

The Macao SAR Government urges:

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

Novel Coronavirus Response and Coordination Centre

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"THE TIMES THEY ARE A-CHANGIN' "

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LIFTING OF QUARANTINE MEASURES BETWEEN MACAU AND HONG KONG STILL UNCLEAR, WITH 'TOO MANY FACTORS' TO CONSIDER: GOV'T

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WILFRED WONG TO LEAD SANDS CHINA UNTIL 2024

P2

DRAFT LAW KEEPS EMPLOYMENT AGENCY FEES UNCHANGED, THOUGH UNEQUAL, FOR BOTH EMPLOYERS AND EMPLOYEES

P5

China Eight children drowned in a river in southwestern China after one fell in and the others jumped in to help, state media said. The children, described as elementary-school age, had gone to play at a beach Sunday on the Fu River, according to state broadcaster CCTV. Their bodies were recovered by yesterday morning. Heavy rain had been forecast for the area, but it wasn't clear if the weather was a factor.

AP PHOTO



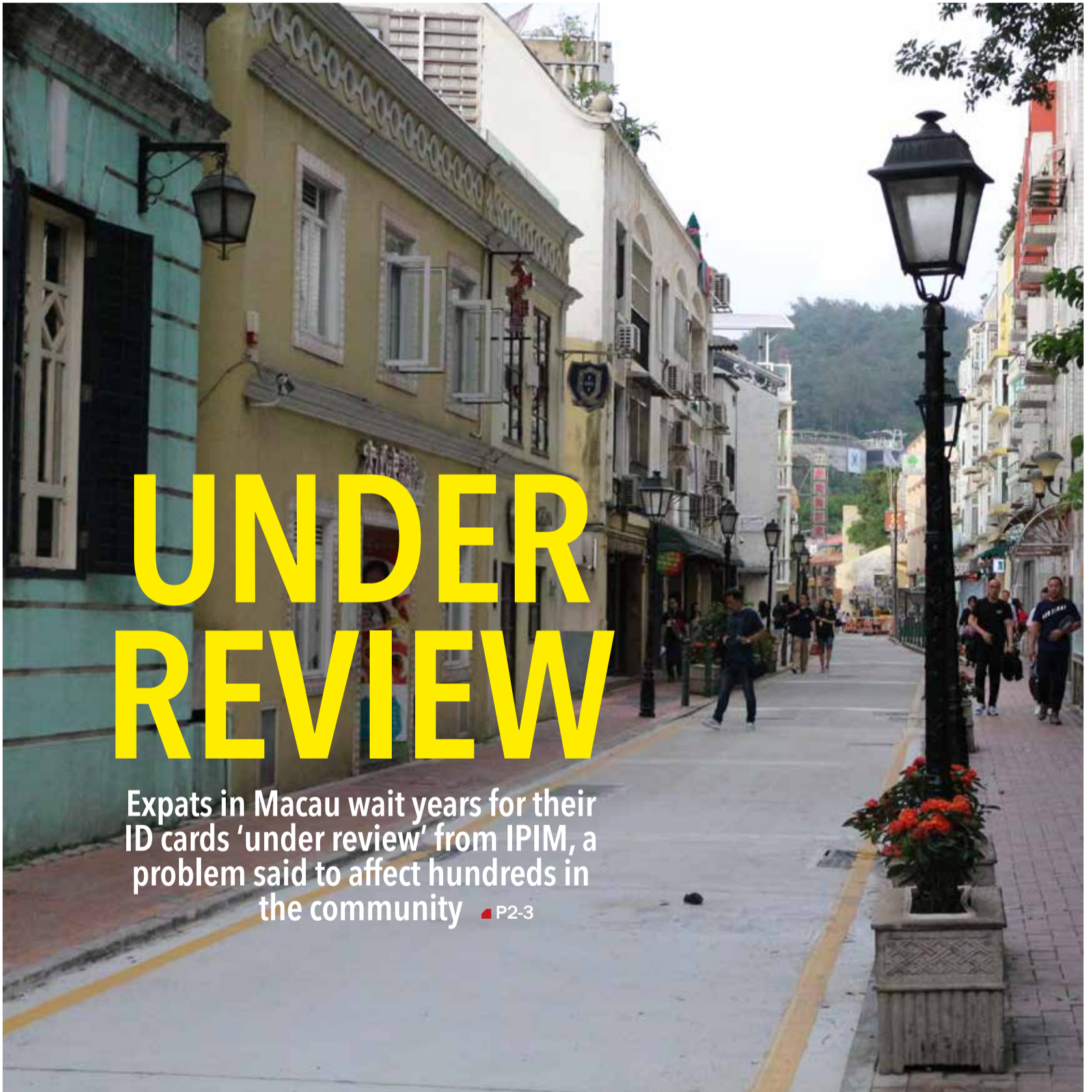
China told Canadian PM Justin Trudeau yesterday to "stop making irresponsible remarks" after he said Beijing's decision to charge two Canadians with spying was linked to his country's arrest of a Chinese tech executive. The spying charges are "completely different" from the case of Huawei executive Meng Wanzhou, a foreign ministry spokesman said. Meng was arrested on U.S. charges connected to possible violations of trade sanctions on Iran.

China The chairman of a chain of pharmacies in Beijing has been sentenced to 15 years in prison for selling more than 500,000 counterfeit 3M Corp. masks during the coronavirus epidemic, news reports said yesterday. Two people who colluded with Li Dong, chairman of Kang Baixin Pharmacy, also were sentenced to prison by the Chaoyang District Court, the Beijing News and other outlets reported, citing unidentified sources. They said the defendants all denied the charges and said they would appeal their conviction.

Philippine officials say Saudi Arabia has asked the Manila government to bring home the remains of 282 Filipino workers, a repatriation delayed because of coronavirus restrictions. Labor Secretary Silvestre Bello III says Saudi King Salman made the urgent request himself. The workers died mostly of various illnesses, including COVID-19, in Saudi Arabia, where more than 800,000 Filipinos work.

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DANIEL BEITLER



UNDER REVIEW

Expats in Macau wait years for their ID cards 'under review' from IPIM, a problem said to affect hundreds in the community P2-3

CORONAVIRUS LOCKDOWNS INCREASE POACHING IN ASIA, AFRICA

AP PHOTO



P6

IC PERFORMANCE VENUES REOPEN FROM JUNE 26 ONWARDS

Following the earlier reopening of cultural facilities and rehearsal venues, the Cultural Affairs Bureau (IC) will resume operation of its performance venues from this Friday, including the Macao Cultural Centre, Dom Pedro V Theatre, Black Box Theatre in the Old Court Building, Macao Contemporary Art Center - Navy Yard No. 2 and the Macao Conservatory Auditorium. In a statement, the IC said it has taken into account the opinions of the Health Bureau and formulated relevant anti-epidemic guidelines in order to provide a safe and healthy environment for performers and audiences. All visitors to the venues must wear face masks, undergo body temperature checks, present their 'Macao Health Code' of the day and follow the crowd control measures on site. In the venues, a distance of one meter must be maintained between each seat.

COMIC COMPETITION HELD TO RAISE CONSUMER RIGHTS AWARENESS

To raise the awareness of teenagers in consumer rights and related issues, the Consumer Council is organizing a four-panel comic drawing competition and invites all local secondary students to enter the competition before the closing date on September 25. Using a four-panel comic drawing competition to promote consumer education in schools helps encourage local secondary students to explore different topics related to consumer rights, including the rights and responsibilities of consumers. The Council indicates that submissions received in the 2018 competition have been used as promotional materials. In a statement yesterday, the Council said it "believes in the infinite creativity of teenagers and hopes to receive quality pieces in this [year's] competition." The competition is open to all secondary students in Macau.

MOBILE VERSION OF 'MACAO 3D MAP' LAUNCHED

The Cartography and Cadastre Bureau has now officially launched the mobile version of the "Macao 3D Map" following the launch of the desktop version in April 2019. The mobile version allows the public to view the landscape of Macau through their smartphone anytime, anywhere. According to the government, the Macao 3D Map is easy to operate and provides map operations including zooming in, zooming out, rotating and panning, as well as many practical functions such as search functions for building names, browsing preset 3D scenic spot, and clicking on the 3D model to obtain the building name. The mobile version of the Macao 3D Map makes use of the technological advances in mobile devices, including multi-touch technology and cloud application.

