



THE US STATE DEPARTMENT HAS DOWNGRADED MACAU IN ITS GLOBAL HUMAN TRAFFICKING REPORT, CLAIMING NOT ENOUGH PROGRESS HAS BEEN MADE

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HO IAT SENG HAS PLANS TO FREEZE THE WAGES OF CIVIL SERVANTS THIS YEAR

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FRIGHTENED BY PROTESTS AND NOW CORONAVIRUS, CHINESE BUYERS ARE IN FULL RETREAT FROM HONG KONG'S COMMERCIAL REAL ESTATE MARKET

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AP PHOTO



Taiwan The Taiwanese capital held its annual LGBT pride parade yesterday, making it one of the few places in the world to proceed with such an event in the face of the coronavirus pandemic.

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China A boat from Myanmar sank on the Mekong river in southwestern China, leaving one person dead and six missing. Seventeen others were rescued, the Yunnan provincial government said.

China-India Construction activity appeared underway on both the Indian and Chinese sides of a contested border high in the Karakoram mountains a week after a deadly clash in the area left 20 Indian soldiers dead, satellite images showed. The images appeared to show that the Indians had built a wall on their side and the Chinese had expanded an outpost camp at the end of a long road connected to Chinese military bases farther from the poorly defined border.

US A federal judge has convicted a Chinese national of economic espionage, stealing trade secrets and engaging in a conspiracy for the benefit of his country's government. The conviction is part of efforts to crack down on China's alleged theft of patented technology created in the U.S, a problem underlying the costly trade war between the two countries.

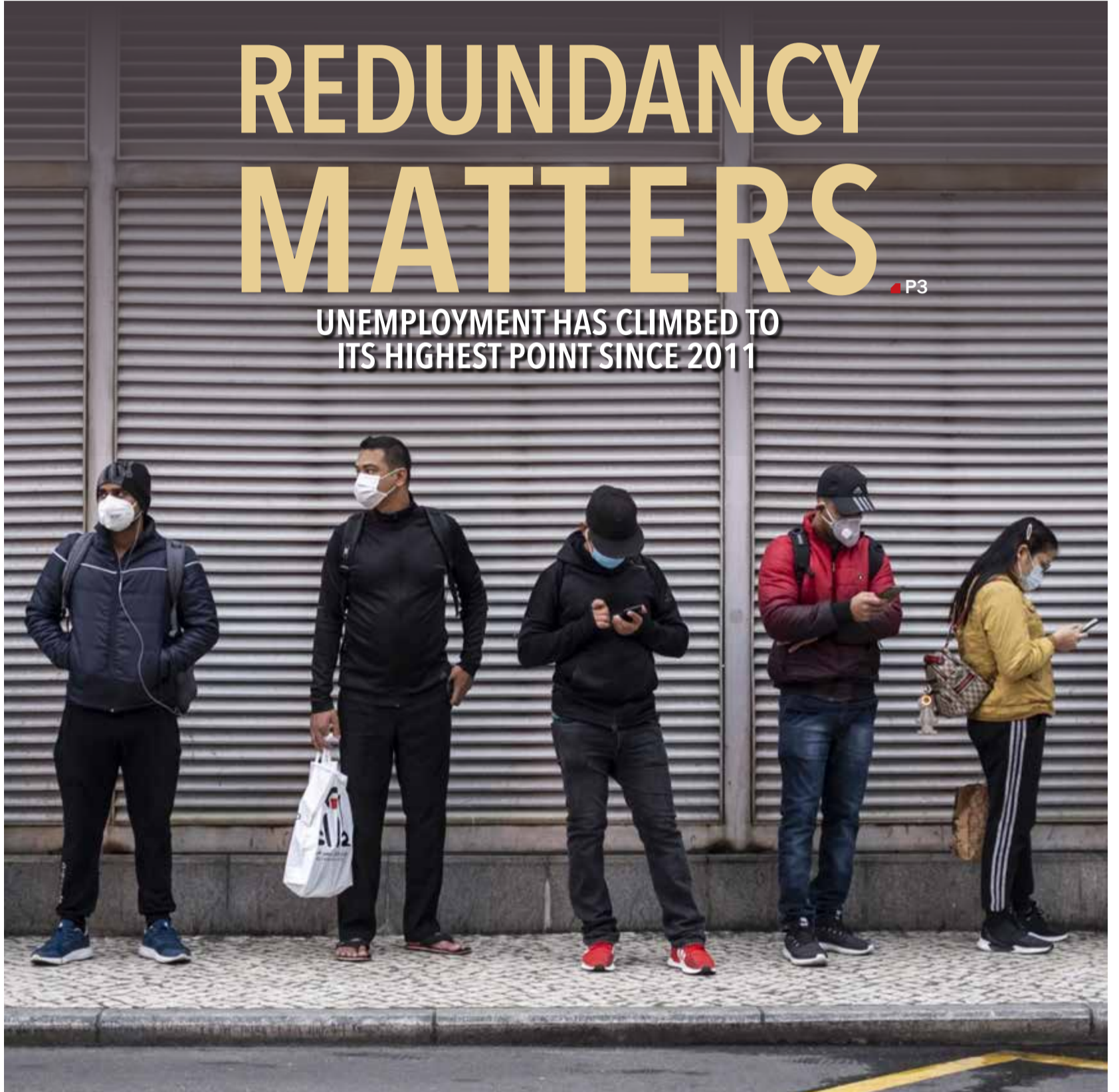
Australia An Australian state lawmaker was suspended from his party Friday and his home was searched in an investigation of alleged influence by China. Police and intelligence officers searched the Sydney home of New South Wales state lawmaker Shaoquett Moselmane and also had a warrant for his parliamentary offices.

