

The Macao SAR Government urges:

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

Novel Coronavirus Response and Coordination Centre

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Air Quality Good



"THE TIMES THEY ARE A-CHANGIN' "

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THE NEW ROUND OF THE MASK SUPPLY SCHEME BEGINS TODAY, WHEN A CHILD'S ID WILL ALLOW THE PURCHASE OF 10 CHILDREN'S MASKS

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JUNE 4 VIGIL ORGANIZER SUBMITS JUDICIAL APPEAL

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YOUNG ADULTS WERE THE LARGEST AGE GROUP OF VISITORS TO MACAU LAST YEAR, ACCOUNTING FOR NEARLY A QUARTER OF ALL ARRIVALS

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Australia A New Zealand woman has been reunited with her dying sister in Australia after gaining an exemption from pandemic travel restrictions on compassionate grounds. Australia had rejected Christine Archer's request for permission to fly from New Zealand four times before her story attracted media attention. Both countries have had success in controlling the spread of the virus.



New Zealand's prime minister wants employers to consider switching to a four-day work week as a way to promote tourism, which has been hard hit by the pandemic. Jacinda Ardern said on Facebook Live that people learned a lot about work flexibility during the lockdown, which was eased last week. The nation's borders remain closed but Ardern said more flexible working arrangements could allow New Zealanders to travel more within their own country.

G7 Japan's government spokesman said yesterday that the country is considering whether to attend the Group of Seven summit, and details would still have to be decided by the host, the United States. Chief Cabinet Secretary Yoshihide Suga was responding to a question about President Donald Trump's tweet that he is considering rescheduling a meeting in the U.S. with world leaders because it would be a "great sign to all" of things returning to normal.

Japan has lifted the coronavirus state of emergency in Osaka and the two neighboring prefectures of Kyoto and Hyogo while keeping the measure in place in the Tokyo region and the northernmost island of Hokkaido. Prime Minister Shinzo Abe made the announcement yesterday. Last week, Abe lifted the emergency measures in all but eight of Japan's 47 prefectures.

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PANDEMIC LOOMS OVER NPC, CPPCC SESSIONS

TWO MEETINGS, ONE ISSUE

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TWO TOP RACES MAY BE CUT FROM GRAND PRIX

RENATO MARQUES



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ZHUHAI WITHDRAWS FIVE PEOPLE'S QUARANTINE EXEMPTION PRIVILEGES

The Zhuhai government has suspended the quarantine exemptions of five people who violated regulations. The group of five includes a businessman who needed to travel between Macau and Zhuhai for urgent business, a mainland non-local worker in Macau, and three Macau residents who live in Zhuhai. These individuals must now abide by Zhuhai's 14-day quarantine policy once they cross the border from Macau to Zhuhai. According to the Zhuhai government, some individuals who are exempt from quarantine have violated Zhuhai's policies. The policies require people to declare relevant information, cooperate with community health management, and not leave Guangdong province without approval. Zhuhai declared that these five presented a high risk to Zhuhai's Covid-19 control.

SI KA LON PROPOSES MACAU'S INVOLVEMENT IN NATIONAL HYGIENE SYSTEM

Lawmaker Si Ka Lon has told China News Agency that Macau should be part of the national public hygiene emergency system. Si, who is currently in Beijing to attend the National People's Congress, hopes that Guangdong, Macau and Hong Kong can form a joint leadership system in order to adjust immigration policies more flexibly, and ensure the safe and orderly recovery of the Greater Bay Area after Covid-19. Si proposes further developing the Guangdong-Macau Traditional Chinese Medicine Technology Industrial Park Development in Hengqin, so that both Macau and Zhuhai can promote Chinese medicine treatment to all Portuguese-speaking countries. In addition, the Macau NPC member hopes the central government will launch plans to support Hengqin and Macau's deep cooperation, eliminating constitutional and policy barriers between the two places.

TWO SUPERMARKETS TO REDUCE PORK PRICES

San Miu Supermarket and Luen Fung Supermarket have planned to reduce the price of pork starting from Saturday. Yesterday, leaders from the two supermarkets met with the Municipal Affairs Bureau (IAM). The two supermarkets promised that pork prices would be reduced, with Luen Fung specifically promising a 15% reduction in prices. The IAM issued a press release acknowledging the two stores' longstanding reasonable pork prices. According to the IAM, the pork supply has been stable and increasing. This means San Miu and Luen Fung can continue reducing the price of pork. Previously in April, the IAM president José Tavares urged local pork vendors to consider lowering their prices after the public complained about the gap in prices between different wet markets.

ANTHONY LAM



HEALTH AUTHORITIES REPORT MINOR CHANGES TO LATEST MASK SUPPLY ROUND

ANTHONY LAM

AS the 13th round of the centralized mask supply scheme begins today, a child's ID will now allow the buyer to purchase a maximum of 10 children's masks, the Health Bureau (SSM) has announced.

The updated arrangement was made to help cope with the resumption of primary school on May 25, when Primary 4 to 6 classes will resume. The week after, Primary 1 to 3 classes will follow suit.

As a result, the SSM has implemented special arrangements to allow kids aged between 5 and 8 to obtain 10 masks during the period. Otherwise, they can opt to buy 10 adult masks or five of each.

Guidelines co-issued by the SSM and the Education and Youth Affairs Bureau (DSEJ) require students to wear masks throughout the school day.

Other details of the 13th round remain unchanged from the previous round. However, children's masks will only be available at the SSM's Health Centers.

Today there will also be a new round of mask supplies available for Macau tertiary education students abroad. As in previous rounds, they should log onto the Higher Education Bureau's website to register, starting from 5 p.m. today until the end of this month. Details about the required identification documents are posted on the bureau's website.

Wong Ka Ki, head of the Education Department of the DSEJ, stated that school resumption has been executed in a smooth fashion. Ahead of the next phases of school resumption, schools have conducted drills to be better prepared, Wong revealed.

He further disclosed that his bureau is in constant communication with other authorities, such as the Public Security Police Force (PSP), the Transport Bureau and the Meteorological and Geophysics Bureau. This is to secure smooth traffic and transport arrangements, as well as effective dissemination of weather forecasts.

The police will also help ensure the immigration clear-

ance process is smooth for cross-border students, provided they have completed the required procedures.

A video depicting a run on cooking oil at a Royal Supermarket store in Fai Chi Kei went viral on social media yesterday. At least 50 middle-aged to elderly people jostled to grab their share of cooking oil, which was believed to be offered at a discounted price.

The scene violated the SSM's instructions regarding crowds and maintaining social distance of at least arm's length.

When questioned about the incident, Ma Chio Hong, head of the Division of Operation and Communications of the PSP, told the press conference that the law-enforcement authority has kept an eye on the crowdedness of various places.

"We are aware of the situation," Ma said. "We have deployed officers to assist in keeping order."

He took the chance to remind members of the public about the SSM's instructions. "I hereby remind the public to avoid crowd gatherings,"

Ma said. "We should also keep a meter of physical distance between each other."

As for the maximum number of people a venue can hold at one time, Leong Iek Hou, coordinator of the local Center for Disease Control and Prevention, said that the number is determined by the license of these venues.

"Different venues have different capacities," Leong said. "The licensing body determines the venue's maximum capacity with consideration of its floor area."

Reiterating the previous instructions on the resumption of continuing education establishments, Leong said, "we recommend cutting the capacity to half of the allowed figure, so as to ensure sufficient space between one another."

With reference to supermarkets, the coordinator admitted that there is a grey area. "There is no maximum capacity stated on their license," she said. "It will then depend on the operator to maintain a reasonable distance between each customer."

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China expected to tighten grip on Hong Kong with security law

CHINESE authorities were planning to write a new national security law into Hong Kong's charter, local media reported, in what would be a dramatic escalation of Beijing's efforts to rein in dissent in the city.

China's lawmakers were preparing to soon pass measures that would curb separation, sedition, foreign interference and terrorism in the former British colony, Hong Kong media reported yesterday, citing unidentified people. Hong Kong representatives were slated to be briefed yesterday before a formal announcement in Beijing, according to the news site HK01, which was the first to report the plan.