Residents stuck in limbo say they



DANIEL BEITLER

IT takes about six months for the Macau Trade and Investment Promotion Institute (IPIM) to review a residency application on the basis of investment or skilled labor. Or at least it's supposed to, but since mid-2018 the Times has learned of a growing number of people stuck waiting for their applications to be processed.

Legally allowed to reside in Macau until a decision has been made, some of these non-permanent residents have waited two years to find out if their residency status will be granted.

The problem is fairly widespread among the expat community and frequently discussed. According to those interviewed by the Times, it has become the topic

of the day for many in Macau's expat circles, with dozens of reports possibly affecting hundreds of people across the territory. Among the affected are the children of non-permanent residents, whose legal right to stay and continue their education in Macau schools depends on the outcome of their parents' applications.

Those interviewed said that the only information disclosed by IPIM is that their cases are "under review". That is despite a variety of tactics employed to extract more details about the status and timelines of their applications.

The interviewed say they are now tired with the investment department's stalling and radio silence. Some say that the lack of information is leading them to question if they have a future in Macau.

The Times contacted IPIM for

comment yesterday but did not receive an immediate answer.

"I have heard of many cases of people in exactly the same situation," said one lawyer asked about how common this situation has become.

"You don't have a decision [from IPIM], which means you can't do anything," said the lawyer, who requested anonymity because of the sensitive nature of the topic. "At least if the decision was 'no' [and the application was rejected], then you can appeal and resolve the matter. But we have no decision and there is no limit or deadline for that."

NOT JUST ABOUT RELIEF PACKAGES

Back in April, the Times published two letters to the editor

penned by anonymous residents who were unhappy that the stalled renewal process had left them ineligible for the government's Covid-19 economic relief measures.

"I know of many cases like mine where residents have been unable to apply for the Economic Relief Grants and the Wealth Partaking Subsidies, due to the fact that their cards, like mine, have expired, even though they are valid Macau residents," wrote one author, who asked to be known as "a concerned resident" only.

"We have been working and living in Macau for eight years and we have treated Macau as our home country," wrote one "concerned family" in the second letter. "We hope the government can consider our plea

Wilfred Wong to lead Sands China until 2024

LYNZY VALLES

The President of Sands China, Wilfred Wong, will remain in his position until February 20, 2024, a year more than the term initially approved by the gaming operator's board.

The decision about the executive's ser-

vice contract was approved during the annual general meeting held on Friday.

As cited in the gaming operator's Hong Kong Exchange filing, the vote to approve the amendment agreement to the service contract of Wong was unanimous.

Sheldon Adelson was also re-elected

as executive director, acquiring 94% of 'for' votes, while Charles Daniel Forman and Victor Patrick Hoog Antink were re-elected as Non-Executive Directors.

Wong has served as the company's President since 2015. In February, he was reappointed to the role.

Wong is currently

responsible for overall leadership while focusing on the strategic objectives of the business in Macau and the Greater Bay Area.

Wong, 67, has served in numerous high-profile roles in Hong Kong, from property development and construction business sectors,

to roles within the Hong Kong government.

Wong has previously stated that his objective in the reappointment will be to continue playing an active role in the long-term goals and strategic initiatives of the company in Macau and in the Greater Bay Area.

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are fed up with IPIM's stalling

and extend to us the various government subsidies that are granted to its residents and non-permanent residents."

The measures introduced this year to combat the economic impact of Covid-19 have highlighted the differences in how the Macau SAR treats its resident population and non-local workforce. But for some of the affected residents, exclusion from the government's relief package is at the very bottom of a long list of problems caused by IPIM's stalling.

"For me, the biggest thing is that it doesn't feel right [to continue] to have our whole lives here," said Jessica (not her real name), a non-permanent resident who lives in Macau with her family. "We have lived here for 10 years, we have jobs, we pay taxes, our kids go to school here and we are in this situation where we can get a phone call at 5 o'clock to say, 'you're not approved'. Because the process has always been unwritten, the actual conditions of whether you will be approved or not are not stipulated. And the insecurity of it all is extremely hard."

"If IPIM would just say that they

need to get their things in order... if they would ask everyone in the renewal process to remain patient while they do this... then it is a whole different ball game. But I think the silence is very frustrating and concerning. People in our situation just speculate. That's all we can do because nobody talks to us," said Jessica.

NO NEWS IS WORSE THAN BAD NEWS

Jonathan (not his real name) is another resident stuck in limbo, who has been awaiting an answer from IPIM for more than one year. His situation is very different from Jessica's, but the details of his case are so specific that he fears the government could identify him if even a little information was disclosed.

Jonathan and many others requesting anonymity will not take the risk of jeopardizing their residency applications by going on the record.

He and his lawyer have tried to explain the silence from IPIM, and think it could be related to the corruption allegations levied against the bureau's former leadership.

Former IPIM leaders Jackson Chang and Glória Batalha Ung stand accused of irregularities in the granting of residency permits for investors and skilled professionals. The 2018 investigation by the Commission Against Corruption that led to the arrest of Chang coincides with the start of the 'radio silence' period, prompting some observers to speculate that IPIM's approval process has been deliberately frozen. Hence no news so far on these cases "under review".

But for Jonathan, no news is indeed worse than bad news.

"If the application was not approved, then at least we could appeal and that might take another few years. We would be in limbo waiting for the result, but we could make preparations [to leave if necessary]," he told the Times. "The problem is, right now we just don't know. There is no standard timeline to follow or that we can count on."

THE KEY TO PUBLIC SERVICES

Having filed her application in the spring of 2018, Jessica and family have had multiple rounds

of enquiries shrugged off by IPIM officials who offered nothing more than assurance that their cases were "under review".

Their plight underscores just how essential a Macau identification card is to accessing the most basic of public services.

"I don't think IPIM or the government realize how bad the situation is for these people. If you are not a resident, then you will not understand the difficulties of getting a bank loan or enrolling your children at a school," said the lawyer interviewed yesterday by the Times.

Jessica describes the ID card as "the legality that allows your kids to go to schools." She says that even the Education and Youth Affairs Bureau can't understand the situation and its staff frequently phone her children's school to request the required ID information. "The kids should have a valid status to go to school," she insisted.

Jonathan wanted to register for a new phone number, but even this simplest of tasks became onerous once the store clerk tried to verify his resident status. "I wanted to get a new phone number,

but it was difficult without the identification card. I needed to get another letter [from IPIM] and it took five days for the manager to check if they could use [this document] to issue a new phone number," he said.

While travel has been a major inconvenience for Jessica and Jonathan, the situation has been worsened by the pandemic situation as airlines are extra cautious about transporting non-citizens.

Bank accounts, credit cards and loans all require Macau identification too, and a temporary notice issued by IPIM is not always sufficient evidence for financial institutions.

"It's not impossible to obtain these things, but I know of one situation where the bank approved the credit card but required the customer to pay 150% of the max credit as a deposit and that's locked in until your Macau ID is approved. For some people, this must be unaffordable," Jessica remarked.

Then there is the issue of employee 'dependents', such as domestic helpers, whose continual employment relies on the resident status of their employer. "It is another stress factor to know you are responsible for other peoples' livelihoods," said Jessica. "I feel responsible for them and I don't know what I am going to do."

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60% OF E-VOUCHER SPENDING TARGETED SMALL BUSINESSES

ANTHONY LAM

AS of June 15, about 63% of the spending by e-voucher or consumption card has gone to small and medium sized enterprises. Forty percent of spending has gone to companies with less than 20 employees.

Yesterday, the Economic Bureau (DSE) announced the result of the mid-term review it conducted on the e-voucher scheme. Apart from collecting data from the technology provider, Macau Pass S.A., the bureau commissioned the Macao Institute for Tourism Studies (IFTM) to conduct a survey which included business operators and e-voucher users.

The bureau did not disclose how many valid responses the survey has received. An inquiry on the matter was made to the DSE, but no reply was obtained by press time.

Slightly more than 600,000 residents obtained their e-vouchers by June 15, which is more than 90% of the approximately 659,000 registered residents.