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REDUNDANCY MATTERS

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UNEMPLOYMENT HAS CLIMBED TO ITS HIGHEST POINT SINCE 2011



BLOOMBERG



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THOUSANDS JOIN 'CRYSTAL FISH' DRILL HELD IN EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES

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NEW COVID-19 CASE HIGHLIGHTS STRENGTH OF MACAU'S CONTAINMENT EFFORT

ANTHONY LAM

THE 46th Covid-19 case registered in Macau, which was confirmed on Friday after 78 days without a new infection, illustrates the effectiveness of the city's containment effort, Dr Alvis Lo Iek Long, medical director of the public Conde São Januário Hospital (CHCSJ) has said.

The basis on which he made his comments was that the measures being put in place have effectively confined infections within a manageable area. It has been able to minimize risks of community spread.

"We commenced the month-long special ferry service on June 17 and expected new infections to be recorded [in Macau]," the doctor explained. "The core of our containment effort is to minimize risks to the community by implementing contingencies and procedures."

As with previous retrieval operations, Macau residents returning through the Hong Kong International Airport are required to obtain a Macau Health Code (previously known as the Health Declaration).

Meanwhile, their health condition is checked and recorded at the Taipa Ferry Terminal, where deep-throat swabs are taken to test for



the novel coronavirus.

In the first nine days of the special ferry service, one infection was identified among the 620 returnees, which equates to 0.16% of the returnees. Lo sees this as a very low percentage.

Upon arrival, the returnees will be sent directly to designated hotels for 14 days of quarantine, during which they will be tested for the virus at least two times.

The new case concerns a 57-year-old male Macau resident and Philippines national, who took Cathay Pacific flight 906 from

Manila to Hong Kong at 10:45 a.m. on Thursday.

The resident arrived at the Hong Kong airport and took the 2pm special ferry from the airport to Macau. At the time of his arrival, the patient displayed no symptoms of discomfort or fever. After being tested at the Taipa Ferry Terminal, he was sent to a hotel for medical quarantine. The man's viral nucleic acid test for Covid-19 returned a positive result.

Medical tests conducted at the hospital showed that the patient has a background of diabetes. He

showed no respiratory symptoms but imaging indicated he was suffering from pneumonia in both of his lungs. The patient is now under isolated hospitalization at the public hospital.

In order to further enhance containment measures, the government has announced that Macau residents returning from countries with high infection figures must present a negative Covid-19 test result in order to board the special ferry. Inbound ferries will accept only Macau residents, while outbound ferries will allow

all passengers to board.

The government has also improved its daily capability for Covid-19 nucleic acid testing from 6,000 to 16,000 tests.

The government has announced that, after regular communication with its counterparts in Zhuhai and Guangdong, the quota for the waiving of quarantine measures in Zhuhai for Macau residents without a Zhuhai Residence Card will be increased from 1,000 to 3,000 per day. This is to satisfy Macau residents' requirements to cross the border to Zhuhai.

Suspected 17th child of Stanley Ho identified

A man named Ho Yau Pong has been listed as Stanley Ho's son in his official newspaper obituary, published yesterday. This relative of Stanley has previously been unknown to the public.

It has long been rumored that Stanley Ho had a 17th child named Ho Yau Kai. Sabrina Ho, the daughter of Stanley Ho and Angela Leong, once denied it when asked to verify the rumor.

Following the obituary, Leong, Stanley Ho's fourth consort, issued a statement "for the first and

the only time" to explain the matter.

In the statement, she revealed, "Ho Yau Pong has never been introduced to the public because of health concerns."

"As is tradition, his name will be inscribed on the tombstone of his late father," she added in the statement.

She stressed that Ho Yau Pong "has never been a secret to the family. He would join family excursions and birthday parties."

