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THE GOVERNMENT HAS PROPOSED INSURANCE COMPANIES TO KEEP BUSINESS FILES FOR A PERIOD OF UP TO 10 YEARS

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NEW MACAU PROMPTS TOP COURT TO RULE AGAIN ON A JUNE 4 VIGIL BAN

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MGM CHINA UNDERGOES LEADERSHIP RESHUFFLE AFTER BOWIE RETIREMENT, WITH NEW TOP EXECUTIVES REPORTING DIRECTLY TO PANSY HO

P3

AP PHOTO



Hong Kong extended its ban on public gatherings of more than eight people to June 18. Secretary for Food and Health Sophia Chan said, after the government found a local cluster of nine people infected by the coronavirus. The city also prolonged the 14-day quarantine requirement for travelers from China, Macau and Taiwan to July 7 and other overseas visitors to Sept. 18. Hong Kong said it found four new local cases and two imported cases yesterday.
More on back page

China is reporting five new cases of the coronavirus, all brought by Chinese citizens from outside the country. No new deaths were reported while 73 people remain in treatment for COVID-19 and 373 are under monitoring and isolation for showing signs of the virus or having tested positive for it without showing symptoms. China has recorded a total of 4,634 deaths among 83,022 cases of the disease.

AP PHOTO



South Korea Areas around Seoul moved to curb large gatherings yesterday and officials urged churchgoers and some health care workers to avoid crowds as the number of new coronavirus once again increased. The densely populated Seoul metropolitan area was home to all but one of the 38 new cases of COVID-19 reported by the Korea Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Hundreds of recent cases have been linked to workplaces.

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CHONGQING EXPRESS

First-tier metropolis announces resumption of visas to SARs P3



XINHUA

TRUMP THREATENS MILITARY FORCE AGAINST PROTESTERS NATIONWIDE

AP PHOTO



P8

AIR MACAU FLIGHT CREW REPORTEDLY TAKES COVID-19 TEST EVERY WEEK

Flight crews working with Air Macau are required to undergo a Covid-19 swab nucleic acid test every seven days, an insider told the Times. The local flag carrier has been contacted for its statement, but no reply was received by press time. For the time being, only Greater China residents who have not been anywhere other than the Greater China Region in the past 14 days will be allowed to enter into Macau. All other arrivals are banned from entry. In the meantime, non-resident workers who hold Zhuhai ID cards are allowed into Macau with a valid Covid-19 nucleic test result and by passing Macau's Health Code.

MPAY APP FAILURE DOES NOT POSE SECURITY ISSUE

The MPay app failure that occurred on Monday does not involve security matters, according to the Monetary Authority of Macao (AMCM). On Monday, the MPay app failed, rendering its services unusable. AMCM has demanded that Macau Pass submits a detailed report to the department within five days. The report should include improvement measures and a customer service follow-up. In addition, Macau Pass is also obliged to submit a conclusion report to AMCM within one month. The department shall inform the public about the handling of the incident. According to AMCM's chairman Chan Sau San, the government does not rule out administrative procedure if there was any violation involved. Currently, the number of affected Mpay users remains unclear.

258,000 ENQUIRIES MADE ON SALARY SUBSIDY

The government's salary subsidy online system registered around 258,000 enquiries as of 4 p.m. yesterday. Within 30 minutes of the enquiry system's launch, the website had already received 12,000 inquiries regarding the 15,000 patacas income subsidy. At the Finance Services Bureau, only a small number of people were present to learn about this subsidy. For self-employed professionals and business owners, the online inquiry system will be available from June 11. The subsidy for employees suggests that eligible taxpayers will be entitled to a monthly grant of 5,000 patacas for a period of three months. The number was based on the median monthly income of employed Macau residents in 2019, namely 20,000 patacas. The subsidy is designed to cover 25% of the 2019 median monthly income.

LAW AMENDMENT TO REQUIRE INSURERS TO RETAIN RECORDS FOR UP TO 10 YEARS

JULIE ZHU

THE government has proposed an amendment which requires insurance companies to keep business documents for a longer period, the Third Standing Committee of the Legislative Assembly (AL) reported yesterday.

The committee had a meeting with several government representatives, including the chairman of the Monetary Authority of Macao (AMCM), Chan Sau San, to discuss the insurance business bill. This is the second meeting, following the one on May 18.

The bill, which is prescribed by article 74, suggests that insurers are obligated to keep documents for three to 10 years depending on the nature of the records.

Originally, the insurance business bill introduced a records retention program to hold onto documents for one year, regardless of the nature of the documents.

Yesterday, the government brought the amendment to the AL committee, extending the retention period to a maximum of 10 years.

Important documents, including elements of accounts records and insurance contracts, should be retained for up to 10 years.

Claim records, and concerned insurance policies regarding each contract should be

WESLEY TINGEY



kept for five years after the expiration date of the contract.

Other types of documents are proposed to be preserved for a minimum of three years. The committee agreed with all of the aforementioned amendments.

According to Vong Hin Fai, Chairman of the AL committee, the collection of these documents can also be safeguarded with digital copies.

When necessary, the concerned administrative government authority can collect digital copies as evidence.

The bill also suggests that when an insurance company suffers any financial incidents or other incidents related to public interest, the SAR government can take measures to interfere.

The committee endorsed the government interference proposal.

On January 24, 2019, the AL passed law No. 27/97/M relating to the insurance business. Overall, the new amendment establishes a higher requirement for local insurers' capital and funding. The amendment also suggests that in-

surers pay a higher fee for the supervision mechanism. According to the bill, companies providing general insurance should have a minimum capital of 30 million patacas in order to set up a fund in Macau, while life insurance companies must have at least 60 million patacas. The law currently in effect suggests that the AMCM charges between 20,000 and 100,000 patacas for its oversight. This range has been increased to between 30,000 and one million patacas in the new amendment.

Sands China records more losses in April than in Q1

SANDS China Ltd.'s net loss in April was \$180 million, compared to the \$166 million net loss from January to March amid the pandemic outbreak.

In April, the gaming operator recorded a 98.7% year-on-year drop in its revenue to

\$9 million. The group's revenue in April 2019 stood at \$700 million.

According to reports, the group is expecting May revenues to be similar to April, as "based on the preliminary information available, net revenues, operating loss, net loss

and adjusted property EBITDA loss in May 2020 were not materially different."

The gaming operator has reportedly borrowed \$404 million from its revolving credit facility to cover the nearly \$200 million a month it takes to keep

the company's Macau revenues running.

The company reported \$110 million in operating costs, \$65 million in development and maintenance and \$25 million in interest costs.

"Sands [China] had \$2.41 billion of liquidity as of 29 May 2020 (including \$1.6 billion available under revolver), down from \$2.8 billion at end-March given monthly cash-burn of \$195 million (including develop-

ment capex)," according to JP Morgan analysts DS Kim, Derek Choi and Jeremy An, as cited in a note seen by GGRAsia.

The brokerage said that the report of the gaming operator did not come as a surprise.

However, the analysts said that "Sands China believes it has a strong balance sheet and sufficient liquidity in place to fund its operations for 12 months in the current operating environment." LV

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Chongqing announces resumption of visa issuance to SARs

STAFF REPORTER

MAINLAND China has resumed processing both Individual Visit Scheme (IVS) and group tour travel visas to the SARs, according to an official announcement issued by the police department of Chongqing.

Chongqing city is one of the four municipalities under the direct administration of the Central Government of China.

Since the end of January, mainland China partially shut down its immigration system, specifically concerning mainland residents' outbound traveling services. The government suspended the issuance of travel endorsements to Hong Kong and Macau as part of its measures to deter the spread of Covid-19.

At that time, some mainland residents were in the middle of travel endorsement applications to the SARs. However, due to the sudden suspension of service, many travel documents were kept by the concerned department without being returned to their owners.

On May 29, the Chongqing police authority released an infographic on its official Weibo account announcing the resumption of service.

According to the announcement, starting June 1, members of the public can visit the Chongqing



qing police department to apply for a travel endorsement to go to Hong Kong and Macau.

Regarding "immigration affairs," the police department is now issuing both IVS and group tour travel visas. The IVS is mostly issued by capital cities, in addition to several other mega cities.

The announcement made by Chongqing did not specify the details of the visa policies at the current stage.

The statement also disclosed the resumption of visa applications to Taiwan.