The newly appointed director of China's cabinet-level Hong Kong and Macau Affairs Office, Xia Baolong, was set to outline Beijing's latest directives to numerous city officials, HK01 reported.

"This is them saying, 'I am calling the shots. I am setting the parameters. Resistance is futile,'" said Joseph Cheng, a retired political science professor and veteran pro-democracy activist. "It's part of their approach of no concessions, no dialogue."

Protesters sought to muster rallies across the city before the announcement, according to posts in forums popular among demonstrators. One poster circulated described the moment as a "battle of life and death."

Earlier, pro-Beijing figures including local NPC deputies Chan Man-ki and Ng Chau-pei had said they would propose such measures by bypassing the city's Legislative Council. The laws - including banning treason, sedition and se-

BLOOMBERG



Hong Kong pro-democracy lawmaker Claudia Mo

cession - are vigorously opposed by pro-democracy politicians and have sparked mass protests in the past.

Although national security laws are required to be passed by Article 23 of the Basic Law, Hong Kong's mini-constitution, successive governments have failed to pass them, with one effort in 2003 resulting in widespread street demonstrations. This new strategy could potentially allow authorities to skip the local legislative process, although the mechanics of how that would remained unclear.

A spokesman for the Hong Kong government and a spokeswoman for Chief Executive

Carrie Lam's office declined to comment yesterday.

"The market is taking this news negatively for Hong Kong given the likely return of violent protest activities, higher risk for the U.S. to remove certain preferential terms for Hong Kong, such as the special tariff status, and risk-off sentiment," said Becky Liu, head of China macro strategy at Standard Chartered Bank Ltd.

The city's officials and China have since last year repeatedly slammed violent protests as "near-terrorist acts," with the commissioner of police warning in recent months that Hong Kong "may be heading into an era of terrorism" and that there was a

need to prevent it.

An attempt to impose security laws now could reignite the unrest that hammered the city's economy last year and serve as a flash point amid broader U.S.-China tensions. The demonstrations only dwindled when the global pandemic put a stop to mass gatherings.

"It's worrying, but I'm not surprised," said Claudia Mo, an opposition lawmaker. "It really depends on how impatient Beijing has become with Hong Kong. The powers that be up north know perfectly well that such a move might just be considered savage, and there might be some heavy price to pay internationally."

The proposal from the Hong Kong NPC delegates suggests passing the same security laws by using Article 18, which permits the national legislature to pass laws relating to defense or foreign affairs if, among other things, it believes there is "turmoil within the Hong Kong Special Adminis-

trative Region which endangers national unity or security and is beyond the control of the government" or a state of emergency. Laws passed using this method include ones on Chinese nationality, territorial boundaries and diplomatic and consular privileges and immunities.

The legislation would still require several procedural steps including approval by the NPC's decision-making Standing Committee, which could come as early as next month, the SCMP said. The move comes before citywide elections in September in which opposition members hoped to gain a majority of the Legislative Council.

Scuffles broke out in the Legislative Council this month as pro-democracy lawmakers sought to block Beijing-backed bills, including one criminalizing disrespect for the national anthem. Some protesters have called for demonstrators to surround the legislature to block the second reading of the bill on May 27, almost 11 months after some demonstrators broke into and ransacked the chamber.

The new measure would be compatible with Hong Kong law and wouldn't impact the city's guarantee of an independent judiciary, the Hong Kong Economic Times reported, citing a person it didn't identify. The law would only affect a "small number" of people, the Economic Times said.

Hong Kong Chief Executive Lam, whose legislation allowing extraditions to the mainland ignited unprecedented unrest in the city last year, said this week that she viewed the national security laws as an "important constitutional requirement for the government." She said they were needed in light of the "violence and near terrorist acts" of the protests.

Danny Gittings, an academic who wrote the "Introduction to the Hong Kong Basic Law," said a chief executive could only implement such laws by proclamation if the wording is identical to the Chinese national law. The anthem measure, which was similarly imposed in 2017, still hasn't been passed by the Legislative Council.

"Even if it's not a law enforceable in Hong Kong, it could still have a strong symbolic impact," Gittings said. **MDT/BLOOMBERG**

NPC MEMBER WANTS HONG KONG TO COPY MACAU-STYLE LAND RENTALS

JULIE ZHU

CHENG Yiu-tong, a Hong Kong member of the National People's Congress (NPC), wants the central government to introduce a land rental agreement for Hong Kong that is similar to the agreement Macau has with Hengqin.

Cheng proposed that the central government allocate a land plot from mainland China to Hong Kong in order to build new neighborhoods for the special administrative region. For the first stage, he wants an area of 30 square kilometers to accommodate 600,000 to 700,000 people.

Cheng called it the "Hengqin Model." It is not the first time he has made such a proposal. He said that he hopes the central government will refer to the "Hengqin Model" when considering the granting of land to the Hong Kong SAR.

Cheng also hopes that Hong Kong law will be implemented on this land.

"The central government's authorization [of the allocation of land] to Macau has greatly inspired us. If Macau can, why can't Hong Kong?" Cheng asked, according to a report by the Global Times.

Cheng is not the only Hong Kong resident looking to have mainland China grant more land to Hong Kong. Pro-establishment lawmaker Starry Lee Wai-king shares similar sentiments with Cheng.

Lee previously announced that during the NPC meeting in Beijing, she will ask the central government to grant Hong Kong the authorization to build a "Hong Kong city" on Zhuhai's Guishan Island, as well in the sea area to the south of the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macau Bridge. She wants a large number of residential units to be built at these locations to help Hong Kong with its demand for housing.

JUNE 4TH MUSEUM MAKES TIMELY REOPENING

THE June 4th Museum in Hong Kong reopened to the public on Wednesday, even as the city's annual Tiananmen Square Incident vigil remained banned on account of the Covid-19 pandemic. As reported by the Hong Kong Free Press, the exhibition at the museum this year is a comparison between the student movement in Beijing 31 years ago and the months-long protests in Hong Kong. According to the HKFP,

the museum pointed to similarities between the two movements. It said that drawing links between the large-scale movements would help to both memorialize the June 4th incident and support Hong Kong's democracy protests. Located in the Tsim Sha Tsui district, the museum first opened in April 2014. It closed just over two years later, allegedly due to pressure from the building owners' committee.



JUNE 4 VIGIL ORGANIZER SUBMITS JUDICIAL APPEAL

LAWMAKER Au Kam San, head of the organizing body for the annual June 4 vigil in Macau, yesterday submitted an official appeal against the banning of this year's event by the Public Security Police Force (PSP).

On Wednesday, the PSP denied Au's notice for the vigil on the grounds of containment of Covid-19 in the city, which has not had a new case in over 40 consecutive days.

Legally, civil assemblies and protests do not require an application, although the authorities have the right to make special arrangements for various reasons.

In his appeal presented to the Court of Final Appeal, the lawmaker began by pointing out that there are no legal grounds on which the authorities can ban a legal civil event.

Au continued to reveal that the police had cited Article 3 of the Law on Prevention and Control of Contagious Disease to deny his notice. The article briefly states that "individuals and public or private entities have the obligation to legally cooperate closely with the entities in-charge."

Au opposed the decision of the police, citing Article 2 of Law 2/93/M, which reads: "Without prejudice to the right to criticize, law-violating assemblies and protests are not allowed." He believes the vigil abides by the law.

Furthermore, the lawmaker pointed out that the police did not explain how the vigil would violate the stipulations of the contagious disease law. He noted that the vigil has no intention of not cooperating with the arrangements or instructions of public entities.

He then stressed that the city's bustling retail environment has resumed as the government's e-voucher consumption subsidy kicked in on May 1. "Nonetheless, without consulting with the organizer, the PSP denied the notice," Au wrote.

Au noted that he expects no more than 300 people to attend the outdoor vigil. He compared it to the busy shops and restaurants across the city, and anticipates that the vigil will be less dangerous than visiting business outlets.