"In a family like this, it is challenging to be an

[ordinary person], but as a mother I still want [Ho Yau Pong] to feel that the world is safe and nice," she added. "He is destined to be protected and undisturbed."

Stanley Ho's funeral will be held on July 9 in Hong Kong. A public mourning session will be arranged with details to be announced later. The title for late Stanley Ho in the obituary is Member of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference, Great Lotus and Great Bauhinia Laureate. **AL**

ANIMA PRESIDENT TO STEP DOWN

LYNZY VALLES

ALBANO Martins, founder and president of Anima Macau, will be stepping down from his position at the animal rights group this July.

In an announcement made on social media, Martins revealed that he has lost vision in his dominant eye due to a nasal polypectomy that was conducted following an accident in January, which is one of the reasons he is stepping down.

It is still unknown who will be his successor at Anima, the group he founded in 2003.

However, he implied that under the new leadership, Anima would be able to acquire the land it currently occupies.

"This process [has been] under way for several years already. Without this solved, we are always under stress! I hope the successor is someone from the actual team who is 24 hours [per day] dedicated to Anima as an executive," he told the Times.

"I believe we will have a non-executive president (the president) and an executive president (the president of the executive

committee). Now I hold both presidencies but we may need to split [the roles between] two people to make it easier," Martins added.

Martins, who successfully campaigned for the closure of Macau (Yat Yuen) Canidrome, is set to leave the city next month.

Meanwhile, he also explained that his work contract with the Nam Van Development Company Ltd which has "lasted for almost 30 years was also cancelled on maturity few days ago."

Martins' contract with the firm will end in February 2021.

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A MACAU TIMES PUBLICATIONS LTD PUBLICATION

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LYNZY VALLES

THE general unemployment rate for March-May 2020 stood at 2.4%, the highest figure since 2011, amid the economic impact of the Covid-19 pandemic.

The unemployment rate among local residents was 3.4%, up 0.3 percentage points from the previous period (February-April), while the general rate had increased by 0.2 percent.

The general unemployment rate in the city has been at 2% or below for the past eight years.

The recent increase is due to the pandemic outbreak, which has caused layoffs at some companies as an effect of economic downturn.

According to the official data, the number of people unemployed increased by 800 to 9,700 from the previous period.

Among the unemployed population searching for a new job, most were previously engaged in the retail and in gaming and junket activities. The number of underemployed individuals increased by 2,300 to 10,600, with the majority working in gaming and junket activities, the construction sector and retail sector.

With few to almost no visitors entering the Macau SAR due to travel restrictions, businesses, particularly in the tourism and hospitality sector, have been deeply affected.

During the peak of the pandemic in February, Chief Executive Ho Iat Seng called on gaming operators not to lay off workers nor cut their salaries.

However, gaming operators have had to cope with a downturn in visitor arrivals from mainland China. These operators are said to be losing millions of patacas per day.

In the first five months of 2020, the number of visitor arrivals fell by 81.1% year-on-year to 3.24 million, with 2.85 million of them

Unemployment rate reaches highest point since 2011



arriving in January, the period prior to the pandemic outbreak in Macau.

It is still unclear when travel restrictions will be eased and when the central government will resume the issuance of Individual Visit Scheme visas and group tour visas.

With the recent outbreak of Covid-19 in Beijing, analysts have expressed concerns that the country's plan to ease travel restrictions may be delayed.

The entry restrictions that have been strictly enforced have also caused gaming revenue to plunge. Last month, the city's gross gaming revenue recorded a drop of 93.2% from a year earlier.

Last week, when commenting on the recent layoffs by gaming operators, Ho described the moves as a "normal phenomenon," adding that similar situations are occurring globally.

Two gaming operators chartered a flight back to the Philippines to repatriate their workers.

In the city, the term layoff has been quite taboo among local residents, as local workers have always been given the impression that they will be prioritized over foreign workers.

During the March to May period, the total labor force was 404,300 and the labor force participation rate was 70.5%.

Total employment was 394,600 and number of employed resi-

dents totaled 280,100, up by 400 and 2,200 respectively from the previous period. Analyzed by industry, employment in the construction sector increased, while that in retail and hotels decreased.

BE PREPARED TO 'ACCEPT DIFFERENT TYPES OF JOBS': DSAL

DANIEL BEITLER

THE Labour Affairs Bureau (DSAL) has hinted that residents should be prepared to lower their standards when searching for work.

The DSAL issued a statement yesterday to address the changing labor market conditions brought about by the spread of Covid-19. The bureau has urged the public to "adjust their mentality" when seeking for jobs and to be prepared to "accept different types of jobs" if necessary.

Data released over the weekend showed that unemployment is on the rise in Macau, reaching levels not seen since 2011.