However, according to the five comments made on a Weibo post

by the official account of the Chongqing police department, which has 1.1 million followers, the announcement doesn't reflect the reality of the situation.

According to one comment on the Weibo post, some people still experienced rejection when applying for the travel endorsement.

Group tour visas are issued by the remaining mainland cities. Previously, group tour visa holders could only travel to Macau or Hong Kong as a member of a travel package. However, since 2019 mainland China has been amending the policies. Now, individual travel visas and group tour visas share the same regulation.

Mainland China issues travel endorsements in three ways: online application, self-service at police departments, and applications through manual service such as submitting documents directly to the office's service counter.

Mainland immigration departments frequently change policies regarding the three methods, usually without disclosing the reasons or even the policies themselves. Often, publicly announced policies are different from the ones implemented in practice.

Analysts have previously noted that the resumption of issuing IVS visas will occur after the 13th National People's Congress.

Macau's Chief Executive Ho Iat Seng previously said that the local government would be requesting for the central government to resume the issuance of visas under the IVS scheme and increase the number of cities covered by the scheme.

Currently, the scheme is implemented in 49 mainland China cities.

Last year, the total number of Chinese IVS visitors in Macau totaled nearly 13.1 million, the largest number of IVS visitors in a year.

MGM reshuffles after Bowie retirement announcement

RENATO MARQUES

MGM China will undergo a leadership restructure with the reshuffling of several positions, including that of Co-Chairperson Pansy Ho, whose role will shift from executive director to managing director.

The reshuffle was announced through a memo from the company's administration to the staff members. This comes in the wake of Grant Bowie stepping down as CEO after he announced his retirement last week.

Besides Ho, Hubert Wang Zi Qi, Kenneth Feng Ziaofeng, and António Menano will also assume new roles within the company.

Wang, who was Vice President of Finance and



Chief Financial Officer, will now become President and Chief Operating Officer, taking charge of Business Development, Casino Operations, Hospitality, Security, and the Digital and Technology Solutions divisions.

Feng, who was President and Chief Strategy Officer

(a position now handed to Wang), will assume the roles of President and, Strategic and Chief Financial Officer overseeing Finance, Human Resources, Brand Marketing, Internal Audit, and the Design, Development, and Property Operations divisions.

While keeping his former job post as Senior Vice president for Legal and General Counsel, Menano will hold further responsibilities in the Surveillance and Security Systems divisions.

In the letter, and contrary to the positions of Wang, Feng, and Menano, Ho was

not clear about her new duties and added powers, saying only, "Hubert, Kenneth, and António will report to me as Co-Chairperson and Managing Director of the company."

The Co-Chairperson also took the opportunity to announce that she aims to have closer contact with the company on a daily basis, adding, "I will be spending more time here and working closely with them and many of you on a day-to-day basis." She will be focusing all her attention on the economic recovery of the company as soon as the border restrictions are lifted, as well as on the renewal application for the gaming license.

Meanwhile, the announcement made by the gaming operator to its team

members was a surprise for analysts at Sanford C. Bernstein.

"[This] comes as somewhat of a surprise to us. We have concerns around this structure as there is limited direct casino operations and marketing management experience among the top executives," analysts Vitaly Umansky, Eunice Lee and Kelsey Zhu stated in a note yesterday.

The analysts also voiced concerns regarding conflict of interest, citing Ho's sibling relationship with Daisy Ho, the chairman of SJM. Despite the absence of Ho's direct role in SJM, the analysts suggest that she "wields influence."

"This continues to be an issue to us with respect to conflicts that may arise," said the brokerage.

MACAU'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

DEMOCRAT ASSOCIATION APPEALS POLICE OBJECTION ON ITS VIGIL

ANTHONY LAM

DEMOCRAT group New Macau Association (ANM) submitted an appeal to the court in the hopes of reversing the Public Security Police Force's (PSP) decision to decline its vigil that was to be held on June 4.

Represented by lawmaker Sulu Sou and a director of the group, Rocky Chan, the ANM considered the police's decision as a hasty action.

The group submitted a 16-page appeal to the Court of Final Appeal, which, according to the law, has immediate authority over cases related to assembly and protest declarations.

It is stipulated by law that the top-level court must announce a judgment within five days of the submission of an appeal. Given the democrat group only submitted the appeal on June 1, it will very likely miss the proposed date, unless the court issues an early judgment in favor of the group.

Citing the legislative committee's recommendation on the law concerning civil assembly and protest, the group noted: "restrictions [on civil rights] [...] should not impact the nature of these rights."

RENATO MARQUES



In addition, the group cited a number of law scholars and international entities, as well as texts from international treaties, to try to prove that the ban on its vigil had no legal grounds.

For example, the International Treaty of Civil and Political Rights has been quoted, which says that

"The restriction must be necessary [...] and must respond to a pressing social need." Additionally, "it must be the least intrusive option".

Most importantly, according to the group, the guidelines issued by the Health Bureau, on which the PSP has based its objection, are not legally binding. On top of that, the Law on the Prevention, Control and Treatment of Infec-

tious Diseases, as cited by the police, only authorizes certain powers to the head of the government. The group suspects that the PSP has transgressed its legal authority.

Similar to lawmaker Au Kam San's declaration of holding a June 4 vigil, which has also been objected to by the PSP, the ANM declared its own version of the vigil.

The ANM vigil consists of four different events scheduled to happen simultaneously at four different locations. In its appeal, the group made an estimation that the events would have an attendance of five people at its peak.

DUO FOUND GUILTY OF HOSTING UNDECLARED ASSEMBLY

On the other hand, two leaders of the Macau Federation for Family Reunion have been found guilty, by a court of law, for hosting an assembly without a prior declaration to the PSP. The judgment was announced on May 29.

The Court of First Instance sentenced the suspects to different penalties: one suspect to three months of imprisonment with one year probation, and the other to five months in prison with 1.5 years' probation. Both were charged with aggravated disobedience.

On July 26, 2019, the duo hosted an assembly that attracted other participants at the entrance of China Plaza, where the office of several government departments, particularly of the Identification Bureau, is located.

Police officers at the location requested several times for them to disperse, and informed that charges would be pressed against the organizers, who neglected the police warning.

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RENATO MARQUES



IAM pledges to keep Portuguese cobblestone pavement

RENATO MARQUES

THE Municipal Affairs Bureau (IAM) has pledged to keep the traditional Portuguese cobblestone pavement in the public spaces of Macau, the bureau said in an official statement.

The statement reversed last

week's intervention by president José Tavares, who during IAM's advisory council meeting stated the possibility of the replacement of the traditional cobblestone pavement for a new pavement made of bricks, which, according to the president, would be less slippery and allow for better drainage of rainwater.

Now the IAM has reaffirmed that the bureau will continue to maintain the Portuguese pavement used in most of the public squares as well as some sidewalks in Macau, namely in the historical center, noting that the bureau "aims to safeguard its symbolism and highlight its characteristics [representative] of the coexisten-

ce of Eastern and Western cultures."

Besides keeping the existing Portuguese cobblestone pavements, IAM also voiced its intention to continue to pave several public spaces and streets with this type of pavement, namely linking neighborhoods and tourist spots.

IAM also noted that the opinions previously provided by citizens and members of the advisory council, such as the potential risks coming from the unevenness and slippery surface of the pavement, will be taken into account by the bureau. The bureau will evaluate the conditions and promote improvements on several locations "whenever conditions permit."

IAM also mentioned that the use of Portuguese cobblestone pavement in Macau is one of the highlights of the region in terms of urban design.

The bureau noted that the areas now paved in this method possess unique characteristics, displaying both Portuguese and Chinese features that highlight the heritage of Macau, and are attractive for tourists.

In 2018, two local scholars, Vanessa Amaro and Sheila Zandonai, published a research paper in the Current Anthropology Journal from the University of Chicago emphasizing the unique characteristics of the Portuguese pavement in Macau. They noted how the pavement had been converted into an item of cultural significance.

In the paper, the researchers addressed the implementation of the pavement over time, and the evolutionary process from the colonial past, in which the use of the pavement provoked resistance and animosity from the Chinese population, to contemporary times, where it has been accepted and regarded as part of Macau's cultural identity.

AD

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DISEASE CONTROL GUIDE

OVERVIEW OF NOVEL CORONAVIRUS PNEUMONIA (NCP)

SOURCE OF INFECTION Source of infection are mainly patients of NCP. Asymptomatic patients are also a likely source.