According to the law, the court must make a judgment within five days. **AL**

CCAC REPORT: FRAUD ASSOCIATED WITH GOV'T SUBSIDY SCHEMES

RENATO MARQUES

THE 2019 Annual Report of the Commission Against Corruption (CCAC) published this week uncovered a high number of incidents connected to several government subsidy schemes, namely the Environmental Protection and Energy Conservation Fund, and the Continuing Education Development Plan. The report also detailed several instances where public officials were associated with cases involving corruption, fraud and abuse of power.

Regarding the first scheme, the CCAC noted in the report that it had investigated a case that was handed over by the Ombudsman Bureau where a restaurant owner was allegedly involved in a scam during his

application for the subsidy.

During the investigation, the CCAC found that between 2012 and 2016, the eco-friendly kitchenware supplier involved had handled the application procedures for at least seven other merchants, helping them obtain subsidies from the Energy-saving Products and Equipment Subsidy Scheme of the Environmental Protection and Energy Conservation Fund.

The supplier had submitted false documents for the merchants to the Environmental Protection and Energy Conservation Fund to obtain the subsidies. They provided them with products at odds with those stated in the applications and overstated transaction amounts, resulting in a fraud of over MOP2 million.

The CCAC also uncovered a case where a local education center had allegedly defrauded subsidies from the Continuing Education Development Plan of the Education and Youth Affairs Bureau (DSEJ).

The bureau discovered not only a scam in which applicants would receive subsidy money for fake courses, but also a scheme in which 30% of the subsidy fund would be given to the organizers as cash kickbacks.

Further investigation revealed that an investigator from the Judiciary Police allegedly conspired with the education center and other suspects to lure in and dupe residents who had funds in their continuing education subsidy accounts.

The person in charge of the education center was sus-

pected to have provided false application information in the computer system for at least 19 applicants who did not attend any courses at all.

The PJ investigator posed as a course instructor in case of an inspection from the DSEJ. He is also suspected of fabricating and submitting fake attendance records with fake signatures from the alleged students.

According to the CCAC, the suspects defrauded over MOP540,000 worth of subsidies.

Using the same method, the person in charge of the education center also used funds belonging to elderly people to enroll them in other fake courses, unlawfully obtaining subsidies worth over MOP140,000 from the DSEJ.

IPIM ex-president's trial postponed again for same reason

JULIE ZHU

THE trial of Jackson Chang, former president of the Macao Trade and Investment Promotion Institute (IPIM), was due to commence yesterday before it was postponed for the second time.

The first hearing of the trial, in which Chang stood accused of corruption, was originally scheduled to take place on April 27. However, the hearing was postponed at the request of the public prosecutor, after they learned that several defendants were absent without justification. The trial has been rescheduled a second time for the same reason.

Chang's case has a total of 26 defendants. The prosecution has 90 witnesses, of which 10 are from the Commission Against Corruption (CCAC) and 16 are from IPIM.

Yesterday, only 10 defendants showed up to the trial. Some of the absentees failed to sign an agreement with the judicial authority justifying their absence.

The prosecution proposed postponing the trial, and the court rescheduled the trial for 9:30 a.m. on June 11.

The court has declared that the defendants absent from yesterday's trial will be fined the equivalent of eight units.

According to Judge Leong

Fong Meng, the next trial will be carried out with or without all of the defendants present, pursuant to Macau's laws and regulations.

Despite the trial not having commenced, the defendant's lawyer made an objection to three testimonies submitted by the plaintiff as evidence.

The three pieces of evidence were obtained by the CCAC from mainland China's corruption watchdog. The lawyer considered the evidence to be inappropriate and requested that it be removed from the court file.

However, the judge supported the legitimacy and validity of the evidence. Leong claimed

that the evidence in each testimony was analyzed in accordance with the city's criminal prosecution law and was therefore considered admissible. She further declared that the evidence was not obtained illegally and therefore there is no reason to invalidate it at this stage.

The recently published 2019 Annual Report of the CCAC details instances last year in which several public officials from different government departments and entities were accused of corruption, fraud or abuse of the power granted by their positions.

One of the major cases that year involved several public officials from IPIM. They had allegedly abused their powers for illicit gain, and had received bribes to perform dishonest acts in the process of vetting and approving applications for "major investment immigration" and "technical immigration."



RENATO MARQUES

Grand Prix to proceed without one, maybe two, of its headliners

RENATO MARQUES

THE 67th Macau Grand Prix is likely to be less glittery than previous years, due to the many changes occurring across the worldwide motorsports calendar.

Although the Macau Grand Prix Organizing Committee (MGPOC) has already confirmed to the Times on several occasions that the event will proceed, this year's event will be stripped of at least one of its major headlining events, the World Touring Car Cup (WTCR), the Times learned from WTCR promoter Eurosport Events.

In a recent interview with motorsports.com, the head of Eurosport Events, François Ribeiro, was quoted confirming that the promoter had submitted a revised version of the WTCR calendar to the International Automobile Federation (FIA), the motorsport governing body. All Asian events, including Ningbo (China), Inje (South Korea), Macau and the season finale in Sepang (Malaysia), have been removed from the revised calendar.

Ribeiro said that the FIA had been very understanding while the series put together its revised Europe-only calendar due



RENATO MARQUES

to the pandemic, saying, "exceptional decisions are needed in exceptional times."

At the same time, Ribeiro revealed that the championship is likely to kick-off in September. He added that the final confirmation from the FIA should come sometime next week.

"We have submitted our dates to the FIA and there will be a communication next week when our calendar is revealed," Ribeiro said.

Although it is not yet official, the Europe-only calendar should be composed of 16 races in six rounds, instead of the original 10 rounds and 20 races.

For the six rounds to re-

main in keeping with the calendar, two will be raced in the original format (two races per weekend) while the other six will be raced in the previous triple-header weekend schedule.

In the absence of the WTCR event from the Grand Prix this year, the MGPOC is likely to replace the event with a similar specification of competition. Sources in racing hinted to the Times that an "extra-calendar" race from the Chinese TCR Series or China Touring Car Championship (CTCC) might be in the pipeline to replace the WTCR round and maintain the legacy of the "Guia Race."

Questioned on the topic

by the Times, the MGPOC admitted to the changes to this year's program, saying, "in response to the latest

developments of the global Covid-19 pandemic, there will be changes to the race program for this year's Macau Grand Prix." However, the MGPOC neither confirmed nor denied the changes identified by the Times.

In the same short statement, the MGPOC added, "The planning for the races is currently ongoing and further details will be announced in due course."

GT RACE MIGHT ALSO BE AFFECTED

Besides the WTCR race, another headline event that is at risk of major changes and losing its status as a "World Cup" is the FIA GT World Cup. The special annual event is held solely in Macau.

According to several sources among the teams, the FIA GT World Cup is also expected to be replaced by a different race of GT category cars.

On this topic, sources hinted to the Times that the solution might be a slight downgrading of the race, with a loss of its "World Cup" status and with competitors coming mostly from GT World Challenge Asia. Applications should remain open to other racers from other worldwide series competing on the same car specifications, however.

For the time being, the 2020 GT World Challenge Asia only has four confirmed rounds. It will start with Japan's Autopolis in mid-July, followed by two rounds in Shanghai in mid-September and mid-October respectively.

The series will close its season at Malaysian's Sepang circuit in the first week of December, precisely two weeks after Macau Grand Prix weekend.

ADVERTORIAL

MELCO DEPLOYING VOLUNTEERS – SIMPLE ACTS OF KINDNESS

MELCO'S Simple Acts of Kindness philosophy is based on the principle that little things have a big impact, and each person can do something to touch people's hearts. Lawrence Ho, Melco's Chairman and CEO, encouraged and deployed colleagues to volunteer during work hours and support the community. Since the beginning of May, up to 10 volunteer activities happened daily, with up to 150 volunteers being deployed each day. Below are activities taken place on May 20:

Agencia Superar Limitada	• Assisting with the logistics such as cargo movement and loading
Cheng Chong Building	• iPad/smartphone workshop for the elderly • Yum cha with the elderly
Creche Kao Yip (Doca de Lam Mau)	• Cleaning and sanitizing
Macau Special Olympics	• Supporting the handcraft workshops and outdoor activities for kids with special needs • Providing assistance to the sports activities
San Hoi Lei U Lan	• Cleaning and sanitizing
The Women's General Association of Macau	• Creating succulents and delivering to the elderly and single-parent families
Vang Kei Hong Trading Co., Ltd.	• Cleaning and sanitizing the warehouse

In early May, over 200 Melco volunteers created handmade Mother's Day cards with hand-written messages for each of the 200 residents of Cheng Chong Building.