In recent months, the DSAL has enhanced its training and career consultancy services to better equip unemployed residents with the skills needed

to reenter the job market. The government authority is also actively matching unemployed residents with vacancies in the construction, property management, catering and retail industries, according to the statement.

However, the effectiveness of the employment referral work depends on "the joint efforts of both parties," according to the DSAL.

It called on employers to provide job vacancies according to their actual demand and for job seekers to "cooperate with the referral work of the Bureau."

"Job seekers need to do their best to cooperate [by] adjusting their mentality, taking every interview seriously and demonstrating their ability," said the bureau in the statement. This will help "improve the chances of being hired."

Gov't plans to freeze wage increase of public servants

LYNZY VALLES

CHIEF Executive Ho Iat Seng has disclosed plans to freeze the salary increases of civil servants, noting that the standard increase may prove unpopular with the public as many private sector employees are experiencing pay cuts due to the novel coronavirus.

Speaking to the press on the sidelines of the Dragon Boat Festival, Macau's top official remarked, "as we all know, in this environment, people are experiencing

pay cuts. We will not be lowering their [civil servants'] salaries but if we increase their salaries now, I believe society will have a reaction."

Last week, Ho ordered the local government to cut expenditure next year, as a consequence of the impact of Covid-19.

However, he assured that it would not impact the current welfare policies for local residents.

Meanwhile, the Chief Executive also commented on the reopening of the Macau-Hong Kong border. According

to Ho, the central government has imposed new travel restrictions when it comes border crossing, implying that the delay of the travel bubble was due to the new prevention measures and restrictions.

Previously, it was announced by Hong Kong Chief Executive Carrie Lam that the implementation of a travel bubble between Hong Kong, Macau and Guangdong province was underway.

However, it has been stalled due to "technical issues."

"The pandemic situation is [ongoing]. The original plan was to resume travel in June but I believe it has to be pushed back to July. Hopefully there will be good news in July," Ho informed the press.

Once the Hong Kong-Macau border reopens, it will function like the border with Zhuhai, wherein only a limited number of travelers would be allowed to travel, such as businessmen, those with an urgent need to see a doctor and those involved in public affairs.



RENATO MARQUES

GOV'T RECEIVES 37,000 SUBSIDIZED HOUSING APPLICATIONS

About 37,000 submissions to the government have been made for the latest phase of subsidized housing applications, which ended on June 26. Of these, 85% or about 31,800 applications were accepted, while 15% or about 5,600 have been partially accepted due to the absence of certain required documents. These applicants will be allowed to submit their missing documents to the Housing Bureau on or before July 24. As with the measures effective during the application period, prior bookings must be made online for submission of supplementary documents. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the application period has been extended twice, making it a seven-month long period.

BUSKERS DISTURBED BY POLICE WHO ASKED FOR PERMIT NOT REQUIRED

A busking performance at Nam Van Lake, permitted by the Cultural Affairs Bureau (IC), has allegedly been obstructed by the police, who claimed that the singers and musicians were allowed to perform but without amplifying equipment, local media outlet Macau Concealers reported. The police officer also reportedly asked for a permit that was not required according to the IC regulations. In a statement issued after the event, the police department explained that the operation was due to a report about suspected illegal workers, because the performers placed a collection box in front of them. The police state that the performers were cooperative with the check and express regret for "groundless media reports."

MACAU JOURNALIST ASSOCIATION ELECTS NEW MANAGEMENT

The Macau Journalist Association has elected a new management team that will represent the association over the next two years. Ng Sio Ngai was reelected as the President of the association. Mak Chon Wa was elected as head of the Administrative Council, while Wong Dong was made the head of the Supervisory Council. Reviewing its work in the past two years, the outgoing Administrative Council recapped that it has been in effective communication with the association's members and provided them with comments and suggestions on various challenges they have encountered amid their work. The association will continue to safeguard public interests and freedom of speech by protecting the rights of its members.



TYPHOON DRILL CARRIED OUT AMID SPECIAL COVID-19 CONTEXT

DANIEL BEITLER

THE Civil Protection Structure carried out its annual typhoon drill on Saturday, involving the participation of thousands of people across the city and in the context of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Codenamed "Crystal Fish", the drill aims to reinforce the Structure's command and enhance the coordination, communication and response efficiency of the emergency services. It also serves to familiarize the public with the evacuation plan in the event of serious flooding.

Under the chairmanship of the Commissioner General of the Unitary Police Service, Leong Man Cheong, the exercise began at 1:45 p.m. on Saturday and occurred in the areas of Ilha Verde, Fai Chi Kei, the Inner Harbor and Coloane. This exercise las-

ted about five hours, having simulated 60 incidents that could happen during the typhoon passage.

In the simulation, the passage of the severe typhoon was accompanied by a storm surge and astronomical tide. This year, it was carried out in the context of the coronavirus pandemic, adding to the simulated difficulties of the exercise.