MODE OF TRANSMISSION Direct or indirect contact of respiratory droplets via the eyes, nose or mouth; the most common form of indirect contact is the touching of eyes, nose or mouth with dirty hands.

INCUBATION PERIOD 1-14 days (usually 3-7 days)

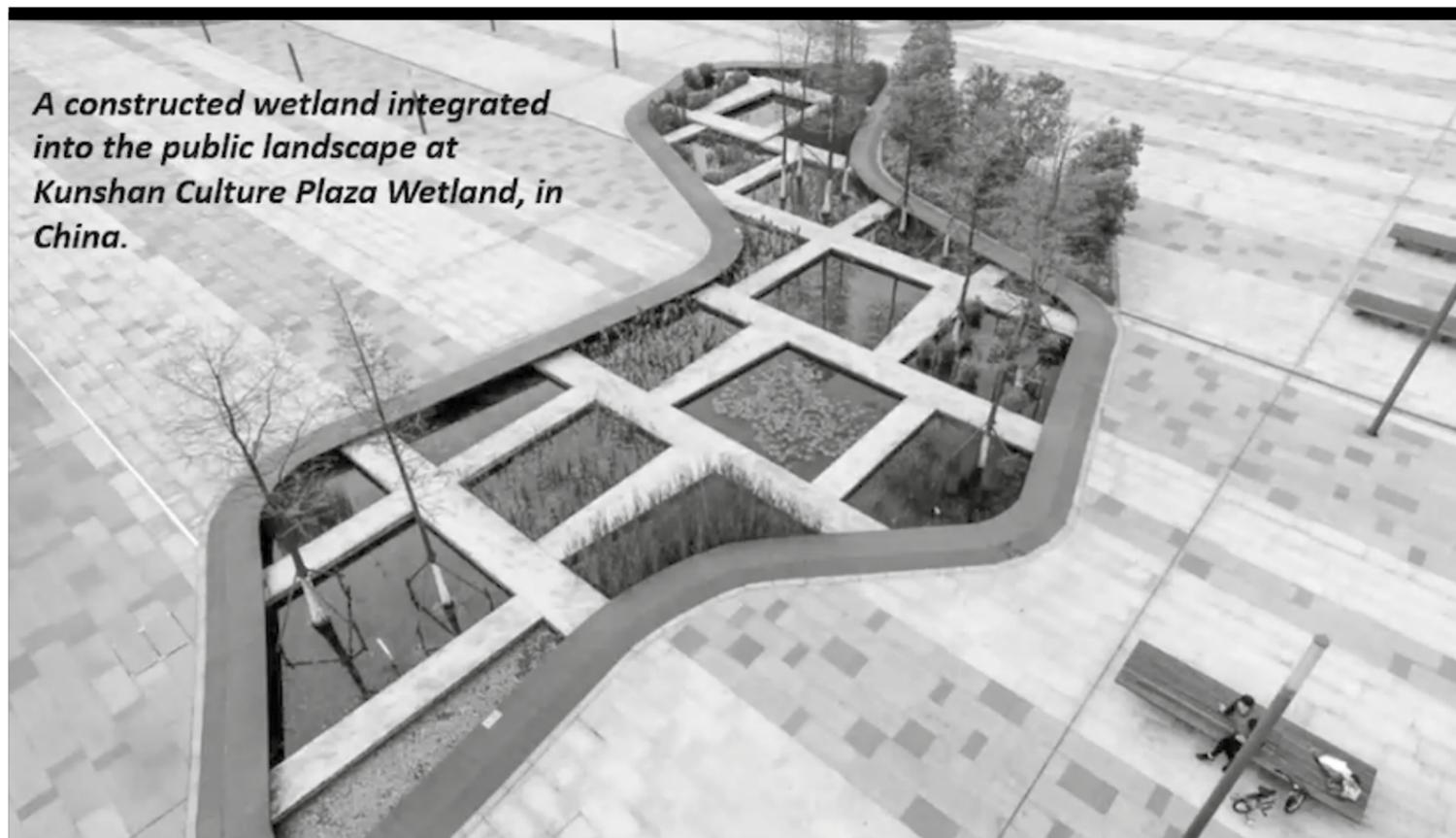
CLINICAL FEATURES Fever, tiredness, dry cough; some patients may also develop symptoms like nasal obstruction, runny nose, sore throat or diarrhoea.

MANAGEMENT AND PROGNOSIS Treatment is mainly supportive. Some cases are severe; fatal cases have been reported. Older patients and people with chronic diseases are at a higher risk of developing severe complications.

NCP IS TREATABLE IF DETECTED EARLY

Please scan this code to visit our special webpage on epidemics. Please stay tuned for the latest government information on the epidemic.

新聞局
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A constructed wetland integrated into the public landscape at Kunshan Culture Plaza Wetland, in China.

SCHOLAR DISCUSSES SOLUTIONS TO MAKE CITIES MORE PERMEABLE

RENATO MARQUES

THE increase of the impermeability of our cities and its influence on the habitat fragmentation and degradation of the ecosystems was the topic of a talk hosted by the University of Saint Joseph (USJ) yesterday evening.

The talk, hosted online by professor Cristina Calheiros, a researcher at the Interdisciplinary Centre of Marine and Environmental Research (CIIMAR) at the University of Porto and a collaborator at USJ's Institute of Science and Environment, addressed the problems created by the impermeabilization of soils in our cities. She highlighted that available solutions call for a return of the city's natural environments and their valuable service in combating impermeability.

According to the professor, Nature-based Solutions (NBS) can be implemented to bring back nature into the cities. These solutions would not just be

"ornamental" but would have great value as services provided by nature to the people, and also have an important economic outcome as they are provided (virtually) for free.

"We need to share our space with vegetation and to take the best benefits from it. Work together with nature, that's the biggest challenge," Calheiros said during the presentation, adding that the purpose of NBS is to "mimic natural processes through engineered solutions."

One of the concepts presented at the talk was of "Green infrastructure," a broad concept which refers to an NBS that addresses green corridors, green roofs, energy saving, water management solutions and much more.

Addressing the idea of aligning our cities to be more balanced with nature, Calheiros said "To bring back nature to cities does not mean to change cities completely as they already

exist and they are like living beings. What we need to do is to combine and integrate green infrastructures into the existing ones," she said, giving the example of using rain gardens to store and reuse storm waters.

"We need to [...] work together with nature, that's the biggest challenge."

CRISTINA CALHEIROS
RESEARCHER

To those aiming to engage with NBS projects to combat environmental issues and solve problems such as pollution, floods resulting from storms, and others, the scholar shares, "We won't be able to reach a solution [for your problem] with one single project and NBS. We need to create a network with different solutions and replicate [these projects in more than

one location] so we can see any effects. Only one application will likely not produce any significant impact."

In this sense, citywide solutions involve establishing a multilayered system of green solutions (green roofs, green walls, and others at building level) combined with blue solutions, i.e. solutions at the street level such as tree trenches and roadside wetlands and ponds.

All the mentioned solutions and methods aim to achieve what is called a "sponge city," a city capable of absorbing and reorganizing its water resources, canalizing them to certain storage areas when in excess and retrieving them when in shortage.

As Calheiros also mentioned, giving several examples, most of the NBS projects do not require a significant amount of space, and they can be applied to virtually any street or roadside in any city in the world.

"The keyword is to be creative, the existing solutions (NBS) are all possible to be implemented in terms of engineering and architecture. You just need to be creative on how to do that according to your goals and particular location," she said. She also reaffirmed that in most cases the best solution would be to integrate several NBS systems, as "problems can arise from people trying to use only isolated solutions or incomplete solutions." An instance would be like creating a pond or artificial wetland to improve water quality but not having a link that allows the transference of that water to other water reserve locations in case of excessive water, causing a flood.

In creating what Calheiros called "dynamic systems," cities will not only be able to take advantage of their short-term solutions but also be prepared to face a mutation of the conditions that are happening due to long-term climate change, therefore being able to "provide different answers" from the same system, she explained, giving the example of several pilot experiments being carried out in several cities on the mainland.

"They use these sponge city [pilot projects] to both deal with too much water [during and after a storm] and, at the same time, to deal with water shortages in some other occasions," she explained.

For the scholar, "Green Infrastructures act as a structuring element of the urban landscape by allowing connectivity between territories and helping to maintain the services provided by ecosystems, bringing several environmental, economic and social benefits," and ultimately bringing sustainability to each of these three pillars.