To observe social distancing, the volunteers delivered the cards to the elderly in small groups throughout the week. "I thought this year we would not have young people coming to celebrate Mother's Day with us because of the virus. We love it when volunteers from Melco come visit, they're always energetic and caring. I can't believe they made these cards one by one, I'm very happy!" said Ms. Yao, resident of Cheng Chong Building.



MACAU AIRPORT RENEWS ENVIRONMENTAL ACCREDITATION

THE Macau International Airport (MIA) has recently had its annual Airport Carbon Accreditation (ACA) renewed for one year.

A statement issued by the Macau Airport Company noted that the airport had been working to reduce its carbon emissions for many years. Its efforts have been recognized by the ACA Program.

The MIA Carbon Management Plan was revised in 2019. A target was set to reduce carbon emissions per movement by 30% from the levels in 2018. The airport had managed to reduce its emissions by 14% from its levels in 2018, 16% less than their goal. The airport did not offer an explanation for why the goal was unmet.

However, the airport pointed out that it would be more difficult to achieve more significant reductions in carbon emissions per movement "due to the significant de-

crease in the number of movements caused by the outbreak of Covid-19," the airport wrote in the statement.

Launched by Airports Council International (ACI), the aim of the ACA program is to encourage and enable airports to implement best practices in carbon reduction, with the ultimate objective of becoming carbon neutral.

The MIA was awarded Level 2 "Reduction" in the ACA program in May 2014 and the accreditation is subject to renewal every year.

The airport was accredited after the calculations and emissions data of the Airport Operations Department had been verified by a qualified third-party verifier. In addition, all the required documents, such as the Environmental Policy and procedures of Airport Operations Department, were reviewed by ACI. **AL**

APRIL TOURIST ARRIVALS LOWEST LEVEL IN OVER A DECADE

LYNZY VALLES

THE tightening of quarantine measures for arrivals in Macau starting in late March 2020 has caused the number of visitor arrivals in April to tumble 99.7% year-on-year to just 11,041.

The figure released by the Statistics and Census Service also represented a month-to-month decline of 94.8%, which is the largest such decline so far this year, as countries shut their borders to deter the spread of Covid-19.

The decline also represents the lowest level of arrivals in over a decade, as cited in data issued by the Macao Government Tourism Office.

Both overnight visitors (6,383) and same-day visitors (4,658) showed year-on-year decreases of over 99%.

In terms of the source of visitors, the number of mainland visitors dropped by 99.6% year-on-year to 10,500 (95.1% of total), with those from the nine Pearl River Delta cities in the Greater Bay Area (4,410) diving by 99.4%.



BLOOMBERG

Until now, only mainland visitors who already hold Individual Visit Scheme visas can enter Macau. The central government has not resumed issuing these visas and group visas, which have also been halted.

Chief Executive Ho Iat Seng previously announced that he intended to request that the central government extend its issuance of visa permits for mainlanders from other Chi-

nese cities to travel to Macau.

Meanwhile, there were only 328 visitors from Hong Kong and 210 from Taiwan.

All visitors to Macau, except those coming from Hong Kong, Taiwan and mainland China, are still banned from entering the city.

Visitors are obliged to undergo a 14-day quarantine at a government-designated hotel.

There is still no date on when the ban will be lifted.

Analyzed by checkpoint, visitors in April mainly came to Macau by land. Visitor arrivals by air were a mere 61 in total.

Since March 25, no layovers have been allowed in Macau. This means nobody is allowed to enter Macau with a passport and a flight ticket to a third country.

In the first four months of 2020, there were 3.23 million visitor arrivals in total, a drop of 76.6% year-on-year. Same-day visitors (1.7 million) and overnight visitors (1.52 million) fell by 77.1% and 76% respectively.

Analyzed by source market, visitors from mainland China (2.3 million), Hong Kong (650,196) and Taiwan (81,150) declined by more than 70%.

Those coming from the United States (13,469), Australia (7,904) and Canada (6,175) also declined.

The Hong Kong government has previously announced that it is in talks with Macau and mainland authorities about lifting some of the travel restrictions in place in the three regions.

MACAU PROVES POPULAR WITH YOUNG ADULT DEMOGRAPHIC

YOUNG adults were the largest age group of visitors to Macau last year, accounting for nearly a quarter of all arrivals, new research from Morgan Stanley All-Asia Research shows.

People aged between 25 and 34 represented 23.4% of all visitor arrivals in 2019, the institution reported as cited by GGR Asia, more than any other age group categorized in the government's visitor statistics database.

More recently, in February and March this year when the Covid-19 spread was at its height in the greater China region, this particular age group saw its contribution to total visitor numbers increase by 5 percentage points year-on-year to about 30%.

According to 2019 population statistics, people aged 25 to 34 accounted for about 15.7% of the mainland's population.

There is little to suggest that this "millennial cohort" is interested in gambling.

Nevertheless, analysts at the Morgan Stanley unit believe that their interest in Macau is "positive for the long-term demand of Macau business," especially in terms of powering the drive toward diversification.

As for other generations surveyed, Morgan Stanley noted that visitors in the age bracket 35 to 44 accounted for 20.1% of visitors last year, while those aged 45 to 54 represented 18.9%. Macau visitors aged 15 and below were the "fastest growing group," up by 47% from 2017. **DB**

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MACAU'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

CHINA began its most important political event of the year yesterday after a two-month delay because of the coronavirus pandemic.

The opening of the annual session of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC) is a further sign of what the government says is its victory over the outbreak that originated in the central city of Wuhan late last year.

Conference members would "tell the world about how China, as a responsible major country, has taken firm action and contributed to international cooperation in the fight against the COVID-19 epidemic," Chair Wang Yang said in his report to more than 2,000 delegates in attendance.

Rank-and-file members gathered in the vast auditorium inside the Great Hall of the People in the heart of Beijing wore masks. Other top officials, including Wang and president and leader of the ruling Communist Party, Xi Jinping, did not.

The session will be followed tomorrow by the opening of the National People's Congress, the ceremonial parliament. Premier Li Keqiang is to deliver a keynote speech outlining economic and social goals for the year.

It remains unclear whether Li will issue the usual gross domes-

China kicks off key political event delayed by pandemic



President Xi Jinping (left) gestures as he arrives for the opening session of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference

tic product growth target for the world's second-largest economy. Given the economic devastation caused by the pandemic, the targeted GDP will likely be considerably lower than last year's 6.0% to 6.5%.

Tens of millions of Chinese have been thrown out of work and it's unclear how many jobs will return after the crisis passes. Not only have domestic production and demand been ham-

pered, but China's key export markets such as the United States and Europe have also suffered massive job losses and drops in consumption.

This year's meeting of the two

bodies is being shortened to one week from the usual two as part of virus-control measures. Media access has also been largely reduced and only a limited number of reporters, diplomats and observers were permitted into the meeting hall.

Backed by massive state propaganda support, Xi has received plaudits at home for having contained the virus, even while the U.S. and others question China's handling of the initial outbreak.

The Chinese public is also largely seen as backing Xi in his confrontational approach to foreign policy challenges, including criticisms from the U.S., Australia and others.

