostok, Russia. SunCity owns a majority stake in Summit Ascent.

Both Summit Ascent and SunCity Group are controlled by chairman Alvin Chau, an entrepreneur whose businesses span across entertainment and travel. In recent years, SunCity has been expanding outside of Macau, which is the world's biggest gambling hub. It's operating a \$4 billion Vietnam casino resort project and is also looking for investment opportunities in the Philippines, Cambodia and Japan.

Imperial had said the proceeds from the cigar business sale will be used for debt reduction and the transaction is expected to close in the third quarter.

Shares in SunCity Group Holdings and Summit Ascent fell in Tuesday trading. SunCity shares were down as much as 2.4% while Summit Ascent sank as much as 3.2%. The Hang Seng index slipped 1.4%. **BLOOMBERG**

AD

ACCURATE, TIMELY & COMPETITIVE TRANSLATIONS

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Av. da Praia Grande, 599, Edif. Comercial Rodrigues, 12 Floor C, MACAU SAR

Retirees, isolated by virus, become DJs for new radio hour

KIMBERLEE KRUESI,
NASHVILLE

TUCKED away inside his room at a senior care facility, Bob Coleman knew he couldn't go out into the world with the coronavirus raging. But he could share with the world his first love — country music.

"Hello everybody, it's a bright day in Franklin, Tennessee," the 88-year-old Air Force veteran crooned into his microphone. "This is Bob Coleman, better known as the 'Karaoke Cowboy,' coming to you from Room 3325. [...] Let's just jump right into it."

The hits of Hank Williams, Dwight Yoakam and Brad Paisley began to play, all carefully selected by Coleman, who lives in Somerby Franklin, an assisted living facility about 20 miles south of Nashville.

Coleman is one of several retirees who have turned into DJs for a new online radio hour known as "Radio Recliner." (radiorecliner.com)

The 60-minute show began airing last month, starting with



Retiree turned DJ Bob Coleman

quarantined retirees in middle Tennessee. It has since taken off, as much the production side as among listeners, with seniors in assisted-living facilities in Georgia, Alabama and others jumping at the chance to be a DJ after being secluded because of strict social distancing rules.

Older adults are the age group most at risk from the new coro-

navirus. This has left many senior citizens in assisted-living facilities not only prohibited from seeing outside visitors, but also banned from socializing with neighbors across the hall.

The idea of Radio Recliner was kickstarted by Atlanta and Birmingham-based marketing firm Luckie, whose clientele includes Bridge Senior Living, which ope-

rates more than 20 senior living properties in 14 states.

After the DJs were recruited, the seniors recorded their introductions and transitions on their phones — many while relaxing on a recliner or kitchen table. The audio was then sent off to production staffers, who handled the technical side of Radio Recliner.

Listeners can send song re-

quests dedicated to family or friends, which are included in the daily show. Fresh content airs weekdays at noon, with previous segments playing in rotation.

A typical dedication went like this: "Hey Granny, this is your favorite granddaughter Amy ... we just wanted to call in and say we love you very much."

Mitch Bennett, Luckie's chief creative officer, said the idea was to provide a sense of community to isolated seniors.

"For this generation, radio was the original social media," Bennett said. "Dedicating a song to someone you love, and having them hear it along with everyone else, is a special way of connecting. It's a great time to bring that feeling back."

In Georgia, 80-year-old Ed Rosenblatt said an hour he spent spinning tunes on Radio Recliner prompted a flood of text messages, emails and calls from friends and family across the country — many of whom he hadn't heard from in years.

"For the past year I've been teaching myself how to play the ukulele," said Rosenblatt, who lives at Somerby Sandy Springs just outside of Atlanta. "So at the close of the show, I actually played a song on my ukulele. I sang and played the 'Sloop John B,' the Beach Boys classic."