"It promotes adaptation to the effects of climate change and contributes to the transition to a low carbon economy," she concluded.

The talk was delivered within the context of the project "Nature-based solutions for a cleaner and safer Macao" implemented by the Institute of Science and Environment at USJ and supported by Clean the World Foundation and Las Vegas Sands.

Macau Urban Renewal Limited records loss in 2019

GOVERNMENT-OWNED Macau Urban Renewal Limited recorded an investment loss of 1,439,932 patacas in 2019, according to the Follow-up Committee for Public Finance Affairs of the Legislative Assembly (AL).

Yesterday, the committee followed up on the operation status of the Macau Urban Renewal Company, Macau Science Museum, and Macau Slaughter House Ltd.

The registration cost of the Macau Urban Re-

newal Limited is more than 100 million patacas. Last year, the revenue of the company was 976,600 patacas and the total expenditure was 2,416,532 patacas.

The committee was mostly concerned about

the Macau New Neighborhood project in Hengqin.

The land plot involved in the Macau New Neighborhood project is worth more than 5.8 billion yuan. Bank of China will loan 5.8 billion yuan to

the government company with an interest rate of 3.5%. The loan will not be guaranteed by the government.

The AL committee questioned which party should be responsible if the Macau New Nei-

ghborhood project loses money. The loan only covers the price of the land plot. The Macau Urban Renewal Company will need the finance to ensure the construction working capital needs are covered. **JZ**

THROUGHOUT January, the World Health Organization publicly praised China for what it called a speedy response to the new coronavirus and thanked the Chinese government for sharing the genetic map of the virus “immediately.”

But in fact, Chinese officials sat on releasing the genetic map, or genome, of the deadly virus for over a week after multiple government labs had fully decoded it, not sharing details key to designing tests, drugs and vaccines. Strict controls on information and competition within the Chinese public health system were largely to blame, The Associated Press has found from internal documents, emails and dozens of interviews.

Health officials only released the genome after a Chinese lab published it ahead of authorities on a virology website on Jan. 11. Even then, China stalled for at least two weeks more on giving WHO the details it needed, according to recordings of multiple internal meetings held by the U.N. health agency in January — all at a time when the outbreak arguably might have been dramatically slowed.

Although WHO continued to publicly commend China, the recordings obtained by the AP show they were concerned China was not sharing enough information to assess the risk posed by the new virus, costing the world valuable time.

“We’re currently at the stage where yes, they’re giving it to us 15 minutes before it appears on CCTV,” said WHO’s top official in China, Dr. Gauden Galea, referring to the state-owned China Central Television, in one meeting.

The story behind the early response to the pandemic comes at a time when the U.N. health agency is under siege. U.S. President Trump cut ties with WHO last week, after blasting the agency for allegedly colluding with China to hide the extent of the epidemic. Chinese President Xi Jinping said China has always provided information to WHO and the world “in a most timely fashion.”

The new information does not support the narrative of either the U.S. or China, but portrays an agency now stuck in the middle that was urgently trying to solicit more data. Although international law obliges countries to report information to WHO that could have an impact on public health, the U.N. agency has no enforcement powers. Instead, it must rely on the cooperation of member states.

The AP has found rather than colluding with China, WHO was itself largely kept in the dark, as China gave it only the minimal information required. But the agency did attempt to portray China in the best light, most likely to coax

AP PHOTO



China delayed releasing coronavirus info, frustrating WHO

the country into providing more outbreak details.

WHO officials worried about how to press China for more information without angering authorities or jeopardizing Chinese scientists, whom they praised for decoding the genome with astonishing speed. Dr. Michael Ryan, WHO’s emergencies chief, said the best way to “protect China” was for WHO to do its own independent analysis, because otherwise the spread of the virus between people would be in question and “other countries will take action accordingly.”

From the time the virus was first decoded on Jan. 2 to when WHO declared a global emergency on Jan. 30, the outbreak grew by a factor of 100 to 200 times, according to retrospective Chinese Center for Disease Control and Prevention data.

WHO and officials named in this story declined to answer questions asked by the AP without audio or written transcripts of the recorded meetings, which the AP was unable to supply to protect its sources.

“Our leadership and staff have worked night and day...to support and share information with all Member States equally, and engage in frank and forthright conversations with governments at all levels,” a WHO statement said.

China’s National Health Commission and Ministry of Foreign Affairs had no comment. But in

the past few months, China has repeatedly defended its actions, and many other countries — including the U.S. — have responded to the virus with even longer delays of weeks and even months.

In late December, doctors noticed mysterious clusters of patients with unusual pneumonia. Seeking answers, they sent samples to commercial labs. By Dec. 27, one company, Vision Medicals, had pieced together most of the genome of a new virus with striking similarities to SARS. They alerted Wuhan officials, who, days later, issued internal notices warning of the unusual pneumonia.

The recordings obtained by the AP show WHO’s concerned China was not sharing enough information to assess the risk, costing the world valuable time

On Dec. 30, Shi Zhengli, a renowned coronavirus expert at the Wuhan Institute of Virology, was alerted to the disease, and by Jan. 2, her team had fully decoded it.

But when it came to sharing the genome with the world, things went awry. China’s top medical authority, the National Health Commission, issued a confidential notice forbidding labs from publishing about the virus wi-

thout authorization. The order barred Shi’s lab from publishing the sequence or warning of the possible danger.

Commission officials later said the order was to prevent any accidental release of the then-unknown pathogen, and to ensure consistent results by giving it to four state labs to identify at the same time.

By Jan. 5, two other government labs sequenced the virus, and another lab in Shanghai led by Zhang Yongzhen had also decoded it. Zhang warned the National Health Commission the virus was “likely infectious.” The Chinese CDC raised its emergency level to the second highest, but did not have the authority to alert the public.

Suspicious cases starting surfacing across the region. In Thailand, airport officials pulled aside a woman traveling from Wuhan with a runny nose, sore throat and high temperature. Scientists at Chulalongkorn University soon figured out she was infected with a new coronavirus, but did not have a sequence from China to match it.

WHO officials, meanwhile, grumbled in internal meetings that China was stalling on providing crucial outbreak details even though it was technically meeting its obligations under international law. Ryan, WHO’s emergencies chief, said it was time to “shift gears” and push for more information.

“The danger now is that despite our good intent...there will be a lot of finger-pointing at WHO if something does happen,” he said.

On Jan. 11, Shanghai’s Zhang finally published the coronavirus sequence ahead of health authorities on virological.org, used by researchers to swap tips on pathogens. It was only then that the Chinese CDC, Wuhan Institute of Virology and the Chinese Academy of Medical Sciences raced to publish their sequences, doing so on Jan. 12.

On Jan. 20, Chinese authorities warned the virus spread between people. WHO dispatched a small team to Wuhan from its Asia offices. China representative Galea told colleagues the Chinese were “talking openly and consistently about human-to-human transmission.”

WHO’s emergency committee of independent experts met twice that week and decided against recommending an emergency. But the agency’s concern prompted an unusual trip to Beijing by WHO director-general Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus and top scientists.

At the end of Tedros’ trip, WHO convened another emergency meeting, finally declaring a global emergency on Jan. 30. Tedros thanked China profusely, declining to mention any of WHO’s earlier frustrations.

“We should have actually expressed our respect and gratitude to China for what it’s doing,” he said. “It has already done incredible things to limit the transmission of the virus to other countries.” AP

AP PHOTO



Trump threatens military force against protesters nationwide

DARLENE SUPERVILLE,
TIM SULLIVAN & AARON
MORRISON, WASHINGTON

WIELDING extraordinary federal authority, President

Donald Trump threatened the nation's governors yesterday [Macau time] that he would deploy the military to states if they did not stamp out violent protests over police brutality that have roiled the nation over the past week. His announcement came as police under federal command forced back peaceful demonstrators with tear gas so he could walk to a nearby church and pose with a Bible.

Trump's bellicose rhetoric came as the nation convulsed through another round of violence over the death of George Floyd at a time when the country is already buckling under the coronavirus outbreak and the Depression-level unemployment it has caused. The president demanded an end to the heated protests in remarks from the White House Rose Garden and vowed to use more force to achieve that aim.

If governors throughout the country do not deploy the National Guard in sufficient numbers to "dominate the streets," Trump said the U.S. military would step in to "quickly solve the problem for them."