At the start of the simulation, the Meteorological and Geophysical Bureau (SMG) issued the red storm surge warning, foreseeing flooding of between 1.5 meters and 2.5 meters in the lower areas of the city.

In view of this situation, the Structure launched evacuation operations in the low-lying areas.

The authorities used a sound system in these areas and different media and social media platforms to alert the public and

convey civil protection information to both residents and tourists.

The simulation introduced sudden incidents such as a fishing vessel at risk of sinking, a serious road accident on the Sai Van Bridge, an interruption to the electricity supply in a shelter center, and a landslide incident that toppled trees.

This year's simulation involved the participation of about 2,350 people from the entities that make up the Civil Protection Structure, as well as 20 civic associations. Over 400 residents directly participated in the exercise while about 2,400 additional families were evacuated.

Due to the pandemic situation, and in compliance with the health instructions imposed by the Health Services, the exercise was carried out in groups and with the proper social distancing

measures enforced, according to the government.

The Secretary for Security, Wong Sio Chak, visited the Civil Protection Operations Center to learn about the status of the work carried out by the different entities, and remarked on this year's added difficulty because of the coronavirus. Despite this scenario, the Secretary said that the preparedness of the Civil Protection Structure and the active participation of the population had shown that public awareness of disaster prevention is improving.

Crystal Fish is the most high-profile drill conducted in Macau. The operation was initiated after the devastating loss caused to the city by the arrival of Typhoon Hato in August 2017, the strongest storm in half a century, which caused loss of life and more than 12 billion patacas in economic losses.

DANIEL BEITLER

THE U.S. State Department has downgraded the Macau SAR in its most recent global report on human trafficking, expressing particular concern over what it sees as the local government's failure to identify and protect victims.

The 2020 Trafficking in Persons Report concluded that Macau has not fully met the minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking, but was making significant efforts to do so. It highlighted and commended the training of police, customs, and social welfare officials and the funding of awareness campaigns on public transportation.

However, the State Department said it had observed a decline in the

US State Department downgrades Macau in human trafficking report

"overall [...] efforts compared to the previous reporting period." For example, funding for the committee for anti-trafficking activities in Macau fell to 3.24 million patacas in 2019, compared with 3.7 million patacas a year earlier, according to data cited in the report.

The State Department was particularly attentive to sex trafficking in Macau.

It said that most of the victims are from mainland China, Russia and Southeast Asia. The victims are coerced into commercial sex in massage parlors, nightclubs

and other entertainment venues in casinos, hotels and private homes. They are forced to work long hours, may be threatened with violence, and sometimes their identity documents are confiscated.

"Concerns remained that traffickers exploited victims in Macau, especially in commercial sex," noted the State Department. "However, the government investigated only one potential case, did not provide assistance to any victims, and did not initiate any prosecutions or sentence convicted traffickers to significant terms of

imprisonment."

The State Department issued recommendations in the report, for example, "significantly [increasing] proactive victim identification, especially among vulnerable populations such as migrant workers and persons in commercial sex."

It also said the authorities should enhance their investigation and prosecution efforts to convict sex traffickers, "including those operating in casinos and other entertainment establishments."

The Macau government has issued a strong condemnation of the re-

port, entirely rebuking the U.S. assessment.

The Office of the Secretary for Security said that the government has effectively reduced the incidence of human trafficking, as evidenced in the falling number of cases in Macau.

The Office said that the U.S. report "once again, did not accurately reflect the real situation in Macau, showing itself to be full of biased interpretations, an inaccurate conclusion and groundless assumptions, as well as revealing a lack of knowledge about Macau's legal system.

MACAU'S LEADING NEWSPAPER



Sands China continues partnership with Red Cross in providing emergency kits

SANDS China Ltd. has a joint initiative with the Macau Red Cross for the second consecutive year, an on-going effort of the company to help enhance the Macau community's precautionary measures ahead of typhoon season.

Recently, Sands Cares Ambassadors helped pack sanitation and emergency typhoon response kits at the Macau Red Cross headquarters and distributed them through local community service centres to 800 households in Macau's low-lying areas.

From May 27 to June 4, around 100 Sands Cares Ambassadors assembled a total of 800

kits for distribution to residents living in the low-lying areas of the city through six local community associations. The areas served were selected according to the Macau SAR government's emergency response plan.

This year, the kits were customised to also contain relief items to support the community's fight against the coronavirus – purchased as part of Sands China's MOP5 million COVID-19 relief fund.

Each kit contains a variety of anti-pandemic and emergency items inside a multi-functional waterproof bag, including face-masks, medical gloves, hand sanitizer gel, disinfectant liquid, a radio, flashlight, first aid pack,

bottled water, biscuits and an emergency response leaflet – provided by the government.