"Everybody knows that song," Rosenblatt said. **AP**

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OPINION

World Views

The Editors, Bloomberg

STUDENTS CAN'T AFFORD TO TAKE THE WHOLE SUMMER OFF

Having slogged through weeks of unevenly administered distance learning, schools in the U.S. are preparing to shut down for the summer. Amid the stress of the pandemic, students, teachers and parents undoubtedly deserve a break. They should keep it short.

How to get students back in classrooms will be driven by public health considerations. In areas at low risk of coronavirus outbreaks, schools might safely reopen if they plan for proper social distancing. For everyone else, some form of remote learning should continue. Forgoing a traditional 10- to 12-week summer vacation might not go over well with students, to say nothing of the adults who will need to supervise their work. But especially for disadvantaged children, the alternative is worse.

The disruptions caused by the coronavirus have harmed learning across the board. By the end of April, more than 80% of public schools had already canceled in-person instruction for the remainder of the school year, leaving 55 million students to learn from home. School districts were ill-prepared for the shift to remote teaching, though the vast majority have since managed to provide students with at least some academic work. However, both the quality of instruction and the expectations for student performance vary widely. Although close to three-quarters of all school districts are delivering material through online platforms, less than half require students to actually use them.

Assuming physical schools remain shut for the summer, the drop-off in students' progress will be steep. During a normal summer, students would be expected to lose at least one month's worth of learning, with math retention taking the biggest hit. The springtime stall caused by the pandemic will exacerbate those losses. Researchers at NWEA, a nonprofit educational consultancy, estimate that on average students could be as much as a year behind by the time they return in the fall.

Richer students with access to technology, tutors and extracurricular enrichment will most likely catch up. But low-income students and those already struggling academically may face insurmountable deficits, particularly if a resurgence of the virus forces schools to close in the fall. So schools should strive to keep breaks in instruction to a minimum.

In the best case, schools should resume in-person classes as soon as it's safe to do so and teachers have adequate protective gear, even if that means curtailing or eliminating the long summer hiatus — a possibility floated by California Governor Gavin Newsom. (A shorter summer would bring U.S. students in line with peers in the U.K., Germany and France, whose break lasts between six and eight weeks.). To ensure social distancing, students could attend in rotating shifts. To combat boredom, classes could emphasize creative and project-based learning, rather than rote memorization and drills.

Until schools physically reopen — and even after they do — students should continue to receive instruction at home. Older students should be required to meet minimal requirements for online attendance and assignment completion. School districts should conduct assessments of students' home computer and Internet access and direct support to families that lack access to reliable technology. To manage potential staff illnesses and keep schools operating remotely over the summer, states should explore ways to hire additional teachers. These include relaxing licensing rules to allow teachers to cross state lines, tapping retired teachers as online mentors and issuing provisional credentials to students in teacher-training programs.

The long-term impact of the pandemic on student outcomes is not yet known. What's certain is that the less schooling students receive, the worse off they'll be once the crisis subsides. Like their elders, children benefit from having time off. Especially now, though, the traditional long summer is far too much.

CORONAVIRUS: WUHAN DRAWS UP '10-DAY BATTLE' PLAN TO TEST ALL 11 MILLION RESIDENTS

THE BUZZ

Wuhan is drawing up plans to test its entire population of 11 million people for Covid-19, state media report.

The plan appears to be in its early stages, with all districts in Wuhan told to submit details as to how testing could be done within 10 days.

It comes after Wuhan, where the virus first emerged, recorded six new cases over the weekend.

Prior to this, it had seen no new cases at all since 3 April.

Wuhan, which was in strict lockdown for 11 weeks, began re-opening on 8 April.

For a while it seemed like life was getting back to normal as schools re-opened, businesses slowly emerged and public transport resumed operations. But the emergence of a cluster of cases - all from the same residential compound - has now threatened the move back to normalcy.

According to report by The Paper, quoting a widely circulated internal document, every district in the city has been told to draw up a 10-day testing plan by noon yesterday.

The document refers to the test plan as the "10-day battle."