"We have the greatest country in the world," the president declared. "We're going to keep it safe."

A military deployment by Trump to U.S. states would mark a stunning federal in-

tervention rarely seen in modern American history. Yet the message Trump appeared to be sending with the brazen pushback of protesters outside the White House was that he sees few limits to what he is willing to do.

Some around the president likened the moment to 1968, when Richard Nixon ran as the law-and-order candidate in the aftermath of a summer of riots, capturing the White House. But despite his efforts to portray himself as a political outsider, Trump is an incumbent who risks being held responsible for the violence.

Minutes before Trump began speaking, police and National Guard soldiers began aggressively forcing back hundreds of peaceful protesters who had gathered in Lafayette Park, across the street from the White House, where they were chanting against police brutality and Floyd's death in Minneapolis. As Trump spoke, tear gas canisters could be heard exploding.

Floyd died last week after he was pinned to the pavement by a police officer who put his knee on the handcuffed black man's neck until he stopped breathing. His death set off protests that spread from Minneapolis across America. His brother Terrence pleaded with protesters to remain peaceful.

Five months before Election Day, the president made clear that he would stake his reelection efforts on convincing voters that his strong-arm approach was warranted to quell the most intense civil unrest since the 1960s. He made little effort to address

the grievances of black Americans and others outraged by Floyd's death and the scourge of police brutality, undermining what his campaign had hoped would be increased appeal to African American voters.

The scene in and around the White House yesterday appeared to be carefully orchestrated. As the crowd of protesters grew, Attorney General William Barr arrived in Lafayette Park to look over at the demonstrations and the swarm of law enforcement.

The sudden shift in tactics against the protesters was initially a mystery. Then, after finishing his Rose Garden remarks, Trump emerged from the White House gates and walked through the park to St. John's Church, where an office had been set on fire the previous night.

Trump, who rarely attends church, held up a Bible and gathered a group of advisers — all white — to pose for photos.

The moment was quickly decried by Trump's critics, with New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo saying the president "used the military to push out a peaceful protest so he could have a photo op at a church."

"It's all just a reality TV show for this president," he said on Twitter. "Shameful."

Federal law permits presidents to dispatch the military into states to suppress an insurrection or if a state is defying federal law, legal experts said. But Trump's statements also set up an immediate conflict with officials in New York and other states who asserted that the president does

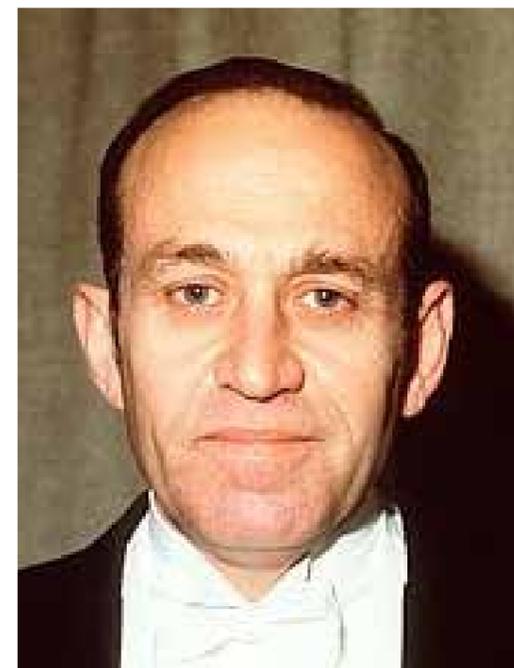
not have the unilateral right to send in troops against the will of local governments.

The country has been beset by angry demonstrations for the past week in some of the most widespread racial unrest in the U.S. since the 1960s. Spurred largely by Floyd's death, protesters have taken to the streets to decry the killings of black people by police. Minneapolis Officer Derek Chauvin has been charged with murder, but protesters are demanding that three of his colleagues be prosecuted, too. All four were fired.

While most of the demonstrations have been peaceful, others have descended into violence, leaving neighborhoods in shambles, stores ransacked, windows broken and cars burned, despite curfews around the country and the deployment of thousands of National Guard members in at least 15 states.

Yesterday, demonstrations erupted from Philadelphia, where hundreds of protesters spilled onto a highway in the heart of the city, to Atlanta, where police fired tear gas at demonstrators, to Nashville, where more than 60 National Guard soldiers put down their riot shields at the request of peaceful protesters who had gathered in front of Tennessee's state Capitol to honor Floyd. Two people were killed during protests in the Chicago suburb of Cicero, authorities said, but provided no details. In Louisville, Kentucky, riot police firing tear gas scattered several hundred protesters from downtown, violently capping a day of mostly peaceful protests. AP

this day in history



1982 ISRAELI AMBASSADOR SHOT IN LONDON

The Israeli ambassador to Britain is critically ill in hospital after being shot on a London street.

Shlomo Argov, 52, was leaving a diplomatic function at the Dorchester Hotel in Mayfair when a young man who had been seen loitering outside the building attacked him.

The gunman fired two shots with a machine pistol - one narrowly missing Mr Argov's police protection officer and the other hitting the envoy in the head.

The assailant was shot by the bodyguard and also has serious head injuries. Two other men fled the scene in a car but were later stopped and arrested by police in Brixton.

Pergamon Press chairman Robert Maxwell was in the hotel when the shooting occurred.

"It happened so suddenly and so unexpectedly that we really only noticed the consequences after it was over - we came out, there were shots and a man fell," he said.

Assistant Commissioner Gilbert Kelland - a senior police officer also at the party - said Mr Argov's protection officer had then pursued the assailant into nearby South Street and shot him.

Both the injured men were taken to Westminster Hospital and a witness told BBC correspondent Peter Snow they were in a "very serious state".

Mr Argov - a career diplomat who is married with two daughters - was later transferred to a specialist unit at the National Hospital for Nervous Diseases, Bloomsbury, for an emergency operation.

Courtesy BBC News

IN CONTEXT

Shlomo Argov survived the attack but was permanently paralysed.

Two Jordanians and an Iraqi linked to Palestinian extremist Abu Nidal were convicted of the attempted murder of the envoy in March 1983. Israeli Prime Minister Menachen Begin retaliated with "Operation Peace for Galilee", a full-scale invasion of Lebanon.

The war lasted for 11 months and Israeli forces did not begin to withdraw from the country until June 1985.

MACAU'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

YOUR STARS



ARIES

Mar. 21-Apr. 19

Acting your age won't feel like much fun today. The kids and toddlers in your life may be having a blast, so why can't you? Asking these questions will lead you to a realization that you can do whatever you want to do!



TAURUS

Apr. 20-May. 20

Is there any such thing as "normal"? And if there were, would you want to be it? Of course not! More than ever, you cherish your unique qualities as well as the uniqueness of your friends.



GEMINI

May. 21-Jun. 21

It's exciting, not intimidating, for you to engage in real debate about real issues that mean a lot to you. Put your whole heart and soul into this new era of communication and you will be rewarded.



CANCER

Jun. 22-Jul. 22

Today, you should eagerly follow any and every impulse to explore a new interest, person, or career prospect. This is a great time to look ahead at your five-year plan and start putting things into place.



LEO

Jul. 23-Aug. 22

Be careful! Try not to let infatuation blind you from the indisputable facts about where you are in life, and where they are. Wanting something doesn't make it good for you.



VIRGO

Aug. 23-Sep. 22

Sometimes the best conversations are the ones you have with someone who totally disagrees with you. Too many people fall victim to the desire to hear exactly what they believe parroted back to them, but not you!



LIBRA

Sep. 23-Oct. 22

Gather up the precious things in your life and hold on tight! No one is threatening you, but less than stellar conditions could arise if you're not fully aware of the value of what you have.



SCORPIO

Oct. 23-Nov. 21

There could be many false starts today in some emotionally charged arena. You may feel you've been promised something when no promise has actually been made.



SAGITTARIUS

Nov. 22-Dec. 21

Past comments that confused you now click in a whole new way, and you'll be struck by a great idea that no one else has thought of yet. Pursue it with everything you've got!



CAPRICORN

Dec. 22-Jan. 19

On the piece of birthday cake that is your life, are you saving the frosting rose for the last bite? There's no need to hold off on enjoying the good stuff today.



AQUARIUS

Jan. 20-Feb. 18

Your daily life is going through some plot twists worthy of a classic Hollywood thriller. At first things are good, then they're bad. The good news is that right now you can put this flick on pause if you want.