Abroad, however, that policy has further bolstered concerns about China's intentions, and the Trump administration has increasingly pressed China over trade, technology and other issues. That may ultimately add to Xi's difficulties in reviving economic growth and jobs at a time when global markets are partly shut and skepticism toward China runs high. AP

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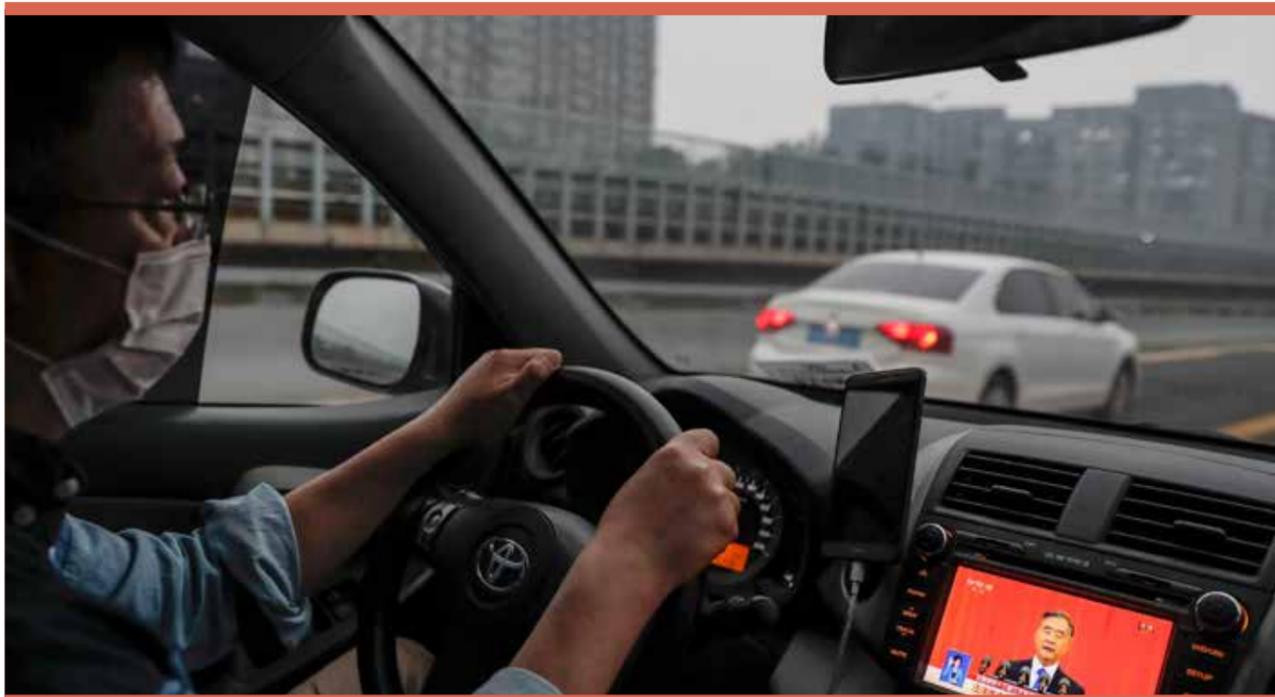
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AP PHOTO



White House report blasts Chinese 'malign activities'

BYOND its hard-hitting rhetoric against China over its handling of the coronavirus, the White House has issued a broad-scale attack on Beijing's predatory economic policies, military buildup, disinformation campaigns and human rights violations.

The 20-page report does not signal a shift in U.S. policy, according to a senior administration official, who was not authorized to publicly discuss the report and spoke only on the condition of anonymity, but it expands on President Donald Trump's get-tough rhetoric that he hopes will resonate with voters angry about China's handling of the disease outbreak, which has left tens of millions of Americans out of work.

"The media's focus on the current pandemic risks missing the bigger picture of the challenge that's presented by the Chinese Communist Party," Secretary of State Mike Pompeo said yesterday [Macau time] before the White House released its report.

"China's been ruled by a brutal, authoritarian regime, a communist regime since 1949. For several decades, we thought the regime would become more like us — through trade, scientific exchanges, diplomatic outreach, letting them in the World Trade Organization as a developing nation. That didn't happen," he said. "We greatly underestimated the degree to which Beijing is

ideologically and politically hostile to free nations. The whole world is waking up to that fact."

Later in the day, the State Department announced that it had approved the sale of advanced torpedoes to the Taiwanese military, a move sure to draw a rebuke from Beijing, which regards the island as a renegade province. The department said it had informed Congress of the \$180 million sale of heavy-weight torpedoes, spare parts, support and testing equipment, which "will help improve the security of (Taiwan) and assist in maintaining political stability, military balance, and economic progress in the region."

While pushing back on China, Trump has sometimes uttered contradictory statements. He has talked about having a great personal relationship with Chinese President Xi Jinping yet has repeatedly denounced China for not doing more to stop the virus from spreading across the world. He'll criticize China, then say he wants Beijing to sign Phase II of a trade deal and join the United States and Russia in a three-way nuclear arms control treaty.

Later on, Trump wrote on Twitter that China's "massive disinformation campaign" is intended to help Joe Biden win the 2020 presidential election.

In the past 20 years, the U.S. believed that if it opened its markets wider, invested more money in China

and provided greater access to top U.S. technology and training for Chinese military officers that somehow this would cause China to liberalize, the official said.

Instead, China is more authoritarian than at any time since Beijing killed anti-government protesters on Tiananmen Square in 1989, and the Chinese Communist Party is increasingly asserting its political ideas across the globe.

The U.S. and China established diplomatic relations during the Nixon administration.

"More than 40 years later, it has become evident that this approach underestimated the will of the Chinese Communist Party to constrain the scope of economic and political reform in China," the report said. "Over the past two decades, reforms have slowed, stalled, or reversed."

According to the report, the Trump administration sees "no value" in engaging with Beijing for symbolism and pageantry. "When quiet diplomacy proves futile, the United States will increase public pressure" on China.

The latest example of U.S. and China power competition is playing out at the World Health Organization. At the U.N. health agency's annual assembly this week, Xi joined by video conference to offer more money and support. Meanwhile, Trump railed against the WHO in a letter accusing it of covering up the coronavirus outbreak with China — and

threatening to permanently halt U.S. funding that has been its main financial lifeblood for years.

China also has been engaged in a military buildup, has engaged in cyber hacking and Beijing's pledge to end predatory economic practices "is littered with broken and empty promises."

China promised during the Obama administration that it would stop government-directed cyber theft of trade secrets for commercial gain and restated the same promise in the first two years of the Trump administration, the report said. In late 2018, however, the U.S. and a dozen other countries reported that China was hacking computers to target intellectual property and steal business information.

"Since the 1980s, Beijing has signed multiple international agreements to protect intellectual property. Despite this, more than 63 percent of the world's counterfeits originate in China, inflicting hundreds of billions of dollars of damage on legitimate businesses around the world," the report said.

The Trump administration also is upset at how China continues to argue to the World Trade Organization that it is a "developing country," even though it is the top importer of high-tech products and ranks second only to the U.S. in terms of gross domestic product, defense spending and outward investment. **AP**

this day in history

1972 PRESIDENT NIXON ARRIVES IN MOSCOW

America's President Richard Nixon has arrived in Moscow for talks with Soviet leaders.

He was given a modest welcome as he stepped off the plane at Vnukovo airport with his wife earlier today.

The welcome party consisted of Soviet president Nikolai Podgorny, Prime Minister Alexei Kosygin and Foreign Minister Andrei Gromyko.

A twenty-minute ceremony, during which the president briefly inspected a guard of honour, was held and broadcast live by Moscow television.

The national anthems of both countries were played and a carefully selected group of Soviet citizens dutifully, but silently, waved American and Soviet flags.

President Nixon, the first US president to visit Moscow, was said to be surprised that Leonid Brezhnev, general secretary of the Communist Party, was not at the airport.

But Soviet officials said Mr Brezhnev's absence was according to protocol, as he does not hold a government position.

However, following a high-speed motorcade through Moscow, President Nixon was invited to unscheduled talks with Mr Brezhnev at the Kremlin.

The meeting lasted 105 minutes and, although US officials would not give details, Ronald Ziegler, the White House press secretary, said the two men discussed "international issues".

Many observers were hoping the war in Vietnam and the nuclear arms race would be high on the agenda.

For the first time in history the stars and stripes flag of America flew over the Grand Palace of the Kremlin to mark the visit.

This evening President Nixon and his wife attended a banquet at the Kremlin. The couple walked along a red carpet and up a 60-step staircase into the Granovit banqueting hall, where the two presidents drank toasts to peace.