Amid the pandemic outbreak, Sands China continues its corporate social responsibility efforts in order to make a significant difference in Macau's fight against the novel coronavirus, in support of the government's virus prevention initiatives.

Dr. Wilfred Wong, president of Sands China Ltd., said: "Sands China considers it our responsibility to assist the Macau community, especially in times of need and challenge. We need to team up to overcome adversity. This initiative is an important effort that ser-

ves a dual purpose: supporting the local community with resources in the fight against the spread of the coronavirus and preparing the community for typhoon season." "Our thanks once again go to the Macau Red Cross for their collaboration and to the Social Welfare Bureau for their coordination and support in providing guidance on selecting the areas served," the executive added.

Last year, around 30 Sands Cares Ambassadors also helped pack emergency typhoon response kits at the Macau Red Cross headquarters, assembling 500 kits in total at the event.

The kits were then distribu-

ted in August to people living in the low-lying areas of San Kio and Patane to help them better prepare for typhoons. Those areas served were also selected according to the Macau SAR government's emergency response plan.

The kits were customised and sourced using MOP280,000 in donations to the Macau Red Cross, which were collected in February 2019 during Sands China's team member talent competition Start Your Show.

The Sands Cares Ambassador programme is part of Sands Cares, the global corporate citizenship programme of parent company Las Vegas Sands Corp.

Taiwan celebrates Pride Month with world's only public parade

SAMSON ELLIS

TAIPEI will be the only city in the world to celebrate Pride Month with a march Sunday, highlighting Taiwan's success in keeping the coronavirus outbreak largely under control.

The parade is scheduled to begin Sunday afternoon close to the Presidential Office in Taipei. Coming just over a year after Taiwan became the first place in Asia to legalize same-sex marriage, the event cements the island's status as one of the most LGBTQ-friendly places in the region.

Taipei hosts one of Asia's largest Pride parades every October, attended by tens of thousands of people from all over the world. The community is holding an additional event Sunday during Pride month, which marks the anniversary of the Stonewall riots in New York in 1969, a key moment in the early fight for LGBTQ rights.

More than 500 Pride events originally scheduled for June have been canceled around the world due to the pandemic, according to the organizers of the Taipei march. Some



will still go ahead but remain online only.

The Taipei celebration is taking place as life gets back to normal in Taiwan. The island has reported fewer than 450 cases of the coronavirus in total since the outbreak began, with seven deaths. The government has eased regulations on large-scale events, social distancing and business travel over the past month after registering no domestic transmission of the virus since early April.

Taipei has established itself as a center for LGBTQ rights in East Asia.

Around 80,000 people come to the Taiwanese capital every year for the annual Pride march. Openly gay and transgender presenters have been a fixture on Taiwanese television for much of the past two decades. In 2016, the government appointed Audrey Tang as a minister without portfolio, one of the few cabinet-level transgender officials in the world.

Since the government legalized gay marriage in May last year, more than 3,500 same-sex couples have tied the knot in Taiwan, according to government data. **BLOOMBERG**

HK POLICE BAN JULY 1 MARCH AMID TENSION OVER SECURITY LAW

HONG Kong police have declined to permit one of the city's largest annual marches as Chinese lawmakers finalize a sweeping national security law for the former British colony.

The march planned for the July 1 anniversary of Hong Kong's return to Chinese sovereignty is against the city's social distancing rules and may cause violence, the police said in a statement Saturday circulated by its organizer Civil Human Rights Front. The group has arranged some of the city's largest-ever protests, including peaceful marches against a controversial extradition bill last year that attracted more than a million people and helped lead to the proposal's ultimate withdrawal.

The rejection came amid rekindled political tension in Hong Kong triggered by the national security law that some fear could damage freedom of expression and the rule of law. The city has already been hit by months of social unrest that started in June last year against China's tightening grip over Hong Kong, as well as the Covid-19 pandemic that has paralyzed retail and tourism.

Civil Human Rights Front said it was appealing the decision. The police have already issued an unprecedented ban against an annual candlelight vigil on June 4 marking the Chinese military crackdown on pro-democracy protesters in Tiananmen Square in 1989. **BLOOMBERG**

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JIM GOMEZ, MANILA

SOUTH CHINA SEA

SOUTHEAST Asian leaders said a 1982 U.N. oceans treaty should be the basis of sovereign rights and entitlements in the South China Sea, in one of their strongest remarks opposing China's claim to virtually the entire disputed waters on historical grounds.

The leaders of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations took the position in a statement issued by Vietnam Saturday on behalf of the 10-nation bloc. ASEAN leaders held their annual summit by video on Friday, with the coronavirus pandemic and the long-raging territorial disputes high on the agenda.