HONG KONG TO PRIORITIZE PASSING OF CONTENTIOUS ANTHEM BILL

AP PHOTO



ZEN SOO, HONG KONG

HONG Kong's government will give "priority" to a contentious bill that seeks to criminalize abuse of the Chinese national anthem, the city's leader said yesterday, days after a pro-Beijing lawmaker wrested control over a key committee that vets bills.

The proposed law is aimed at ensuring that residents of Hong Kong, a semi-autonomous Chinese territory, respect China's national anthem. Under the bill, those who use the anthem for commercial purposes, or publicly and intentionally insult the anthem, such as booing it during soccer games, could face fines of up to 50,000 Hong Kong dollars (\$6,450) and up to three years in prison.

The move comes as differences between the pro-Beijing and pro-democracy camps in Hong Kong were sharpened during months-long protests last year that were sparked by an attempt to pass a bill that would have allowed suspects to be extradited to mainland China to face trials. That bill was even-

tually withdrawn.

Hong Kong's leader, Carrie Lam, said the chief secretary and other officials have written to pro-Beijing lawmaker Starry Lee, who has inserted herself as chair of the Legislative Council's House Committee — which scrutinizes bills and decides when they can be sent for a final vote — to consult with her on the resumption of second readings of bills.

"Two of the bills have been delayed for a very long time, and they are the national anthem bill and the patents amendment bill ... [they should] be given priority.

CARRIE LAM

"Two of the bills have been delayed for a very long time, and they are the national anthem bill and the patents amendment bill," Lam said at a news conference. "So we do expect these two bills to be given priority in the resumption of second readings by the Legislative Council."

The anthem bill was first proposed in January last year, after Hong Kong spec-

tators jeered at the Chinese national anthem during several high-profile, international soccer matches in 2015. Anti-China sentiment has been on the rise in Hong Kong since 2014 protests, known as the Umbrella Revolution, that stemmed from the Chinese government's decision to pre-screen candidates for the city's leadership position.

Beijing's move was seen as a restriction on democracy in Hong Kong, and a violation of the "one country, two systems" framework that it was given when the former British colony was handed back to China in 1997.

Lee on Friday inserted herself as chair of the House Committee amid shouting matches from both camps and accusa-

tions from pro-democracy lawmakers that she was overstepping her boundaries.

The chairperson's seat had previously been empty for six months, with Beijing criticizing deputy chairman and pro-democracy lawmaker Dennis Kwok of abusing his power in delaying the election of a new chair, and thus causing a backlog of bills. **AP**

AP PHOTO



China reported just one new coronavirus case, as the government presses ahead with reopening measures. Some students in Beijing have returned to their schools, and Shanghai Disneyland and the ancient Forbidden City have reopened to limited visitors with social distancing maintained. Also yesterday, the National Health Commission said 115 people remain in treatment for the coronavirus.

AP PHOTO



South Korea has reported 27 new cases as health workers work to test thousands of people who visited nightspots in Seoul after detecting dozens of infections linked to club goers. Figures released by South Korea's Centers for Disease Control and Prevention brought national figures to 10,936 cases and 258 deaths. Clubs in the capital region have been closed again after the outbreak, and the reopening of schools was pushed back to May 20.

Indonesia's death toll from the coronavirus breached 1,000 yesterday, the most of any country in Southeast Asia. Virus task force spokesman Achmad Yurianto said 16 new deaths were confirmed in the past 24 hours, taking the death toll to 1,007. Indonesia's fatality rate is one of the highest in the world at about 7%, probably because insufficient testing has resulted in many cases going undetected.

AP PHOTO



Australia's treasurer Josh Frydenberg (pictured) said the country faces a "sobering" economic outlook and will have its largest-ever deficit when a revised budget is released in October. The budget has been delayed so the government can assess the economic costs of the virus. New South Wales recorded no new cases of coronavirus for the first time since health authorities began documenting them in February.