The mean spending for each card was MOP2,481, with a total spending of nearly MOP1.5

ANTHONY LAM



billion, across approximately 15.6 million transactions, with the mean value of each transaction coming to MOP93.

Some 70% and 24% of spending from e-vouchers went to the retail and catering industries respectively. About half of these business operators obtained at least half of their revenue over the relevant period from the e-voucher.

The survey also determined that the majority of residents were satisfied with the registration and

distribution of the e-voucher.

The inflation rate in May was 1.67%, which is lower than that of April. The DSE thus concluded that the e-voucher has not pushed up inflation. May also saw an increase of mobile payment transactions.

Overall, judging by the first half of the e-voucher scheme, the DSE concluded that the scheme has successfully generated and stimulated internal consumption, improved entrepreneurial confi-

dence, relieved financial pressure within the community, as well as popularizing a type of e-payment tool.

Furthermore, the bureau stated that the next phase of the e-voucher scheme will commence with a top-up procedure. By August, Macau Pass will set up top-up spots where residents can obtain the next spending lot of spending credits, totaling MOP5,000.

Top-up spots will be set up in bank branches and government

service counters across the city. The bureau is considering inviting associations to provide locations for top-ups as well. Director Tai Kin Ip of the DSE stressed that the procedure will be convenience-oriented.

The second phase of the scheme will start in August and end on December 31.

The e-voucher scheme has allegedly seen profiteering practices at supermarkets. When the scheme started operation, several local supermarket brands were accused by residents of profiteering. Photographs that compared prices before and after the start of the scheme went viral on social media platforms as proof of the allegations.

At yesterday's press conference, the bureau admitted that it has discovered 59 cases of supermarket malpractice. Pong Kai Fu, head of the bureau's Research Department, disclosed that most cases involved price tagging mistakes at supermarkets.

The bureau has conducted 1,394 inspections on supermarkets and spot-checked the price tags of 12,000 merchandise items. It also disclosed that by proportion of the total number of cards issued, the number of cards reported lost to the Public Security Police Force was insignificant, although more than half of the reported lost cards have been retrieved.

Chief Executive orders 2021 government spending be cut

JULIE ZHU

CHIEF Executive Ho Iat Seng has ordered the local government to cut expenditure next year, according to a decree published yesterday in the government official gazette.

The 2021 budget cut is the consequence of the impact of Covid-19.

The decree says that amid the changes in the economic environment, all public government departments and organizations must make a prudent evaluation of all types of budget expenditure for next year.

For departments and organizations applying cash accounting policies, the total common expense of the central budget should not exceed, the 2020 amount after a 10% deduction.

In accordance with the provisions of the Macau law, non-autonomous departments, departments with administrative auto-



nomy, and autonomous departments, are included in the aforementioned 10% deduction category.

Non-autonomous departments are departments without an income, and all expenditures are paid by the SAR government's common income. They include the office of Chief Executive and the offices of the secretaries, totaling over 45 departments.

Autonomous departments such as the Stu-

dent Welfare Fund and the Housing Bureau have their own income.

The total expenditure of the MSAR integrated budget for the 2020 financial year is 114.64 billion patacas, and the balance is currently 828.88 million patacas.

Departments and organizations applying the accrual accounting method should also apply the 10% deduction.

However, the deduction amounts do not include risk reserves, de-

preciation, amortization, and do not involve the retirement pension system.

Public departments are requested to be even "more cautious" when analyzing budget allocations for each project, and should only register the budget when the concerned department has received authorization to proceed.

The Chief Executive also made rules for changes of human resources.

According to the decree, the number of workers at these departments and organizations should not exceed the approved number of personnel, and the number of additional employees should not exceed the number of posts available in each supervisory entity.

In 2021, a public department or organization must provide reasonable explanations in order to purchase real estate.

WOMAN ATTACKS COWORKER AFTER HEATED ARGUMENT

JULIE ZHU

A local woman has attacked a coworker in ire after being given a bad work performance review, the police authority reported yesterday.

The local woman is 30 years old, surnamed Tse. She works as a cleaning lady, and is responsible for cleaning the public bathroom at the Sai Van Lake Square.

Over the course of her employment, one of her coworkers, a Filipino woman, filed several complaints to their boss accusing the local woman of a poor work attitude.

In the afternoon of June 19, Tse hit her colleague on the head with a stick. The victim called the police authority.

The Public Security Police Force (PSP) deployed two officers to handle the case. When the officers, a woman and a man, arrived in the vicinity of the bathroom, the attacker was still there.

During the police officers' inquiry, the suspect became emotional and threatened to jump into the Sai Van Lake. She then fled the scene towards Av. Pano-

râmica do Lago Sai Van.

The two officers pursued her, and subdued her. However, during the engagement, Tse bit both officers and pushed one to the floor.

Tse later admitted to the PSP officers that she had attacked her coworker out of resentment. According to Tse, she had an argument with her colleague before she attacked her.

The police authority has already forwarded Tse to the prosecution authority and she has been charged with assault and civil disobedience.

Aside from this case, the Judiciary Police (PJ) reported an instance of online fraud.

A local woman in her 40s fell victim to an online romance scam. The victim transferred 530,000 patacas to a stranger online, who claimed to be an engineer from the U.S.

She started talking to the scammer in mid-April. The victim attempted to make another 350,000 patacas transfer to the scammer. When she was making this transfer, a bank clerk reminded her that it could be an online scam.

MACAU PHOTO AGENCY



Lifting of Macau-HK quarantine needs careful study, says health official

ANTHONY LAM

A variety of criteria must be taken into account to fully lift the quarantine measures on people traveling between the two Special Administrative Regions, Leong Iek Hou, coordinator at the local Center for Disease Control and Prevention, said yesterday.

"There are a lot of factors that we need to consider as a whole," the medical doctor explained. "Such as whether the Covid-19 condition has stabilized in both Hong Kong and Macau and whether it's safe for people to make contact."

Although it is believed that the situation in Macau has stabilized, the doctor added that the type and number of people being allowed to travel between the two places

should also be taken into consideration.

"Does it mean that all people will be permitted to travel?" the medical doctor asked. "Or should we set a ceiling? If so, what should the ceiling be?"

Other supporting measures will be required to facilitate the lifting of quarantine measures, Leong further explained.

"Are the Health Code system and the nucleic acid test capacity ready to cope?" Leong asked. "We can only discuss any lifting of quarantine measures when all these criteria are met."

Currently, all people entering Hong Kong from other locations, including its own residents, have to undergo a 14-day quarantine period before being allowed to move freely within the territory.

Several categories of people can

be exempted from the quarantine measure with approval from the city's Chief Secretary for Administration. For example, people who are "necessary for the supply of goods or services required for the normal operation of Hong Kong" or people who are "necessary for governmental operation" may be exempted. The full list is available on a dedicated website.

Leong was also asked to address the problems experienced by non-local pregnant women. She reminded that the special ferry service is now running to the Hong Kong airport. "They can take the ferry and return home if they desire," answered Leong.

It is possible that these women are near their estimated due date or have missed the threshold to catch a flight, but they will be taken care of by the local health

authorities, Leong explained.

"For these cases, I believe the Public Security Police Force will consider [them] on a case-by-case basis and extend their legal stay in Macau," Leong added. "And the Health Bureau will handle their pre-natal check-up and delivery when necessary."

Travel restrictions in effect in the neighboring SAR exempt people travelling from mainland China, Taiwan or Macau, who have not been to other places in the past 14 days. In other words, these people are eligible to enter Hong Kong, although they will still be bound by the quarantine measure.

In addition, the "Golden Bus" running on the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macau Bridge has resumed services, albeit with reduced capacity.

In response to a question about applicants not receiving a text message with regards to their application for a quarantine waiver in Zhuhai, Leong stressed that only approved applicants will receive a confirmation text message.

Data on the special ferry services indicates that a total of 1,166 Macau residents have registered with the government that they will take the ferry as of yesterday. Of this number, 421 have already arrived in Macau. Some 399 tickets have so far been sold for the outbound ferry to Hong Kong International Airport. Some 119 have departed from Macau.