"We reaffirmed that the 1982 UNCLOS is the basis for determining maritime entitlements, sovereign rights, jurisdiction and legitimate interests over maritime zones," the ASEAN statement said.

The leaders were referring to the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, a 1982 international agreement that defines the rights of nations to the world's oceans and demarcates stretches of waters called exclusive economic zones where coastal states are given the right to exclusively tap fishery and fuel resources.

They said in their statement that "UNCLOS sets out the legal framework within which all activities in the oceans and seas must be carried out."

ASEAN takes position vs China's vast historical claims

AP PHOTO



Chinese officials did not immediately comment on the statement, but three Southeast Asian diplomats told The Associated Press that it marked a significant strengthening of the regional bloc's assertion of the rule of law in a disputed region that has long been regarded as an Asian flash point. They spoke on condition of anonymity due to a lack of authority to speak publicly.

"This is a rebuke of the basis of China's claims," said Carl Thayer, a prominent South China Sea

analyst. He said the statement represented "a significant shift in ASEAN's rhetoric."

While it has criticized aggressive behavior in the disputed waters, ASEAN, which relies heavily on China for trade and investment, has never castigated China by name in its post-summit communiqués.

As ASEAN's leader this year, Vietnam oversaw the drafting of the "chairman's statement," which was not a negotiated document but was circulated among other

member states for consultation. Vietnam has been one of the most vocal critics of China's assertive actions in the disputed waters.

China has taken increasingly aggressive steps in recent years to bolster its claims to the strategic waters, which it vaguely marks with a so-called nine-dash line that overlaps with the coastal waters and territorial claims of ASEAN member states Vietnam, Malaysia, the Philippines and Brunei. Taiwan has also staked a claim in vast stretches

of the disputed waters.

In July 2016, an international arbitration tribunal invalidated China's vast historical claims to the waters based on UNCLOS. China refused to participate in the case and dismissed the ruling as a sham.

China in recent years transformed seven disputed reefs into missile-protected island bases, including three with military-grade runways, and continues to develop them in actions that have set off protests and alarmed rival claimant states, as well as the United States and its Asian and Western allies.

In recent months, China has come under fire for what rival claimants say were aggressive actions in the disputed waters as countries were scrambling to deal with the coronavirus.

Vietnam protested in April after a Chinese coast guard ship rammed and sank a boat with eight fishermen off the Paracel Islands. The Philippines backed Vietnam and protested new territorial districts announced by China in large swaths of the sea. AP

AD

EPIDEMIC CONTROL MEASURES

POINTS TO NOTE WHEN USING PUBLIC TRANSPORT

During the virus epidemic, please take necessary precautions to protect yourself when using public transport to reach your destination.

People with fever, cough or other respiratory symptoms should avoid using public transportation. Otherwise, they should wear a mask at all times and observe personal hygiene, and avoid close contact with other people on the vehicle.

Bus



- ★ All passengers should wear face masks
- ★ Please keep windows open for good ventilation
- ★ Use a tissue paper to wrap the handrail before holding it
- ★ Avoid talking to the driver or other passengers
- ★ Avoid getting on crowded buses
- ★ Avoid crowded bus routes by taking advantage of the transit routes
- ★ Use hand sanitiser after disembarking

Taxi



- ★ Wear a face mask
- ★ Sit in the back seat
- ★ Keep the windows open
- ★ Avoid talking to the driver
- ★ Avoid touching the inside of the taxi
- ★ Prepare small change
- ★ Use hand sanitiser after disembarking

Light Rail



- ★ Please wear a face mask
- ★ Use a tissue paper to wrap the handrail before holding it
- ★ Keep a certain distance from other passengers
- ★ Avoid talking to other passengers
- ★ Use hand sanitiser after disembarking



CONGRATULATIONS TO THE SANDS CHINA DRAGON BOAT TEAMS FOR OUTSTANDING TEAMWORK, DEDICATION AND PERSEVERANCE!

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AP PHOTO



China virus cases stabilize as Italy sees drop in deaths

KEN MORITSUGU

CHINA has extended COVID-19 tests to newly reopened salons amid a drop in cases, while South Korea continues to face new infections after it eased social distancing rules to lift the economy.

In the U.S., Vice President Mike Pence called off a planned campaign bus tour in Florida following a surge in confirmed cases there. Hard-hit Italy, meanwhile, registered the lowest day-to-day tally of COVID-19 deaths Saturday in nearly four months.

No positive cases were found in Beijing's beauty and barber shops in a further sign that the city's recent outbreak has been largely brought under control.

Beijing officials have temporarily shut a huge wholesale food market where the virus spread widely, reclosed schools and locked down some neighborhoods. Anyone leaving Beijing is required to have a negative virus test result within the previous seven days.