PISCES

Feb. 19-Mar. 20

New folks on the scene want to show you what they're made of, so concentrate on listening. Figure out what they have to offer. They could inspire new exploration.

The Born Loser by Chip Sansom



SUDOKU

EASY

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

EASY+

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

MEDIUM

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

HARD

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

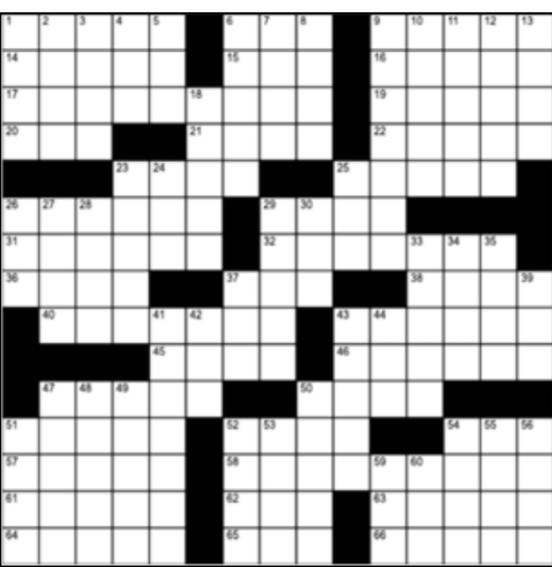
WEATHER

	MIN	MAX	CONDITION
CHINA			
Beijing	20	34	clear
Harbin	12	22	thundershower
Tianjin	21	32	clear
Urumqi	21	33	clear
Xi'an	20	37	cloudy
Lhasa	8	19	cloudy
Chengdu	19	31	cloudy
Chongqing	19	28	cloudy
Kunming	15	29	clear
Nanjing	25	29	thundershower
Shanghai	23	27	moderate rain
Wuhan	23	32	cloudy
Hangzhou	23	26	heavy rain
Taipei	25	30	cloudy
Guangzhou	25	33	thundershower
Hong Kong	29	33	shower
WORLD			
Moscow	13	16	drizzle
Frankfurt	16	28	drizzle
Paris	17	28	drizzle
London	12	25	drizzle
New York	16	22	drizzle

CROSSWORDS

ACROSS: 1- Taj ___; 6- Hindu honorific; 9- Less loony; 14- Wonderland girl; 15- Bard's nightfall; 16- ___ of Two Cities; 17- Godless; 19- Arrested; 20- Cattle call; 21- "Chicken of the sea"; 22- Orange container; 23- Get as a result; 25- Worker's reward; 26- Less difficult; 29- "My fault!"; 31- Draw idly; 32- Enormous; 36- Impediment; 37- ___ Lingus; 38- Manitoba native; 40- Soon; 43- Scoffs; 45- "Orinoco Flow" singer; 46- Tantalizes; 47- ___ of thousands; 50- Intend; 51- Harbor towns; 52- Type of song, to be sung solo; 54- ___ Dawn Chong; 57- You ___ right!; 58- Exasperating; 61- Dutch painter Jan; 62- Mantric syllables; 63- Hotelier Helmsley; 64- Verbal flourishes; 65- Crazy ___; 66- Doled (out);

DOWN: 1- Yes, ___!; 2- Singing voice; 3- "The Farmer in the Dell" syllables; 4- Top pitcher; 5- Circle of flowers; 6- Organization; 7- Bridle strap; 8- Member of a great Peruvian people; 9- Bitter derision; 10- Maker of Pong; 11- Grannies; 12- Best of a group; 13- Lacoste of tennis; 18- Blank look; 23- Crest; 24- Serpentine swimmer; 25- Tachometer abbr.; 26- Begley and Wynn; 27- Tops; 28- Fly; 29- Last letter of the Greek alphabet; 30- Thole insert; 33- Current location; 34- Very, in Versailles; 35- In this place; 37- ___ day now...; 39- Tricky curve; 41- Teachings; 42- N.Y. neighbor; 43- Lieu; 44- PBS benefactor; 47- Trunk line; 48- Words to live by; 49- Lost; 50- Interior; 51- Gone by; 52- In a frenzy; 53- Hindu hero; 54- Knee-slapper; 55- Actress Heche; 56- Crikey!; 59- Common street name; 60- Born, in France;



Crossword puzzles provided by BestCrosswords.com

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

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



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HK\$4,900,000 900 ft² 2 1/2 1 1/2

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Taipa Apartment Great Venetian View
\$28,000/mth 2,060 ft² 4 1/2 2 1/2

FOR SALE

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691 ft² \$6,357,000 (ref: n/a)
- [Taipa] Manhattan D unit 4 1/2 2 1/2
2,305 ft² \$15,980,000 (ref: n/a)
- [Macau] Keng Ou Office 3 1/2
2,352 ft² \$17,500,000 (ref: 19096002)
- [Macau] 2 Shops downtown
1,404 ft² \$20,800,000 (ref: 19015573)

FOR RENT

- [Coloane] Grand Coloane Resort 1 1/2 1 1/2
710 ft² \$10,000/mth (ref: 20021002)
- [Macau] Vai Fung Triplex, Macau 2 1/2 2 1/2
1,065 ft² \$14,000/mth (ref: 19121001)
- [Taipa] Manhattan 3 1/2 2 1/2
1,626 ft² \$19,800/mth (ref: 20031001)
- [Taipa] Private house 2 1/2 3 1/2 3 1/2
4,266 ft² \$45,000/mth (ref: 19055006ST)

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ISABEL REYNOLDS

WHAT was meant to be a landmark year for Japan-China relations has turned sour, as the U.S. standoff with Beijing leaves Prime Minister Shinzo Abe caught up in a fight between his country's biggest trading partner and its sole military ally.

If all had gone according to plan, President Xi Jinping would have been feted on a state visit to Japan last month, the first of its kind in a decade. Instead, the event that Abe had told Xi would mark a "new era" in relations was called off as both countries battled the infection -- and its future is in question.

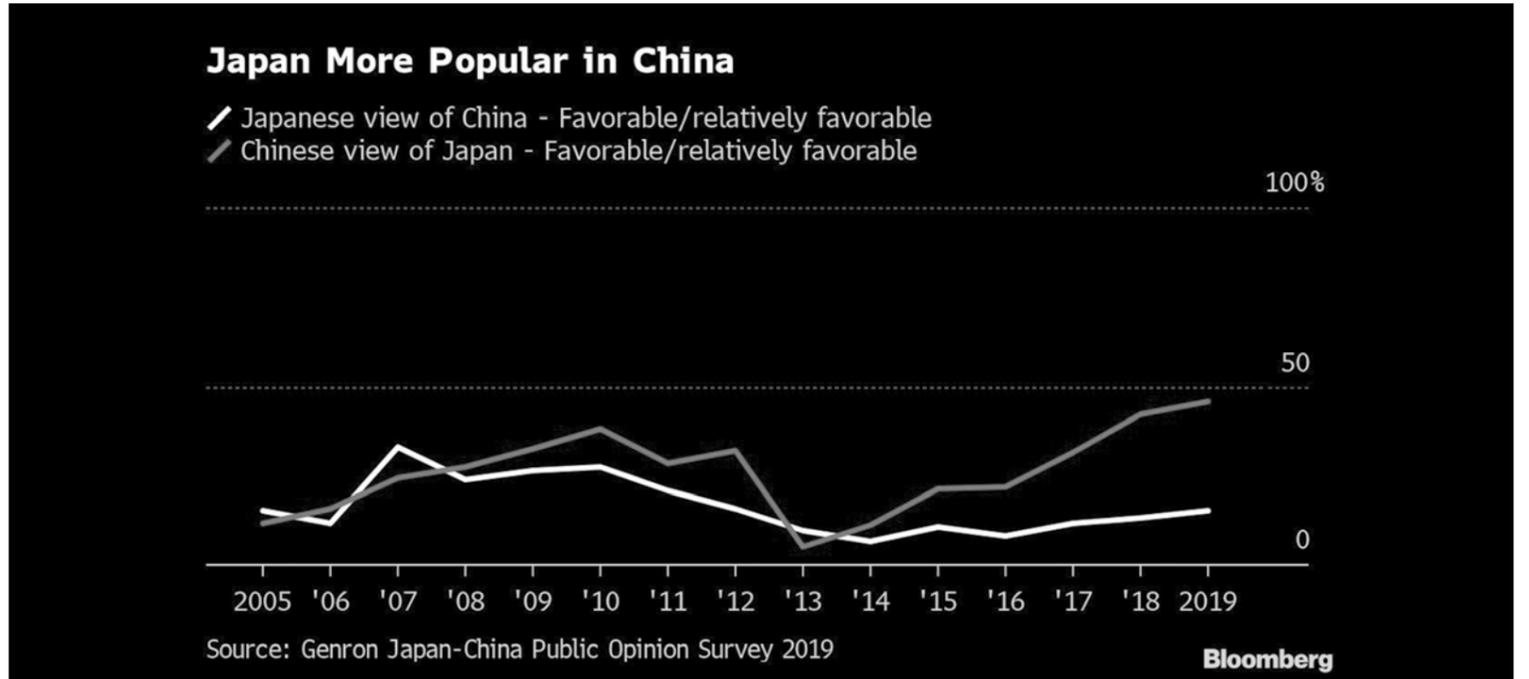
Abe is now looking to deflect collateral damage at home as the world's two biggest economies battle over the pandemic and Hong Kong. The tensions between Japan's largest trading partners come as Abe tries to revive a Japanese economy that analysts expect to suffer a contraction of almost 22% this quarter, the deepest for records back to 1955.