There are known differences between the two men on such issues as the war in Vietnam and the Middle East.

President Nixon spoke about the need for co-operation and reciprocity between the two countries in their efforts to conquer disease, improve the environment, and to expand bilateral trade and economic links.

He said he was eager to make the summit a memorable one for its substance.

During his speech he alluded to Vietnam: "We should recognise that it is the responsibility of great powers to influence other nations in conflict or crisis to moderate their behaviour."

He also spoke of a possible arms agreement which, he said "could begin to turn our countries away from a wasteful and dangerous arms race and towards more production for peace".

President Podgorny said the Soviet Union wanted not just good but friendly relations with the US.

The US president is due to remain in the Soviet Union until 29 May.

Courtesy BBC News

IN CONTEXT

During the week-long summit several agreements between the two countries were reached.

On 26 May a treaty to halt the nuclear arms race, known as the Strategic Arms Limitation Talks (Salt), was signed in the Kremlin by President Nixon and Mr Brezhnev.

The agreement, which was the culmination of nearly three years of talks between the two superpowers limited each superpower to 200 defensive nuclear missiles and froze the number of intercontinental ballistic missiles for the next five years.

An agreement designed to establish more favourable conditions for developing commercial and other economic ties between the USA and the USSR was also reached.

The two countries also agreed to make their first joint manned venture into space in June 1975.

Other agreements relating to incidents at sea, science and technology, health and the environment were also made.

Little progress was made on the Middle East or Vietnam although the two sides did agree to further negotiations on both subjects.

MACAU'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

YOUR STARS



ARIES

Mar. 21-Apr. 19

A very flirtatious person has been paying a lot more attention to you lately, and today they could kick it up a notch. At first, it may not be clear that they're trying to get to know you better.



TAURUS

Apr. 20-May. 20

Let your charming personality shine through and show someone who you really are. And if anyone can create a clear understanding of their true self with the written word right now, it's you.



GEMINI

May. 21-Jun. 21

If you're just looking, make sure they know that. If you're ready to make a move, let them know that, too. Ask for what you want and you might get it.



CANCER

Jun. 22-Jul. 22

There's no reason to be intimidated by them! Now is the time to reach out and connect with other people, because they need to see what you're capable of.



LEO

Jul. 23-Aug. 22

Today your main priority should be your home. Make sure that it's a place of calm, comfort, and safety. If it isn't, start researching ways to change that.



VIRGO

Aug. 23-Sep. 22

There's been some fuzzy communication lately, and you might have suffered a bit because of it. There isn't much you can do about improving things just yet.



LIBRA

Sep. 23-Oct. 22

Your mind is entering a strong phase of clarity, despite the fact that there is too much duality in your life right now. It seems like everyone has two sides to their personality...



SCORPIO

Oct. 23-Nov. 21

You can get the rest of your work done tomorrow, so don't worry about letting anyone down in your quest for fun. You deserve a chance to loosen up, so take it while it's here.



SAGITTARIUS

Nov. 22-Dec. 21

Things could be very unpredictable today, so expect some last-minute changes. Think of your day as a motor that just got a giant wrench tossed into it!



CAPRICORN

Dec. 22-Jan. 19

The news of the day will remind you that while you can't always get what you want, you have more power than you know what to do with. Start thinking of new ways to use it.



AQUARIUS

Jan. 20-Feb. 18

You already have a fairly healthy respect for money, but right now you need to be extra cautious about how you treat it and spend it. Make sure all your credit cards are safe and current.



PISCES

Feb. 19-Mar. 20

If you feel good, you look good! Pamper yourself a little bit today and give your physical appearance a little boost. But don't worry - it's not like you really need it!

The Born Loser by Chip Sansom



SUDOKU

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

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

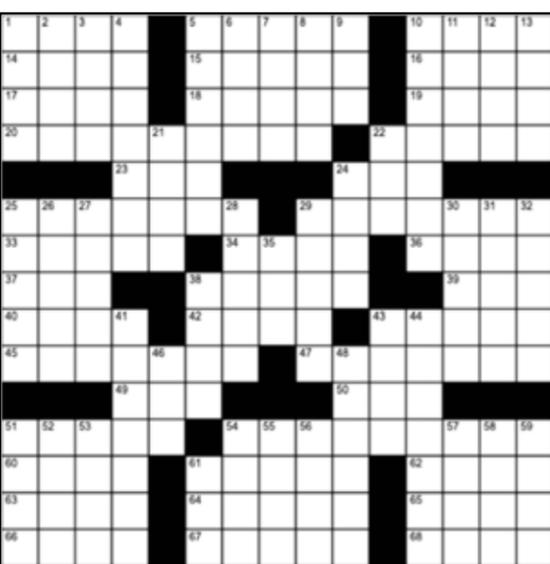
WEATHER

	MIN	MAX	CONDITION
CHINA			
Beijing	15	30	clear
Harbin	11	21	shower
Tianjin	16	29	clear
Urumqi	13	25	clear
Xi'an	18	35	overcast
Lhasa	8	15	drizzle
Chengdu	21	32	overcast
Chongqing	23	31	cloudy
Kunming	17	26	moderate rain
Nanjing	20	30	cloudy
Shanghai	19	27	overcast 3-4
Wuhan	19	31	cloudy
Hangzhou	19	27	cloudy
Taipei	23	26	rainstorm
Guangzhou	24	29	shower
Hong Kong	25	30	moderate rain
WORLD			
Moscow	4	12	drizzle
Frankfurt	14	26	cloudy
Paris	16	28	drizzle
London	12	24	drizzle
New York	12	21	clear

CROSSWORDS

ACROSS: 1- Toward the mouth; 5- Equip; 10- Casino game; 14- Lucie's father; 15- Peachy!; 16- Candid; 17- Elevator man; 18- Fiend; 19- Sincere; 20- Apostates; 22- Infected; 23- Entirely; 24- Nuke; 25- Envelope; 29- Love affair; 35- Seraglio; 34- Examine, search; 36- Put on; 37- Granada gold; 38- Piece of music written for a solo instrument; 39- Paleozoic, for one; 40- Liquid food; 42- Saab model; 43- Fountain treats; 45- Without bound; 47- Chilean natural resource; 49- In whatever degree; 50- Rule, for short; 51- Same here; 54- Permissible; 60- Radiate; 61- Opposed to cation; 62- ___-do-well; 63- Canoeing body; 64- Painter Rousseau; 65- Taverns; 66- Islamic ruler; 67- Top story; 68- Sign over;

DOWN: 1- Scent; 2- Network of nerves; 3- Z ___ zebra; 4- Illness; 5- Ultimate purpose; 6- Require; 7- Matron; 8- Western Native Americans; 9- Took the gold; 10- Cat's front foot; 11- Parrot; 12- Enlarge, as a hole; 13- One's partner; 21- Dejected; 22- Leg; 24- Sector; 25- Elected; 26- Biblical brother; 27- Arrogant; 28- Adlai's running mate; 29- Radioactive gas; 30- I ___ vacation!; 31- 200 milligrams; 32- Rub out or remove from memory; 35- Blackguard; 38- New Orleans is The Big ___; 41- Phonograph record; 43- Bouillabaisse, e.g.; 44- Pertaining to compounds of carbon; 46- Brian of Roxy Music; 48- Sardonic; 51- Remove from text; 52- Mosque leader; 53- Polynesian carving; 54- Work without ___; 55- Bits of thread; 56- Actress Singer; 57- Nota ___; 58- Give for a while; 59- Gaelic language of Ireland or Scotland; 61- Found it!



Crossword puzzles provided by BestCrosswords.com

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



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MACAU'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

ASTRAZENECA GETS \$1 BILLION FROM US TO MAKE OXFORD VACCINE

ASTRAZENECA Plc received more than \$1 billion in U.S. government funding for an experimental Covid-19 vaccine from the University of Oxford, a boost to one of the world's fastest-moving projects to develop a shot.

The investment accelerates a race to secure vaccine supplies, seen as a key step toward restarting global economies after a lockdown-induced slump. Stock markets have been rising and falling on developments in research labs as investors weigh the prospects.