Yesterday saw the 75th day without a new Covid-19 case in the city. In the past three days, the provisional Covid-19 nucleic acid test station at the Taipa Ferry Terminal has undertaken 7,127 tests.

Different service fees proposed for employers and employees

THE local government has not changed its opinion with regard to service fee standards for employers and non-local employees in the employment agency business, according to the Third Standing Committee of the Legislative Assembly (AL).

Yesterday, government representatives from the labor affairs, economy and finance sectors submitted to the committee the working text of the law exclusively related to the employment agency businesses.

The local government

has made no changes to the specifics of the law, aside from editing some sentences.

Vong Hin Fai, Chairman of the Third Standing Committee, highlighted the government's consistent stance in regard to some of the pivotal proposals in the law.

The Macau SAR government still requires that local employment agencies not offer jobs for any non-local residents who are already in Macau. These non-local residents include blue-card workers and

visitors, regardless of their nationality.

The second unchanged proposal is related to the employment service fee. The proposed amendment will allow employment agencies to charge an employer an unlimited service fee. However, an employment agency will still only be allowed to charge 50% of an employee's first monthly salary.

Currently, Macau is not implementing the Private Employment Agencies Convention, an International Labour Organization

convention which recommends that an employment company should not charge employees any service fee.

The Macau government explained that since Macau is not part of the convention, employment companies charging a service fee to job seekers do not violate legal principals.

As a member of the Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention, the local government also believes that the service fee does not involve any discrimination against

non-local workers.

The law amendment prescribed that the service fee should only be transferred 60 days after a non-local worker's employment legal status is in effect.

In the local government's opinion, the bill amendment will help prevent individuals from looking for jobs in Macau after entering the city as tourists. Without the measure, it claims that Macau's employment market will become unstable.

The latest amendment also replaced the term "vio-

lator" with "suspect" when referring to any individuals who are involved in an administrative investigation procedure.

The amendment also proposed that an employment company's license owner could be an individual, a group, or a company. If it is a joint-stock company, then the company should have three or more shareholders. Any shareholders owning over 10% of the company must go through a vetting procedure in relation to the person's "integrity." JZ



Often caught in parts of Africa and Asia, the anteater-like animals are smuggled mostly to China and Southeast Asia, where their meat is considered a delicacy and scales are used in traditional medicine

CORONAVIRUS LOCKDOWNS INCREASE POACHING IN ASIA, AFRICA

ANIRUDDHA GHOSAL & MICHAEL CASEY, NEW DELHI

A camera trap photo of an injured tigress and a forensic examination of its carcass revealed why the creature died: a poacher's wire snare punctured its windpipe and sapped its strength as the wound festered for days.

Snares like this one set in southern India's dense forest have become increasingly common amid the coronavirus pandemic, as people left jobless turn to wildlife to make money and feed their families.

Authorities in India are concerned this spike in poaching not only could kill more endangered tigers and leopards but also species these carnivores depend upon to survive.

"It is risky to poach, but if pushed to the brink, some could think that these are risks worth taking," said Mayukh Chatterjee, a wildlife biologist with the non-profit Wildlife Trust of India.

Since the country announced its lockdown, at least four tigers and six leopards have been killed by poachers, Wildlife Protection Society of India said. But there also were numerous other poaching casualties — gazelles in grasslands, foot-long giant squirrels in forests, wild boars and birds such as peacocks and purple morhens.

In many parts of the developing world, coronavirus lockdowns have sparked concern

about increased illegal hunting that's fueled by food shortages and a decline in law enforcement in some wildlife protection areas. At the same time, border closures and travel restrictions slowed illegal trade in certain high-value species.

One of the biggest disruptions involves the endangered pangolin. Often caught in parts of Africa and Asia, the anteater-like animals are smuggled mostly to China and Southeast Asia, where their meat is considered a delicacy and scales are used in traditional medicine.

In April, the Wildlife Justice Commission reported traders were stockpiling pangolin scales in several Southeast Asia countries awaiting an end to the pandemic.

Rhino horn is being stockpiled in Mozambique, the report said, and ivory traders in Southeast Asia are struggling to sell the stockpiles amassed since China's 2017 ban on trade in ivory products. The pandemic compounded their plight because many Chinese customers were unable to travel to ivory markets in Cambodia, Laos and other countries.

"They are desperate to get it off their hands. Nobody wants to be stuck with that product," said Sarah Stoner, director of intelligence for the commission.

The illegal trade in pangolins

continued "unabated" within Africa but international trade has been disrupted by port closures, said Ray Jansen, chairman of the African Pangolin Working Group.

"We have witnessed some trade via air while major ship routes are still closed but we expect a flood of trade once shipping avenues reopen again," Jansen said.

Fears that organized poaching in Africa would spike largely have not materialized — partly because ranger patrols have continued in many national parks and reserves.

The pandemic compounded the wildlife plight because many Chinese customers were unable to travel to markets in Cambodia, Laos and other countries

Emma Stokes, director of the Central Africa Program of the Wildlife Conservation Society, said patrolling national parks in several African countries has been designated essential work.

But she has heard about increased hunting of animals outside parks. "We are expecting to see an increase in bushmeat

hunting for food — duikers, antelopes and monkeys," she said.

Jansen also said bushmeat poaching was soaring, especially in parts of southern Africa. "Rural people are struggling to feed themselves and their families," he said.

There are also signs of increased poaching in parts of Asia.

A greater one-horned rhino was gunned down May 9 in India's Kaziranga National Park — the first case in over a year. Three people, suspected to be a part of an international poaching ring, were arrested on June 1 with automatic rifles and ammunition, said Uttam Saikia, a wildlife warden.

As in other parts of the world, poachers in Kaziranga pay poor families paltry sums of money to help them. With families losing work from the lockdown, "they will definitely take advantage of this," warned Saikia.

In neighboring Nepal, where the virus has ravaged important income from migrants and tourists, the first month of lockdown saw more forest-related crimes, including poaching and illegal logging, than the previous 11 months, according to a review by the government and World Wildlife Fund or WWF.

For many migrants returning to villages after losing jobs, forests were the "easiest source" of

sustenance, said Shiv Raj Bhatta, director of programs at WWF Nepal.

In Southeast Asia, the Wildlife Conservation Society documented in April the poisoning in Cambodia of three critically endangered giant ibises for the wading bird's meat. More than 100 painted stork chicks were also poached in late March in Cambodia at the largest water-bird colony in Southeast Asia.

"Suddenly rural people have little to turn to but natural resources and we're already seeing a spike in poaching," said Colin Poole, the group's regional director for the Greater Mekong.

Heartened by closure of wildlife markets in China over concerns about a possible link between the trade and the coronavirus, several conservation groups are calling for governments to put measures in place to avoid future pandemics. Among them is a global ban on commercial sale of wild birds and mammals destined for the dinner table.

Others say an international treaty, known as CITES, which regulates the trade in endangered plants and animals, should be expanded to incorporate public health concerns. They point out that some commonly traded species, such as horseshoe bats, often carry viruses but are currently not subject to trade restrictions under CITES.

"That is a big gap in the framework," said John Scanlon, former Secretary-General of CITES now with African Parks. "We may find that there may be certain animals that should be listed and not be traded or traded under strict conditions and certain markets that ought to be closed." AP

TOP European Union officials are holding talks yesterday with Chinese President Xi Jinping and Premier Li Keqiang at a time of rising tensions between two major trading partners over the fallout from the coronavirus crisis and Beijing's increasing control over Hong Kong.

European Council President Charles Michel, EU commission President Ursula von der Leyen and the bloc's foreign policy chief, Josep Borrell, will hold two video conferences separately, first with the premier and later with Xi.

The meetings are not expected to produce concrete results — no joint statement will be issued — but the Europeans hope it will boost slow-moving talks on an investment agreement and build some common ground for tackling thorny political issues at a face-to-face meeting, hopefully late in the year.

The EU sees China as a

EU, China look to ease tensions, push on with business

“systemic rival” that offers great opportunities but also presents many challenges. The coronavirus pandemic has created new obstacles, notably what Brussels sees as a China-orchestrated campaign of disinformation about the pandemic that could put lives at risk.