A staunch supporter of Donald Trump, Abe has stood by the U.S. president in recent weeks. And that could pose risks for Japan's exposure in China.

"If Abe falls out with China completely, it will be detrimental to him at home and abroad," said Shi Yongming, a former Chinese diplomat to Japan and now a research associate at the China Institute of International Studies.

But a flare up in a territorial dispute between the two Asian powers and Beijing's move last week to impose new security legislation that could stifle dissent in Hong Kong has helped stoke a resurgence of Japan's own wariness toward China. Some in Abe's own party, as well as opposition groups, are questioning whether Xi should visit Tokyo at all.

That could be a blow to Abe, who has poured time into mending a relationship with China that was at its most hostile in de-



TRADE

'NEW ERA' FOR CHINA-JAPAN TIES DISSIPATES OVER TRUMP-XI FIGHT

cadres when he took office in 2012 -- the peak of a dispute over contested islands. While he succeeded in restoring official visits, and opened Japan's doors to Chinese tourists, mistrust has simmered.

So far, the economic side of the relationship has continued to be strong even as political issues have waxed and waned. Japan's foreign direct investment in China rose by 37% from 2016 to 2019, according to Ministry of Finance data. Abe's administration has said economic ties are good and China has steered clear of taking on Tokyo in the same way it has battled Trump.

But there have been signs that the relationship could get worse. Last month, Japan earmarked \$2.2 billion of an economic stimulus package to help manufacturers who want to reduce dependence on China. This month it will implement a law restricting

foreign investment in companies it says are core to national security.

The measure seems aimed at China's Huawei Technologies Co. despite Beijing's warnings that any restrictions on its technology could damage bilateral ties. Trump has urged allies to block the company, saying its technology would open the door to espionage. Huawei has repeatedly denied the claims.

Japan will require agencies and companies that handle residents' information to take national security risks into consideration when they buy communication equipment, national broadcaster NHK reported, adding the plan will effectively see Japan speed up its removal of Huawei products.

"Japan is always wary of China," said Bonji Ohara, a former military attaché in Beijing and now senior fellow at the Sasakawa

Peace Foundation in Tokyo. "If the U.S. takes a hard line on China, that gives Japan more room to move."

As the spats have unfolded, China has taken a markedly softer line on Japan than against the U.S., avoiding the need to confront both at once. For its part, Japan is keen to avoid escalating tensions too far with a key business partner, as its economy tanks due to the coronavirus.

Abe has stood by Trump and expressed a willingness to fly to the U.S. to attend a Group of Seven summit in person this month, even though domestic media say he might have been forced to quarantine for two weeks after his trip. Trump has now postponed the event.

As Trump vowed "strong" and "meaningful" actions against China over Hong Kong, Tokyo issued a strongly worded statement

of concern, calling in the Chinese ambassador to convey the message directly.

Yasuhide Nakayama, head of a foreign relations panel in Abe's ruling Liberal Democratic Party, turned up the heat on China and said in an interview Tuesday that Japan must try to restrain "the forcible actions taken using the power of the Communist Party dictatorship."

Japan has experience of Beijing's use of economic leverage, after a scare a decade ago when China put the brakes on its supply of rare earth metals that are essential for Japan's high-tech industries.

"When China increases its economic influence, it tries to use that to get others to agree to its demands," Ohara said. It could even try to use supplies of any future coronavirus vaccine in the same way, he added. **BLOOMBERG**

CORPORATE BITS

MGM hosts seminar on talent development strategy



MGM organized a seminar on "Macau Hospitality & Tourism Talent Development Strategy", where Sou Chio Fai, Secretary General of the Talent Development Committee and the Director of Higher

Education Bureau, was invited to be the guest speaker. The seminar featured a series of talent development strategies of the hospitality and tourism industries to MGM team members and

representatives of higher education institutions, the gaming operator announced in a statement.

The seminar took place at MGM Cotai, which was attended by 80 MGM local management team members, as well as 50 representatives from government departments, higher education institutions and related associations

During the seminar, Sou encouraged industry peers to conduct more exchanges and collaborations with other cities in the Greater Bay Area, and learn from their experiences to set a broader spectrum for Macau's sustainable growth.

Melco announces winners of uniform design competition



Melco Resorts & Entertainment announced the results of the 'Melco Environmental Services Team Uniform Design Competition' in collaboration with the Macau Productivity and Technology Transfer Centre (CPTTM). The purpose of the competition is to

continue developing positive partnerships with the city's designers, suppliers and manufacturers through dedicated "Made in Macau" projects, to support the local creative industry, as well as to provide a platform for local designers to showcase their talent.

Local designer Yongjia Liang was named competition Champion, and Tam Hang I and Cheong Weng lan were awarded 1st Runner-up and 2nd Runner-up respectively.

David Sisk, Chief Operating Officer, Macau Resorts, and Property President, City of Dreams, Macau of Melco Resorts & Entertainment said, "As part of Melco's long-standing commitment to the development and advancement of local SMEs and creative talent for Macau's sustainable growth, we are pleased to continue working closely with CPTTM to help promote opportunities for local designers, talent, suppliers and manufacturers."

MACAU'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

MORE talented workers are likely to leave Hong Kong if China imposes a vaguely worded national security law on the financial hub, according to one of the city's most prominent investors.

David Webb, who amassed a fortune investing in Hong Kong stocks, said the city has already seen a "brain drain" as locals migrate overseas and international companies find it harder to attract expatriates. While details of China's proposed national security legislation for the territory are still unclear, Webb said a vaguely defined law could fuel concerns among employers including banks that they'll be liable if staff run afoul of authorities.

"The brain drain could damage the economy," Webb said in an interview with Bloomberg TV's Shery Ahn. "That's something of great concern."

China's move to bypass local lawmakers and impose the controversial legislation on Hong Kong has cast fresh doubt on the city's autonomy from the mainland, a key part of its appeal as an international financial center. While Chinese and Hong Kong government officials have said the law won't impact the "legitimate" interests of foreign investors, analysts have warned that some residents and businesses may pull their families and assets out of the city.

Hong Kong investor David Webb says city is facing 'brain drain'



David Webb, an activist investor and editor of Webb-Site.com

Webb, who has been managing his own money since 1998, served as an independent director on the board of Hong Kong's stock exchange operator from

2003 to 2008 and is a frequent commentator on the city's regulation, corporate developments and politics. His publicly disclosed holdings of Hong Kong shares

are valued at more than \$100 million, a figure that likely understates his wealth.

Some Hong Kong-based investors have been more suppor-

tive of the national security law, saying it will help restore order to a city that has been rocked by anti-government protests over the past year.

Social stability will likely return to Hong Kong after details of the legislation are announced in August or September, Shan Weijian, chairman and chief executive officer of PAG, a Hong Kong-based alternative asset manager that oversees \$38 billion, said in a letter to investors this week. He said Hong Kong's position as an international financial center will remain unchanged and the law won't impact PAG's business.