The U.K. drugmaker received the money from the U.S. Biomedical Advanced Research and Development Authority and said it has secured capacity to make 1 billion doses. Although AstraZeneca has said it expects to have shots ready as soon as September, the company's vaccine candidate is still in human trials, with no guarantee of success.

The funding for AstraZeneca is part of the Operation Warp Speed effort to secure vaccines for the U.S., according to a statement from the Health and Human Services Department. Astra can receive up to \$1.2 billion under the

BLOOMBERG



agreement, and the U.S. expects 300 million doses to be available as early as October.

The U.S. "is making multiple major investments in developing and manufacturing promising vaccines long before they're approved so that a successful vaccine will reach the American people without a day wasted," HHS Secretary Alex Azar said. Oxford's vaccine is the fourth to receive BARDA support.

The U.S. agency has also provided funding for French pharma-

ceutical giant Sanofi, including \$30 million for its Covid vaccine and a \$226 million award in December to increase production capacity for its pandemic influenza vaccine. A Covid vaccine developed by the company will probably go to Americans first if the company can successfully deliver one, Chief Executive Officer Paul Hudson said last week in an interview with Bloomberg News.

Sanofi said later that it would make the shot available everywhere. While the absence of a Euro-

pean counterpart to BARDA has slowed efforts to secure supplies, Hudson said the French company is in talks with several governments on possible arrangements.

Supplying the U.K. with vaccine will be a priority for AstraZeneca, CEO Pascal Soriot has said. Astra plans to make as many as 30 million doses available in Britain by September and has committed to delivering 100 million this year.

Astra said it's working with groups including the World Health Organization, the Coalition for

Epidemic Preparedness Innovations and Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance, on making sure the vaccine is allocated fairly. The company said it has supply agreements for 400 million doses.

"Several more agreements are expected to deliver AstraZeneca's commitment to ensure global access," a spokesman said in an email. "These agreements are happening in parallel in order to ensure broad and equitable supply of the vaccine throughout the world at no profit during the pandemic."

The U.S. funding will support a final-stage clinical trial with 30,000 participants, as well as tests in children, AstraZeneca said.

Dozens of other vaccine projects are underway around the world, from the U.S. to China, drawing in major pharma giants, university labs and others. Moderna Inc. shares jumped earlier this week after the U.S. biotech revealed positive early results from its experimental vaccine.

President Xi Jinping of China has said any successful vaccine developed there will be made available as a global public good. **MDT/BLOOMBERG**

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Detective, nurse, confidant: Virus tracers play many roles

HEALTH investiga-
tor Mackenzie Bray
smiles and chuckles as
she chats by phone with a
retired Utah man who just
tested positive for the cor-
onavirus.

She's trying to keep the
mood light because she
needs to find out where
he's been and who he's
been around for the past
seven days. She gently pe-
ppers him with questions,
including where he and his
wife stopped to buy flowers
on a visit to a cemetery.
She encourages him to go
through his bank state-
ment to see if it reminds
him of any store visits he
made.

Midway through the
conversation, a possible
break: His wife lets slip that
they had family over for
Mother's Day, including a
grandchild who couldn't
stop slobbering.

"Was there like a shared
food platter or something
like that?" Bray asks. "The-
re was, OK, yep ... sharing
food or sharing drinks,
even just being on the
same table, it can spread
that way."

Suddenly, with a shared
punch bowl, the web has
widened, and Bray has do-
zens more people to track
down.

She is among an army
of health professionals
around the world filling
one of the most important
roles in the effort to guard
against a resurgence of the
coronavirus. The practice
of so-called contact tracing
requires a hybrid job of in-
terrogator, therapist and
nurse as they try coax ner-
vous people to be honest.

The goal: To create a
road map of everywhere
infected people have been
and who they've been
around.

While other countries
have devised national
approaches, a patchwork
of efforts has emerged in
the U.S. where states are
left to create their own pro-
gram.

Bray normally does
this type of work to track
contacts for people with
sexually transmitted dis-
eases. She is now one of
130 people at the Salt Lake
County health department
assigned to track corona-
virus cases in the Salt Lake
City area. The investiga-
tors, many of them nurses,
each juggle 30 to 40 cases,
and try to reach everyone
the original person was
within 6 feet (1.8 meters)



Health investigator Mackenzie Bray sits in her office at the Salt Lake County Health Department

of for 10 minutes or more.
They stay in touch with
some people throughout
the 14-day incubation pe-
riod, and calls can take 30
minutes or more as they
meticulously go through a
list of questions.

Some estimate as many
as 300,000 contact tracers
would be needed in the
U.S. to adequately curtail
the spread. While some
states like Utah have re-
ported having enough
contact tracers, others are
hundreds or even thou-
sands of people short.

The contact tracers of-
ten find themselves in a
tangled web of half-truths
and facts that don't match
up. Language and cultural
barriers arise that requi-
re interpreters and taxing
conversations that leave
the investigators wonder-
ing if the person under-
stands what they're trying
to do.

They land on occasion
into complicated family
dynamics where people
are reluctant to tell the tru-
th.

DiCaro found out days
into a case that a father
was sleeping in his car be-
cause he and his wife were
separating. The man had
stopped returning DiCaro's
calls, and that key informa-
tion came from his child.

"I get people that lie all
time," DiCaro said. "I try to
get as much information
from the beginning but it's
just not always the case.
And time is one of those
things you can't take back
when you are trying to pre-

vent and you know do the-
se contact tracing investi-
gations."

Each call is an exercise
in good cop, bad cop. She
needs people to cooperate,
but no one is legally requi-
red to answer the ques-
tions. Usually kindness
works better than strong
words.

Some people lie be-
cause they're scared, or they
forget an outing. Construc-
tion workers, house-
keepers and others wi-
thout paid sick time may
gloss over symptoms so
they can get back to work.
Some immigrants without
documentation brush off
testing because they fear it
could lead to deportation.

"People sometimes
think contact tracing is bla-
ck and white but there is a
lot of gray that goes into it,"
said Bray, who often thinks
about her parents and
97-year-old grandmother
as she works to help stop
the spread of the virus.
"Our worst fear is that we
push too hard and we lose
someone. It's not just their
health on the line, it's the
people around them."

No matter the tension,
Bray and DiCaro give fre-
quent reminders of why it
all matters: "Thank you for
what you're doing. You're
helping the community,"
DiCaro says during one
call.

She knows that on the
other end of the line, the
first call from a tracer can
be jarring. Sometimes,
DiCaro and Bray have to
break the news that so-

meone was exposed or tes-
ted positive.

"It's normal to talk to like
your doctor, but you don't
ever expect the health de-
partment to call you and
be like, 'You were exposed

to a serious disease," said
Anissa Archuleta.

The 23-year-old got a
call from DiCaro after she,
her sister and her mother
took a rare break from
hunkering down to help
organize a drive-by bir-
thday party for a young
cousin. They dropped off
a present, then caved and
accepted an impromptu
invitation to go inside to
grab some food.

What they didn't know:
the father of the birthday
boy had the coronavirus,
and unknowingly exposed
more than a dozen people
at the gathering.

After that first call, DiCa-
ro checked in every day for
two weeks. The fear slowly
faded after their tests came
back negative and they
began building a rapport
with DiCaro. She asked
about their symptoms and
how they were feeling each
day and learned about
how Ortega lost her voice

to fibromyalgia. Archuleta
would pass along messa-
ges her mother whispered
in her ear.

And after a while, Ar-
chuleta began asking Di-
Caro about her life and
how she was holding up.

About a week in to their
calls, on the daily check-in,
Archuleta thanked DiCa-
ro for caring about them
and checking in every day.
Tears welled up in DiCaro's
eyes.

"Ah thanks," she said as
she grabbed a Kleenex to
wipe her eyes.

After she hung up, she
leaned back in her chair
and closed her eyes for a
few seconds.