The meetings come at a time when China stands accused of trying to influence European officials and Borrell has twice denied in recent months that the External Action Service — a kind of EU foreign office that he leads — has bowed to Beijing's pressure to alter documents.

While the 27-nation EU is China's biggest trading partner, it is often divided

in its approach to Beijing. Yet the new security law for Hong Kong has galvanized the bloc. EU member countries insist the law will undermine the territory's autonomy, which was guaranteed in the “one-country, two-systems” framework.

Monday's meetings were originally meant to be a summit on March 30, but the coronavirus pandemic pushed it off the agenda, along with another high-level event that was due to take place in September in the German city of Leipzig.

The Europeans will hold a news conference today [Macau time] but no Chinese officials are scheduled to take part. AP



European Council President Charles Michel (right) speaks with European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen after an EU summit

ANALYSIS

China faces a rice bowl dilemma after Covid

CLARA FERREIRA
MARQUES

EMPTY supermarket shelves in the early stages of the coronavirus pandemic have put grow-your-own back on the world's agenda, and nowhere more so than in China, where ensuring food supplies for its huge population has been a political priority for decades. Simply diversifying imports may not satisfy hawkish voices. Emphasizing domestic production, though, will extract a heavy toll for a country with a fifth of the globe's people, but roughly a 10th of arable land and less than 6% of water resources.

For a nation scarred by famine, it's hard to overstate the importance of food security. That was true long before 1994, when U.S. environmental pioneer Lester Brown drew international attention to the potential consequences of scarcities by asking who would feed China when it boomed. Officials fear inflation as a potential cause of social and political instability — not without reason, given that rising prices helped provoke the Tiananmen Square protests. Agricultural imports, of course, have a



tendency to become tangled in diplomatic spats.

The answer was historically a simple one: self-sufficiency, particularly in grains like wheat, rice and corn. The idea has been hard to shake, even if the exact meaning of the phrase has softened over the years. Then came the 2020 pandemic, pressing everyone to fret about messy distribution chains. Officials freshened up plans and, projecting an image of self-reliance, Premier Li Keqiang told China's parliament last month that it was imperative to ensure food supply, while rewarding grain-producing counties and boosting the minimum purchase price for rice.

That doesn't mean the country can simply set the clock back to 1996, when China outlined a strict grain self-sufficiency policy — or

that it plans to. In part, what China is doing now is a regular rebalancing of the official position, says Thomas David DuBois at Beijing Normal University, who hosts the China Eats podcast.

For one, a back-to-the-future move would be nigh-impossible. China has become a member of the World Trade Organization. Households eat larger portions and tuck into more protein, increasing demand for grain to feed livestock. Imports of produce have climbed. While China has rice and wheat, it relies on overseas markets like the U.S., Brazil and Argentina for soybeans. It has also sought to increase meat imports after African swine fever hit pork production last year. Agricultural purchases have been key to a trade truce with Washington.

Certainly, the cost of past domestic ambitions has already been extortionate. In environmental terms, the damage has meant fertilizers used at four times the global rate, degraded soil and scarce water. Then there's the financial blow: According to the World Bank, input subsidies rose sevenfold between 2006 and 2010. By that final year, government support for producers amounted to 17% of gross farm receipts. This rising bill, along with other changes, including growing international clout, accounts for Beijing's more balanced approach after late 2013, when policy began to lean toward imports, sustainability, investing abroad and modernizing at home.

It's encouraging that some of those efforts have paid off during the pandemic. Farmers seem

to have been better able to handle spring planting disruptions thanks to digital applications. Longer-running policies like the vegetable basket plan that makes city mayors responsible for urban food security, partly to stimulate local production and preserve agricultural land, appear to have worked. Reserves held out. Still, the weaknesses of the global supply chain were exposed.

As ructions with Washington rumble in the background, it's unsurprising that the idea of the national rice bowl held firmly in Chinese hands, filled with Chinese rice, holds some attraction. Yet there are longer-term risks for misallocated resources that already lead to plentiful smuggling of cheaper fare. Not to mention what Amrita Jash at New Delhi's Centre for Land Warfare Studies points out are heightened risks of clashes with neighbors like India, as China seeds afield from an expanding fleet of distant-water fishing vessels

It matters, though, that popular concern over issues including genetically modified crops, metal-tainted soil and dirty

water — plus official awareness of the cost of ignoring them — means that a new domestic push has a chance of being far less destructive than before. Food safety worries have only heightened of late. Physical constraints like water scarcity will play a role in limiting those aspirations, as Bloomberg Intelligence notes, and shape more sustainable policy by encouraging investment in irrigation and other innovations.

China has little choice but to build food security by balancing internal sufficiency against more diverse international sources, often with Chinese links in the supply chain. That doesn't necessarily mean large-scale acquisition of land in Africa and elsewhere to ship harvests back home, which is both unpopular and economically punitive. Using its clout on global markets makes more sense.

In this context, the Belt and Road Initiative has been a game-changer in terms of linking up the mainland and friendly sellers when it comes to grains, says Zhang Hongzhou of Nanyang Technological University, who studies China's resource governance. Ukraine is now a leading supplier of corn to China.

China's rice bowl is going to stay mixed a while longer — however tightly it is held. **BLOOMBERG**

PANDEMIC

Virus cases surge in US, India, but slow in China, Korea

EMILY SCHMALL, ELAINE KURTENBACH, NEW DELHI

THE world saw the largest daily increases yet in coronavirus cases, with infections soaring in India's rural villages after migrant workers fled major cities.

India's coronavirus caseload climbed by nearly 15,000 as of yesterday to 425,282, with more than 13,000 deaths, the health ministry reported.

After easing the nationwide lockdown, the Indian government has run special trains to return thousands of migrant workers to their natal villages in recent weeks.

Nearly 90% of India's poorest districts have cases, though the outbreak remains centered in Delhi, Maharashtra and Tamil Nadu states, which are home to major cities.

Infections slowed in China and South Korea, suggesting some progress in stemming their newest outbreaks. But despite clear headway in containing the virus in regions that suffered early outbreaks, globally the number of new virus cases has soared in recent days. In Brazil, Iraq, India and the United States, hospitals are scrambling to cope.

Nearly 9 million people have been infected by the new coronavirus and more than 468,000 people have died, according to figures compiled by Johns Hopkins University. Experts say the actual numbers are much higher, given limits to testing and the presumed large share of asymptomatic cases.

In a grim reminder of the pandemic's ubiquitous reach, Philippine officials said Saudi Arabia's king had asked that the remains of 282 Filipino workers who perished in recent months in the oil-rich kingdom be repatriated within three days. They died of varied causes, but virus restrictions delayed repatriations.

Labor Secretary Silvestre Bello III said the Philippine government asked that the deadline be extended and that the bodies of about 50 Filipinos who died of COVID-19 be buried in Saudi Arabia.

The Philippines has reported more than 30,000



infections and 1,169 deaths, among the highest in Southeast Asia. It is struggling to help bring home tens of thousands of Filipinos who have lost their work abroad.

In Pakistan, infections are accelerating and hospitals are having to turn away patients, with new cases up to 6,800 a day in mid-June. The government has relaxed pandemic restrictions, hoping to salvage a near-collapsed economy as the number of people living in poverty has risen to 40%, up from 30% of the population of 220 million people.

In Iraq, masked workers were setting up makeshift coronavirus wards in Baghdad's vast exhibition grounds as a long-dreaded spike in infections strained its overstretched hospitals, battered by years of conflict and poor infrastructure.

Late Sunday, the World Health Organization reported the largest single-day increase in coronavirus cases by its count, at more than 183,000 new cases in the latest 24 hours. Brazil tallied 54,771 and the U.S. was next at 36,617, the UN health agency said. India reported more than 15,400.

Experts say rising case counts reflect multiple factors including more testing and spreading infections. More than two-thirds of the new deaths were reported in the Americas.

Still, in East Asia there were signs of progress, as South Korea reported 17 new cases, the first time its daily increase fell to under 20 in nearly a month.

The recent outbreak has been centered around Seoul, the capital, where the mayor warned stronger social distancing measures may be reimposed if the daily new cases don't fall below an average of 30 in the next three days.