Hong Kong's financial hub status will ultimately depend on how Chinese and Hong Kong officials implement the security law and how countries like the U.S. respond, Webb said. Donald Trump's administration has declared that Hong Kong is no longer autonomous from China and threatened to strip some of the city's trade privileges, but the U.S. president has yet to announce specific measures or say how quickly they might take effect. **BLOOMBERG**

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Roda de Oleiro Pottery Wheel

iniciados/ beginners
nível I . level I
≥16 anos/years old

monitor: José Matos

Segundas e Quartas
Mondays and Wednesdays
18h30 - 21h30

total: 21 horas/hours
07 sessões/sessions

local/venue:
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OPINION

World Views

David Fickling, Bloomberg

TAKE CHINA'S US FARM THREATS SERIOUSLY, NOT LITERALLY

If you're haggling over the price of goods at a market, there often comes a point when the buyer threatens to walk away. It's up to the seller to decide whether or not that's a bluff.

That's the right way to consider the news that Chinese state-owned agricultural companies have been ordered to pause purchases of U.S. farm goods, including soybeans. The halt has been ordered while Beijing weighs escalating tensions over Hong Kong, people familiar with matter told Bloomberg.

Threats to limit China's voracious appetite for commodities are a tried-and-tested way for the country's leadership to turn the diplomatic thumbscrews. Still, American farmers should take a deep breath before deciding that all is lost.

For one thing, any embargo on American soy would be barely perceptible for the next few months.

As we've argued previously, this pattern has been repeated in multiple products, whether it's Australian coal or Canadian pork. So many individual shipments are involved in any large trading relationship that Beijing can get a remarkable amount of diplomatic leverage from threats to hold up or cancel a few purchases, even if it doesn't follow through.

State-owned agricultural traders aren't in the business of doing anything that would upset their political masters, and it's notable that one of the people familiar told Bloomberg News the restrictions don't apply to private companies. The attempt to gain leverage is real enough, and Beijing is counting on the American farm lobby complaining to Washington about the situation. Ultimately, though, it's up to the U.S. government to decide whether that's reason to reverse course on other aspects of foreign policy.

The two-year target of \$200 billion in increased Chinese imports from the U.S. in the phase one trade deal signed in January was already looking challenging. A near-doubling of inbound trade was always going to be a stretch, and that was before the damage that the coronavirus has done to demand in China and supply chains in the U.S. The current diplomatic tensions will surely put the figure still further out of reach — but if you were counting on that at this point, you haven't been reading the news.

It's also worth considering that commodities are traded on a global market. While America has undoubtedly lost soybean market share in China to Brazil in recent years, that's probably a welcome shift for a business that was looking over-exposed to a single country. Despite a 4.7 million metric ton drop in U.S. soy exports to China between 2015 and 2019, total exports are up by about 4.2 million tons as Egypt, the European Union, and other Asian countries such as Indonesia, Taiwan, Thailand and Pakistan soaked up the shortfall.

America is now less dependent on a single unreliable buyer than it was a few years ago — and while export prices have indeed fallen, the price drop is a phenomenon that has quite as much to do with worldwide supply, demand and inventories as it has to do with China. Despite a 42% increase in Brazil's exports to China over the same period, average export prices in 2019 were lower than those earned by the U.S.

There's plenty to worry about in the sharper tone between Beijing and Washington these days — but the concern should be a diplomatic one. After a difficult few years, farm incomes in the U.S. are running at long-term average levels. Selling produce has almost always been a loss-maker for the median American farm anyway, with work done away from the fields normally the main earner. While China is slowly diversifying parts of its food supply chain away from its rival across the Pacific, nothing's going to change overnight. Its threats should be taken seriously, not literally.

It's the ultimate rewrite.

To restart halted productions while protecting against the coronavirus, Hollywood heavyweights are recommending that scripts be changed to minimize touching — and that filmmakers use computer-generated images to replace real-life interactions on screen.

The recommendations are part of a white paper written by major studios and trade unions. They hope to get the industry moving again after an almost complete shutdown in March, when the coronavirus pandemic ravaged Europe and the U.S. Actors, crews and filmmakers have been out of work since then, and the closing of theaters has cost the industry about \$1 billion a month in domestic sales.

Though it's still unclear when the more physical aspects of the entertainment business can restart, the paper shows the industry has begun to agree on safe working conditions — a crucial component for bringing back halted productions like the new "Matrix" and "Mission: Impossible" movies.

The recommendations suggest that the virus will have an enormous impact on working conditions in the months ahead. Live TV programs like talk shows are advised to bring back guests only on a case-by-case basis. People who don't need to be there in person, such as writers, should work virtually. And auditions should be done via videoconference.

CARRIE LAM DECRIES US 'DOUBLE STANDARDS' OVER PROTESTS

HONG Kong's leader blasted the U.S. for "double standards" in the way it handles protests after the Trump administration vocally supported sometimes-violent demonstrations in the Asian financial hub.

"Look at how the local governments handle chaos in the U.S. and what stance they took on a similar level of chaos in Hong Kong last year," Chief Executive Carrie Lam said at a weekly news briefing yesterday. "They are highly concerned about their national security, while holding different standards for our country, especially over Hong Kong's situation."

Lam is facing renewed anti-government protests as China's plan to enact sweeping national security legislation over the city fuels public anger. President Donald Trump vowed to revoke some of the city's special trading privileges and impose sanctions against Chinese and Hong Kong officials "directly or indirectly involved" in eroding the city's autonomy.

The U.S., which has passed bipartisan legislation backing Hong Kong's pro-democracy camp, now finds itself engulfed by widespread unrest of its own, triggered by the death of African-American



man George Floyd at the hands of a white police officer in Minneapolis.

Lam's backers in Beijing have seized the opportunity to needle the Trump administration over the protests in recent days, with Chinese propaganda outlets showing scenes from the U.S. of burning buildings, harsh police responses and demonstrators decrying the government.

Lam addressed the possibility of U.S. sanctions, saying there was "no justification whatsoever" for any foreign governments to level them on Hong Kong.

"For the time being, I have not seen or heard any details from the U.S. administration," she said. "My stance is to point out to the American government, and any other governments if that arises, is that they will be hurting their own interests in Hong Kong,"

she added.

Hong Kong authorities announced later yesterday that they would extend a ban on gatherings of more than eight people to June 18, after the discovery of a cluster of new coronavirus cases spread within the community. The city has seen relative success in containing the spread of the pandemic, and has slowly returned to a sense of normalcy in recent weeks.

As parts of the world begin reopening after virus-induced closures, Lam cautioned at her briefing that governments shouldn't take measures that would further undermine the global economy.

Earlier this week, Hong Kong's police for the first time banned people from gathering June 4 to commemorate the 1989 crackdown on activists in Beijing's Tiananmen Square. **BLOOMBERG**



South America The emergencies chief of the World Health Organization said Central and South America are witnessing the most intense transmission of the coronavirus, but it's difficult to predict when the pandemic might peak there. Dr. Michael Ryan said five of the 10 countries reporting the most new cases are in the Americas: the U.S., Brazil, Peru, Chile and Mexico. He said hospitals were starting to strain under the pressure.

Africa's coronavirus cases have surpassed 150,000 while the World Health Organization says the continent of 1.3 billion people is still the region least affected. Concerns remain high as some of Africa's 54 countries struggle with when to reopen schools and parts of their economies. Rwanda, the first nation in sub-Saharan Africa to impose a lockdown, this week slowed the easing of it after reporting its first COVID-19 death.



Australia Thousands of protesters marched through downtown Sydney yesterday, voicing their solidarity with Americans demonstrating against the death of George Floyd. The protesters in Australia's largest city chanted, "I can't breathe" — some of the final words of both Floyd and David Dungay, a 26-year-old Aboriginal man who died in a Sydney prison in 2015 while being restrained by five guards. More on p8



Singapore has reopened 75% of its economy as part of a three-phase controlled approach to end a virus lockdown in place since early April. Finance, electronics manufacturing and logistics are among sectors that resumed operations after a two-month closure with strict safety requirements. Schools will also reopen in stages this month. But most retail shops, personal services, dining in at restaurants and social gatherings are still banned.

THE DECISIVE MOMENT

MDT/Lynzy Valles



Memorial. SJM Holdings group has opened to the public a memorial area at the East Wing Main Lobby of Hotel Lisboa for the late gaming tycoon Dr. Stanley Ho. SJM employees, along with members of the public, are welcome to pay respect to the father of modern Macau who passed away on May 26.