"When you do this like
10-12 hours a day ... It's
nice to get those positive
reactions from people that
are very grateful who do
see the purpose of what
we are doing," said DiCaro.
"It's nice to be apprecia-
ted." AP

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OPINION

World Views

Max Nisen, Boomborg

MODERNA VACCINE
WHIPLASH DEMANDS
BETTER DISCLOSURE

Interpreting drug trial data releases is difficult in the best of circumstances. And usually, it's just a problem for the subset of investors who focus on the sector. In the middle of a pandemic, a whole world is throwing money around on press releases, and it's making a mess of expectations and the market.

U.S. stocks soared Monday on the publication of early human vaccine data from Moderna Inc., only to reverse course Tuesday after an article from the excellent health news publication Stat highlighted its limits and the long and highly uncertain path ahead. It's similar to what happened in late April, when markets reacted and retrenched after a limited rollout of results from a trial of Gilead Science's virus treatment remdesivir. It was enough to get the drug approved on a limited basis, but doctors and investors alike are still waiting for something more than a basic analysis weeks later.

This boom-confusion-bust cycle doesn't benefit anybody, except for companies such as Moderna that raise money at hyped-up valuations. Unsophisticated investors aren't going to understand the nuances of drug development overnight. All this suggests that when it comes to a race for a vaccine with unprecedented scientific, public health, and policy implications, there ought to be a higher standard on disclosure.

Pharmaceutical companies routinely release so-called "topline" data, an initially limited snapshot of results in a press release, and then follow up with more detailed information at a later date. It's also not at all uncommon to report interim results from incomplete ongoing studies. Even by that standard, Moderna's release has issues. The company's phase one trial was primarily intended as a first look at the vaccine's safety rather than a hard test of whether it works. While the safety disclosures didn't produce big red flags, they also weren't flawless or especially detailed, especially considering that the company's technology has never produced a widely used human vaccine.

Though it wasn't the focus of the trial, efficacy data got the highest billing in the company's press release and the most attention as the world grasps for hope about a quicker route back to normalcy. One of the principal sources of excitement — the claim that the vaccine created neutralizing antibodies equivalent to those in recovered individuals in a subset of patients — came from a group of just eight people. Even though scientists are still in the earliest stages of figuring out the immune response to this virus, Moderna provided no hard data on the level of antibodies produced or the yardstick it was measuring against. The world will have to wait for an indeterminate period for that information, and to see whether it translates to a protective effect in the real world.

It's possible that Moderna had a predetermined plan to release results and followed it. Companies have to disclose material information, and there are more gray areas with this sort of early open-label trial. However, to the extent that there was latitude, investors and the world would arguably have been better served had the company waited a few weeks to get more follow-up data and released far more detail. The company created the conditions for a narrative to run ahead of the data, and other vaccine developers should avoid its example.

None of this is to say that the results are bad; they're enough to proceed to and help inform larger trials. They're just shaky justification for a huge rally in Moderna's already elevated stock given the more difficult trials ahead for the vaccine, its uncertain commercial prospects, and the many other candidates in development, let alone for a broader surge. The release confirms that this vaccine is a viable candidate in a long race, not that one is coming dramatically sooner.

The enormous import of the ongoing work from Moderna and other companies and the public funds flowing in their direction should come with extra responsibility.

The central Chinese city of Wuhan, where the global coronavirus pandemic originated last year, has issued a total ban on the hunting, breeding and human consumption of wild animals.

That is an apparent response to research showing the virus most likely originated among bats and was transmitted to people via an intermediary wild species sold at a food market in the city.

The regulation issued this week seeks to carry out measures passed at the national level covering protected land animals as well as sea life, promising financial relief to help dealers move

into other lines of business.

However, it contains numerous exceptions, including for animals used for traditional Chinese medicine, as long as they are not consumed as food for humans.

That left it unclear whether the ban would cover pangolins, small mammals whose scales are used for traditional Chinese medicine but which are thought to have been the intermediary carrier of the virus.

The regulation will be enforced immediately and will be in effect for five years.

PATTEN URGES HONG KONG PROTESTERS NOT TO 'LOSE FAITH'



ZEN SOO, HONG KONG

HONG Kong's last British governor, Chris Patten, yesterday [Macau time] urged protesters not to "lose faith" over what he described as moves by Beijing to tighten its control over the semi-autonomous city.

The former British colony was returned to China in 1997 under a "one country, two systems" framework that gives it its own legal system and more freedoms than on the mainland. It has been rocked over the past year by huge rallies that exposed deep divisions between democracy-minded Hong Kongers and the Communist Party-ruled central government in Beijing.

The protests began over a now-withdrawn bill that would have allowed Hong Kong residents to be sent to the mainland for trial, and continued for more than seven months over police conduct and perceptions that Beijing is tightening its controls over the city's affairs.

The demonstrations, which were largely peaceful at first, over the months descended into occasionally violent clashes between police and protesters. More than 8,000 arrests were made.

"They shouldn't lose heart. They shouldn't lose their sense of dignity and decency and moderation," Patten said in an online interview organized by The Foreign Correspondents' Club in Hong Kong.

"I don't think you can kill or lock up or tear gas into submission the idea of freedom," said Patten, who was Hong Kong's last colonial governor before the city was returned to China and helped negotiate the terms of the handover. He has often been critical of developments in Hong Kong since then, saying the terms were violated.

"I don't think you can kill or lock up or tear gas into submission the idea of freedom."

CHRIS PATTEN

Hong Kong's police force has been accused of excessive use of force during the demonstrations. Protesters have thrown gasoline bombs in retaliation and occupied streets and college campuses, turning them into battlegrounds against the police.

Patten urged people to "stand up for what they believe in" and vote in legislative elections in September.

He criticized a recent report by the city's police watchdog that exonerated officers' use of force, and described the recent arrests of 15 pro-democracy activists on charges of unlawful assembly as "outrageous."

"It's a threat to Hong Kong's autonomy and to the 'one country, two systems,'" he said, adding that the arrests were an attempt to

intimidate the rest of Hong Kong.

In response to Patten's comments, China's foreign ministry in Hong Kong said in a statement that Patten was instigating the young people of Hong Kong to continue to act like hooligans as "cannon fodder for political gain."

He was also accused of distorting the "one country, two systems" principle, and of smearing China's international image, according to the ministry's statement.

"Chris Patten is a sinner of a thousand years who will definitely be nailed to history's pillar of shame," the statement said.

Patten, who introduced democratic reforms in Hong Kong toward the end of his tenure as governor, has urged Britain to speak up for the territory. Beijing last October accused him of being a "black hand" behind the protest movement after he called a regulation banning protesters from wearing face coverings "absolute madness."

Patten also hit out at Hong Kong leader Carrie Lam, saying she was not performing her job with the "greatest integrity" as Beijing tightens controls over the city.

"The government seem to be the mechanism through which the Communist leadership in Beijing runs Hong Kong and makes its decisions. Carrie Lam will have to live with her conscience," he said. AP

South Korea has reported 12 new coronavirus cases and one more death, bringing its totals to 11,122 cases and 124 deaths. The Korea Centers for Disease Control and Prevention yesterday said 10 of the new cases came from Seoul and nearby Incheon, where health workers have been scrambling to track and test potential virus carriers following dozens of infections linked to nightspots. South Korea was reporting around 500 new cases a day in early March.



Sri Lanka police say three women died in a stampede yesterday when residents of a Colombo neighborhood scrambled to receive aid distributed to people who lost their livelihoods because of the coronavirus. They said several others were hospitalized. Six private individuals who organized the aid distribution were arrested. Many people in the crowded neighborhood are day laborers or drive three-wheel taxis.

Italy's government is seeking to turn the coronavirus emergency into an opportunity to pass "the mother of all reforms" to simplify the country's notoriously bulky bureaucracy, invest in education and research and make Italy more attractive to foreign investment. Premier Giuseppe Conte told parliament's lower chamber that an upcoming "simplification" decree aims to provide a "shock" to the economy.



Spaniards are going about their restricted lives wearing masks in compliance with a government order that comes into force. Masks are now mandatory for people over 6 years old in all public spaces, including outdoors when they can't keep a distance of 2 meters between them. The new ruling affects approximately 45 million people.