"If Seoul gets penetrated (by the virus), the entire Republic of Korea gets penetrated," Mayor Park Won-soon said, using the country's formal name. He said the basic reproduction number of virus carriers, or number of infections caused by an individual, rose to nearly 1.8 between April 30 and June 11. Any number above 1 indicates a growing epidemic.

A rise in cases among people arriving from South Asia prompted a halt to new visas for travelers from Pakistan and Bangladesh.

Elsewhere in Asia, Beijing's increase was in single digits for the first time in eight days. It reported nine cases.

But Australia's Victoria state reported 16 new cases of the coronavirus as it tries to bring an outbreak there under control. The number of cases there is the highest in two months, accounting for more than 80% of Australia's new cases over the past week.

In the United States, experts say the resurgence in infections there is not a so-called "second wave" but a continuation of the first wave of outbreaks as the number of cases plateaus.

New cases are dipping in some parts of the coun-

try while rising mainly in the the South, West and Midwest, swamping hospitals in some areas.

The coronavirus has killed about 120,000 people nationwide. More than 30,000 cases were reported on Friday and Saturday, with the daily totals their highest since May 1.

In New York City, the worst affected area so far, efforts to stop the pandemic's spread through contact tracing are being hampered by the reluctance of many people to provide information to tracers.

The New York Times reported only 35% of the 5,347 city residents who tested positive or were presumed positive for COVID-19 in the first two weeks of the contact tracing program gave information about their close contacts.

But Dr. Ted Long, head of New York City's new Test and Trace Corps, defended the program, saying 69% of the people who complete an interview provide contacts.

The city will hit a turning point yesterday: allowing New Yorkers to dine out for the first time in three months, though only at outdoor tables. Shoppers can browse, shaggy heads get haircuts and kids climb playground monkey bars, instead of their apartment walls.

Office workers will be allowed to resume their commutes, though many won't yet.

Larry Silverstein, the 89-year-old World Trade Center developer, said he couldn't wait. AP

this day in history



1972 CHANCELLOR ORDERS POUND FLOTATION

The Chancellor, Anthony Barber, has announced his decision to temporarily float the pound.

The news comes only a day after the bank lending rate was increased by 1% - and four days after an interview on the BBC's Panorama programme in which he denied Britain was in danger of devaluation.

Labour MPs will see his decision to float the pound - rather than trade within a broad band linked to other currencies - as a first step towards devaluation.

Mr Barber told MPs the trade balance had deteriorated in the past couple of months and it had become necessary to shore up sterling by using the Bank of England's reserves.

He told MPs he was determined not to "allow ourselves to slide into a situation where we would have to borrow substantial sums".

"One of our underlying causes of this situation has undoubtedly been the concern about inflation... To curb inflation remains our first priority," he added.

The immediate crisis was sparked by heavy selling of the pound on the markets, which began on 16 June.

Investors' unease about high inflation in Britain has been exacerbated by recent highly publicised pay settlements for coal miners and railway workers, taking the average public sector wage increase to 9%. The Government has also become locked in two disputes over its industrial relations act, further damaging its image abroad.

The Chancellor accused his shadow Denis Healey of adding to pressure on the pound by speculating about a possible devaluation in a speech on Monday evening. In it, Mr Healey said there would be a devaluation by July or August.

Amid Conservative jeers, leader of the opposition Harold Wilson denied his shadow chancellor's remarks had anything to do with the pressure on the pound.

Labour front benchers also claimed the decision to float was in direct contradiction of the Government's agreement to keep the pound's exchange rate within a narrow band as a first step towards economic and monetary union with the other Common Market countries.

Mr Barber insisted the flotation would be temporary. The foreign exchange market will be closed today (Friday) and Monday in order to prepare for the new arrangements.

Courtesy BBC News

IN CONTEXT

The Chancellor went to Luxembourg on 26 June to explain his decision to float the pound to the finance ministers of the six Common Market countries. He assured them the pound would return to operating within fixed trading bands in time for Britain to join its European partners in 1973. Britain did join the Common Market, but the economy went from bad to worse. Mr Barber imposed a 90 day price freeze from 6 November. 1973 saw more industrial action and petrol rationing as a result of a Middle East oil embargo. Prime Minister Edward Heath was finally forced to call a snap election in February 1974 - which he lost to Harold Wilson.

MACAU'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

YOUR STARS

ARIES
Mar. 21-Apr. 19
 Your pioneering spirit is back and it's looking for something—or someone—new to discover! This is going to push the level of excitement in your life up a notch, which will be fun.

TAURUS
Apr. 20-May. 20
 Things are right on schedule in your life, no matter how big your urge to rush around today. Kick back, relax, and take time to enjoy all of the hard-earned successes you're having right now.

GEMINI
May. 21-Jun. 21
 Big or small, a few of your problems could be discussed in a public forum today. And, as expected, everyone you know will have their share of advice regarding what you should do about it.

CANCER
Jun. 22-Jul. 22
 You could reach an important compromise with a friendly authority figure today, no matter the past friction. Whether you believe it or not, when they say that they like you, they mean it!

LEO
Jul. 23-Aug. 22
 The key to financial security right now isn't learning how to make more money; it's learning how to better manage what you already have. Invest in an adviser or book that can teach you.

VIRGO
Aug. 23-Sep. 22
 When you're face-to-face with a goodie you've been wanting, count to ten before you grab your wallet. It might feel impossible, but the longer you wait, the less you're going to want to waste your money.

LIBRA
Sep. 23-Oct. 22
 This day could be centered around your relationships, specifically the people who have helped you the most. As for those fair-weather friends, they will show their true colors soon.

SCORPIO
Oct. 23-Nov. 21
 Emotional conversations could be very distracting for you today, so try to avoid conflict or pushing anyone's buttons. If you have to tell people what they want to hear in order to keep them happy, then do it.

SAGITTARIUS
Nov. 22-Dec. 21
 Your road to romance could take a little bit of a detour today, but it will be a fun one! Just roll with these changes and keep a positive attitude. You're in for some interesting surprises and delightful adventures.

CAPRICORN
Dec. 22-Jan. 19
 A friend you used to see with some regularity seems to have dropped off the face of the earth, and you miss them. If your messages have gone unanswered, don't take it personally.

AQUARIUS
Jan. 20-Feb. 18
 You could be starting to detect some patterns in a friend's behavior that worry you. Before you jump to any conclusions, get some time alone with this person today.

PISCES
Feb. 19-Mar. 20
 Your instincts are strong right now, so your guesses will be much more accurate than they typically are. Hunches could lead you to great discoveries or interesting encounters.

The Born Loser by Chip Sansom



SUDOKU

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

5	6	8			
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8					9
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		9	8	4	

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

WEATHER

	MIN	MAX	CONDITION
CHINA			
Beijing	24	33	overcast
Harbin	18	25	thundershower
Tianjin	26	31	overcast
Urumqi	14	28	clear
Xi'an	18	29	cloudy
Lhasa	12	23	drizzle
Chengdu	22	31	overcast
Chongqing	23	30	drizzle
Kunming	18	27	shower
Nanjing	22	25	moderate rain
Shanghai	24	29	moderate rain
Wuhan	22	26	drizzle
Hangzhou	22	31	thundershower
Taipei	26	31	overcast
Guangzhou	28	35	cloudy
Hong Kong	29	32	cloudy
WORLD			
Moscow	15	22	cloudy
Frankfurt	14	27	clear
Paris	14	22	cloudy
London	14	24	cloudy
New York	24	36	clear

CROSSWORDS

ACROSS: 1- Graceful horse; 5- Capote, to friends; 8- Ostrichlike bird; 12- Chapter of the Koran; 13- Thaw before takeoff; 15- Stool pigeon; var.; 16- Egyptian goddess of fertility; 17- Suggest; 18- Opposed; 19- English dramatist; 22- Lair, often for wild animals; 23- Bit of work; 24- Muslim leader; 26- Chemical indicator; 29- One who belongs to a group; 31- "Everybody Hurts" band; 32- In agreement; 34- Assisted; 36- Grave; 38- Trail; 40- Throw; 41- Headband; 43- Host; 45- Rainy, say; 46- Debt that remains unpaid; 48- Silvery white; 50- Pack firmly; 51- The French word for "no"; 52- Clod chopper; 54- Increasing in heat; 61- Fashion mag; 63- Backing for an exhibit; 64- Yours, in Tours; 65- The world's longest river; 66- Donkeys; 67- Rescue; 68- Dagger of yore; 69- Aliens, briefly; 70- JFK postings;

DOWN: 1- Sale sign; 2- Hurry; 3- Met highlight; 4- Woven container; 5- Office fill-in; 6- Ready to eat; 7- Bruins' home; 8- Messenger; 9- Passed along for use by another; 10- Romain de Tiroff, familiarly; 11- Analogous; 13- Revulsion; 14- Hawk's nest; var.; 20- Writer Bombeck; 21- Austen novel; 25- Slightly; 26- Hotelier Helmsley; 27- Everlasting plant; 28- More tender; 29- Birthplace of Muhammad; 30- Adjust to zero; 31- Some NFL linemen; 33- Where some vets served; 35- Summer hrs.; 37- Aboriginal rite site; 39- Edible seed parts; 42- Moore of "G.I. Jane"; 44- Self-images; 47- Sleep disorder; 49- Crate; 52- Coop group; 53- Actress Lena; 55- Matter for Holmes; 56- Little helper?; 57- Dreg; 58- Coup d'___; 59- Bright star; 60- Rail supports; 62- Extra-wide shoe size;

Yesterday's solution

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

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

Emergency calls 999	Taxi 28 939 939 / 2828 3283
Fire department 28 572 222	Water Supply - Report 2822 0088
PJ (Open line) 993	Telephone - Report 1000
PJ (Picket) 28 557 775	Electricity - Report 28 339 922
PSP 28 573 333	Macau Daily Times 28 716 081
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	



<p>FOR SALE</p> <p>Fragrant Court, Ocean Gardens HK\$24,000,000 3,500 ft² 4 3 3</p>	<p>FOR RENT</p> <p>Nova City, Taipa Great family home \$22,000/mth 2,503 ft² 4 3 3 1</p>	<p>FOR SALE</p> <p>[Macau] Retail space, Area Preta 170 ft² \$3,200,000 (ref: 19096003)</p> <p>[Taipa] Hoi Wan Garden 2 1 1 900 ft² \$4,900,000 (ref: 19106003)</p> <p>[Taipa] Taipa Village (2 units) 4 2 2 1,404 ft² \$8,380,000 (ref: 19096006)</p> <p>[Coloane] Large 3/4 bedroom 2 3 3 2 2,530 ft² \$12,980,000 (ref: 19096000)</p>	<p>FOR RENT</p> <p>[Macau] Lakeview Mansion Car Park 1 \$3,800/mth (ref: 20041001)</p> <p>[Coloane] Grand Coloane Resort 1 1 1 710 ft² \$13,200/mth (ref: 20021002)</p> <p>[Taipa] Great View Apartment 4 2 2 2,060 ft² \$28,000/mth (ref: 20031001)</p> <p>[Taipa] Private house 2 3 3 3 4,266 ft² \$45,000/mth (ref: 190550065T)</p>	<p>jml 卓雅物業 property since 1994</p> <p>(853) 2835 2699 hello@jmlproperty.com www.jmlproperty.com</p> <p>f jmlmacau @ jmlproperty</p>
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APPLE WILL REMOVE THOUSANDS OF UNLICENSED IPHONE GAMES IN CHINA

APPLE Inc. will start removing thousands of mobile games lacking government approval from its App Store in China next month, closing a loophole that the likes of Rockstar Games have relied on for years.

Developers and publishers in China have been told that their iOS games will need licenses to continue operating from July, according to people familiar with the matter. The decision ends the unofficial practice of allowing games to be published while awaiting authorization from the country's slow-moving regulators.

This has until now allowed games such as Grand Theft Auto, whose gory depictions of violence are unlikely to ever pass muster with Chinese censors, to be available within the country's borders. China's regulators require all games that are either paid or offer in-app purchases to submit for review and obtain a license before publication, and major Android app stores have enforced such rules since 2016. But unapproved games have flourished on Apple's iPhone platform.

It's unclear why Apple - a target



of numerous regulatory clamp-downs in the past - hasn't moved as swiftly as other app stores in China, which are owned and operated by local mobile giants like Alibaba Group Holding Ltd. and Xiaomi Corp.

The latest approvals process took effect in 2019 amid confusion among industry players about the speed with which Beijing, known for months-long content reviews that may or may not lead to a monetization licen-

se, would process requests. For its part, Apple has begun ramping up oversight of its Chinese app store, removing two podcast apps earlier this month at China's request.

Back in February, Apple reminded iOS developers in the country to obtain licenses for their titles by June 30. But it was only after prolonged uncertainty about enforcement that the iPhone maker explicitly told publishers that any unlicensed games

after the deadline will be banned and removed from the local App Store, according to the people, who asked not to be identified because the matter is not public.

There's no telling how long it will take to remove all unlicensed games once the change comes into effect. Chinese gaming blog Gamelook earlier reported Apple's upcoming enforcement.

China accounted for about a fifth of the \$61 billion in digital goods and services sold via

Apple's App Store in 2019, making it the largest market after the U.S., the Analysis Group estimates. Apple takes a 30% cut from the majority of such transactions.

There are roughly 60,000 games on China's iOS App Store that are either paid or contain in-app purchases, and at least a third of them don't have a license, according to an estimate by AppInChina, which helps companies localize and publish their apps in the country.

"These companies will suddenly lose all revenue from what is typically their second-largest market after the U.S.," said AppInChina Chief Executive Officer Rich Bishop. His firm received three times its usual volume of enquiries about game licenses over the past week, he added.

Apple's new effort highlights the Chinese government's tightening grip on gaming. Citing concerns about the proliferation of addiction among minors and the dissemination of offensive content, regulators now adopt a much stricter and slower review process than before they temporarily halted all approvals in 2018. **MDT/BLOOMBERG**

AD

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C&C
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& NOTARIES
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官樂怡 Rui José da Cunha[®]
山度士 Álvaro Rodrigues[®]
馬天龍 Nuno Sardinha da Mata[®]
趙魯 Zhao Lu[®]
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TENNIS

Dimitrov positive for COVID-19, exhibition event canceled

GRIGOR Dimitrov has tested positive for COVID-19, leading to the cancellation of an exhibition event in Croatia where top-ranked Novak Djokovic was due to play in the final.

Dimitrov, ranked No. 19 and a three-time Grand Slam semifinalist, is the highest-profile current player to say he has the virus. His announcement Sunday on his Instagram page comes at the end of a week when the U.S. Open said it would go forward.

The professional tennis tours have been suspended since March and are planning to resume in August.

Goran Ivanisevic, one of Djokovic's coaches, said the news from Dimitrov was "shocking" and that "now everyone will have to be tested."

Dimitrov said he was making his condition public because he wanted to "make sure anyone who has been in contact with me during these past days gets tested."

"I am so sorry for any harm I

AP PHOTO



might have caused," he wrote.

The Bulgarian featured last week in the Serbia leg of the Adria Tour exhibition event organized by Djokovic. There was criticism that there was no social distancing at the exhibition, which took place before packed stands in Belgrade, the Serbian capital. The Serbian government lifted most virus restrictions last month despite do-

zens of new cases being registered.

Dimitrov also played a match against Borna Coric in Croatia, at the Adriatic resort of Zadar, on Saturday in the second leg of the exhibition series. After the match, he complained about fatigue. He said in his post that he was tested in Monaco.

Organizers said Sunday the exhibition has now been canceled.

Djokovic had been scheduled to play Russia's Andrey Rublev in the final.

Besides Djokovic, other leading players participated in the events, including Dominic Thiem in Belgrade and Alexander Zverev in both tournaments.

"We are really sorry, we tried our best to respect all measures, and we did respect all measures

imposed by the governments of Serbia and Croatia," said event director Djordje Djokovic, the younger brother of Novak Djokovic.

"From our side, we did all we could but Grigor is unfortunately positive. At this moment we are organizing all medical services to check all people who have been in contact with Grigor, they will all be tested. I already contacted all players of the Adria Tour, and their families, all of the volunteers, all people involved in organization – absolutely none of them have any symptoms."

He added: "Before he came to Zadar, Grigor was in his home country [Bulgaria], we don't know if he got the virus there. All of the people who had close contact with him here will be tested."

Novak Djokovic has initially struck a skeptical tone if he would play at the U.S. Open at Flushing Meadows from Aug. 31 to Sept. 13.

Some of the sport's top names, including defending men's champion Rafael Nadal along with top-ranked Ash Barty have expressed reservations about heading somewhere that was a hot spot for the COVID-19 outbreak. Others expressed an eagerness to return to action.

The U.S. Open normally is the fourth and final Grand Slam tournament of each season but would be the second major of 2020, following the Australian Open, which concluded in early February. AP

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Exhibition Venue
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Free Admission

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OPINION

Our Desk

Lynzy Valles



WAY BACK HOME IT IS

At least three repatriation flights will occur between now and the end of the month, with companies sponsoring charter flights for dismissed workers.

Recently, the terms “dismissed” or “lay off” aren’t words that companies want to use nor admit are highly likely to occur, due to the fact that it sends a negative message that the company is really undergoing crisis.

With gaming revenues tumbling 93.2% year-on-year in May, last month was the eighth month straight of gaming operators’ declining revenue, with only a total of 1.76 billion patacas.

Only a few gaming operators have admitted to losing up to \$2.5 million a day, and that laying off workers amid the health and economic crisis was the only way to go.

Dismissing staff during this pandemic outbreak has been a global issue worldwide – particularly in hospitality and tourism as there is not enough work for employees given the strict travel restrictions in place.

Macau isn’t an exception to these widespread layoffs.

As reported, by the end of the month, the Consulate General of Nepal in Hong Kong and Macau will hold a chartered flight to repatriate some 80 stranded nationals who have been laid off.

These dismissed workers – the majority of whom worked in the security sector – have long been requesting a chartered flight as remaining in the city incurs significant expense.

This Saturday and next week, some 230 Filipino workers will be repatriated by their former employers, Sands China and Menzies Macau. The figure does not include other Filipino nationals who are still stranded in the city due to the absence of a direct flight to Manila.

The two companies have reportedly offered remaining seats to the Consulate General of the Philippines in the Macau SAR.

Last week, at the time of the last chartered flight arranged by the Consulate, the airport was packed with hundreds of stranded workers and tourists ready to go home.

I spoke with several of them and although some were glad to be finally going home (mostly tourists), many were still devastated, as some of them have experienced unfair treatment in terms of being laid off.

One of them that I spoke to could barely speak and was shaking while eating packed food distributed by the consulate.

She was extremely pale, looked weak and it was obvious that she was over-fatigued. While speaking to her, I found that out that she was fired by her employer due to illness.

With her domestic worker contract set to expire in August, she was immediately dismissed by her employer – most probably to avoid any hospital costs – in a time where no direct flights are being conducted.

She said she was only paid the remaining annual leave she has.

Her story is only one of the many frustrating stories heard that day.

Sadly, this remains an issue occurring in Macau, which points to the fact that non-resident workers – particularly domestic workers – still suffer from the city’s absence of protection for rights.

Employers should not be able to just kick out their employees because of an illness without offering any compensation. This woman was fired by her employer with little notice – not even a week, I suppose.

Going back to the main point of this article: there is no other way for these people but home as, really, the effects of the pandemic outbreak, did not spare anyone.

WHO REPORTS LARGEST SINGLE-DAY INCREASE IN CORONAVIRUS CASES

The World Health Organization reported yesterday [Macau time] the largest single-day increase in coronavirus cases by its count, at more than 183,000 new cases in the latest 24 hours.

The UN health agency said Brazil led the way with 54,771 cases tallied and the U.S. next at 36,617. Over 15,400 came in in India.

Experts said rising case counts can reflect multiple factors including more widespread testing as well as broader infection.

Overall in the pandemic, WHO reported 8,708,008 cases — 183,020 in the last 24 hours — with 461,715 deaths worldwide, with a daily increase of 4,743.

More than two-thirds of those new deaths were reported in the Americas.

Meanwhile, the head of the World Health Organization is warning that the coronavirus pandemic is still accelerating around the globe.

Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, WHO’s director-general, noted yesterday that the last 1 million cases of the virus were reported in just the last eight days alone.

Ghebreyesus also warned against the “politicization” of the pandemic, likely referring to U.S. President Donald Trump’s criticism of WHO and China over their handling of the outbreak.

WIRECARD SCANDAL

ACCOUNTS WORTH BILLIONS LIKELY DON’T EXIST

GEIR MOULSON, BERLIN

GERMAN payment service provider Wirecard said yesterday it has concluded that two accounts that were supposed to contain 1.9 billion euros (\$2.1 billion) probably don’t exist, deepening troubles that last week prompted the resignation of its chief executive.

Wirecard AG was once regarded as a star of the growing financial technology sector, but its shares have fallen sharply from their peak after the company became the subject of multiple Financial Times reports about accounting irregularities. Wirecard disputed the reports, which started in February 2019, and said it was the victim of speculators.

Last week, the company disclosed that auditors couldn’t find accounts containing the 1.9 billion euros and postponed its annual report. On Friday, CEO Markus Braun resigned and was replaced by James Freis.

Two Philippine banks that were said to hold the money in escrow accounts said that they had no dealings with Wirecard.

The Bank of the Philippine Islands said a document claiming the company was a client was “spurious.” BDO Unibank said that a docu-



ment claiming the existence of a Wirecard account was falsified and “carries forged signatures of bank officers.”

On Monday, Wirecard said its management board “assesses on the basis of further examination that there is a prevailing likelihood that the bank trust account balances in the amount of 1.9 billion euros do not exist.”

Wirecard said it is in “constructive discussions” with banks on continuing credit lines, and is “assessing options for a sustainable financing strategy for the company.” It said it’s examining other possible measures to keep the business going, including restructuring and disposing of business units.

After plummeting last week, Wirecard’s shares took another dive yesterday. They were down 34.6% at 16.89 euros in late-morning Frankfurt trading.

The company was once considered a star of Ger-

many’s tech sector; its market value at one point exceeded that of Deutsche Bank. Wirecard pushed Germany’s No. 2 bank, Commerzbank, out of the country’s DAX 30 index of blue chips.

The company had rapidly expanded outside Germany, building an Asia-Pacific business and entering the North American market by buying Citigroup’s prepaid card services business in 2016.

“You have to pinch yourself and wonder if what is going on at Wirecard is true,” said Robert Halver, an analyst at Baader Bank in Frankfurt.

He noted that Germany is “not spoilt for high-tech companies” and raised the possibility of the German government considering action to preserve Wirecard’s technology, arguing that “it would be bad if Wirecard became a takeover object for China.” AP



India’s coronavirus caseload has risen to 425,282 as infections soar in rural areas to which migrant workers fleeing major cities have returned in recent weeks. India’s health ministry yesterday reported 14,821 new cases and about 300 new deaths, bring the toll of fatalities up to more than 13,000. The coastal state of Goa reported its first COVID-19 death.



South Korea has reported 17 new cases of COVID-19, the first time its daily jump came down to the teens in nearly a month. Its 40 to 50 cases per day increases over the past two weeks have occurred as people increased their public activities amid eased attitudes on social distancing. An increase in imported cases has prompted authorities to halt providing new visas for travelers from Pakistan and Bangladesh.

New Zealand reported two new cases of the coronavirus yesterday as a trickle of infected people continue to arrive at the border. The country of 5 million people now has nine active cases after having none at all earlier this month. Health officials say all those cases involve people who have recently arrived and are in quarantine, and there’s no evidence of community transmission.



Serbia’s president declared a landslide victory for his right-wing party in a parliamentary vote held amid concerns over the spread of the novel coronavirus and a boycott of much of the opposition. Aleksandar Vucic (pictured) told jubilant supporters that his Serbian Progressive Party won over 60% of the vote, or some 190 seats in the 250-seat Serbian parliament.

THE DECISIVE MOMENT

AP Photo/Vincent Yu



Total eclipse of the Sun. A solar eclipse is seen over Hong Kong Sunday. People across the Arabian Peninsula, Eastern Africa and Asia, Macau included, observed Sunday’s eclipse.