Tens of millions of Chinese traveled during the three-day Dragon Boat Festival that ended Saturday, with no outbreaks reported immediately.

The Korea Centers for Disease Control and Prevention said that 40 of the newly reported cases were domestically infected, while 22 others came from over-

seas. The bulk of the local cases were detected in the densely populated Seoul metropolitan area, linked to nightclubs, church services, a huge e-commerce warehouse and low-income workers.

In Hawaii, the city of Honolulu announced that campgrounds will reopen for the first time in three months with limited permits to ensure social distancing. In contrast, Washington Gov. Jay Inslee put a hold on plans to move counties to the fourth phase of his reopening plan as cases continue to increase.

In a further sign of the impact on the U.S. economy, Tyson Foods has announced that 371 employees at its chicken processing plant in the far southwestern corner of Missouri have tested positive for COVID-19.

Pence canceled a planned bus tour in Florida to benefit his and President Donald Trump's reelection, as state health officials on Saturday reported more than 9,500 new cases, surpassing the previous day's total by more than 600 confirmed cases. The figures come as officials move to reclose beaches and discourage bar gatherings.

Kansas, Idaho and Oklahoma were also among U.S. states seeing a sharp rise in case.

While the rise partly reflects expanded testing, experts say there is ample evidence the scourge is making a comeback, including

increasing deaths and hospitalizations in parts of the country and higher percentages of virus tests coming back positive.

According to Italy's Health Ministry data, there were eight deaths of infected patients since Friday, raising the nation's known toll in the pandemic to 34,716.

There were 175 new cases, bringing the overall count of confirmed COVID-19 cases in the country where Europe's outbreak first exploded to 240,136. In a sign the country was emerging from the crisis, fewer than 100 infected patients were occupying ICU beds nationwide for the first time since the very early days of the outbreak.

European leaders were taking no chances, however. German authorities renewed a lockdown in a western region of about 500,000 people in the past week after about 1,300 slaughterhouse workers tested positive for COVID-19.

Serbia's government says Defense Minister Aleksandar Vulin tested positive for the coronavirus. Known for his highly pro-Russian stance, Vulin was part of Serbia's delegation led by President Aleksandar Vucic that attended a Victory Day parade this week in Moscow. Vucic met face-to-face with Russian President Vladimir Putin, but it was not clear whether Vulin did so as well.

Britain's government is expected to scrap a 14-day

quarantine requirement that forced people to self-isolate upon returning home from abroad. India's confirmed coronavirus cases crossed half a million on Saturday with another record 24-hour jump of 18,552 infections.

Egypt has largely reopened. In Cairo, a metropolis of some 20 million people, coffee shops reopened Saturday to receive in-house customers but the smoking of "sheesha" from hookah waterpipes was still on hold.

Deaths in the U.S. are running at about 600 per day, down from a peak of around 2,200 in mid-April. Some experts have expressed doubt that deaths will return to that level because of advances in treatment and because many infections are happening in younger adults, who are more likely than older ones to survive.

The virus is blamed for more than 125,000 deaths and over 2.5 million confirmed infections nationwide in the U.S., by Johns Hopkins' count. But health officials believe the true number of infections is about 10 times higher. Worldwide, the virus has claimed close to a half-million lives with nearly 10 million cases.

The resurgence in the U.S. has drawn concern from abroad. The European Union seems almost certain to bar Americans in the short term from entering the bloc, which is currently drawing up new travel rules, EU diplomats said. **AP**

this day in history



1995 US SHUTTLE DOCKS WITH RUSSIAN SPACE STATION

American and Russian spacecraft have successfully docked in orbit for the first time in 20 years.

The US shuttle Atlantis delivered a relief crew of two cosmonauts to the Russian Mir space station, signalling a new era of space co-operation between the two former Cold War rivals.

The operation to link the craft was led by the commander of the Atlantis, Robert Gibson. Flying over the Mediterranean at 17,500mph, he lined up the Mir in his sights and with barely a shudder the two craft touched.

"We have capture," he said.

After the safety of the spacecraft was confirmed with the pressure between them equalised, Gibson opened the hatch separating them.

Propelling himself through to the Russian craft he stretched out his arm to shake hands with his counterpart.

The symbolic gesture was watched live from Moscow by US Vice President Al Gore, and by the head of NASA Dan Goldin at the Russian control centre.

The crew of the US shuttle moved into the Mir for group photos, before presenting the cosmonauts with gifts of chocolate, fruit and flowers. The Russians gave the Americans gifts of bread and salt, the traditional symbols of welcome.

Mr Gibson said: "After all the training and the preparation it seems hard to believe we're actually there but indeed we are."

The two spacecraft will remain attached for five days, giving the Mir crew time to stock up on fresh water, oxygen and nitrogen. The crews will carry out a range of scientific experiments.

A further six link-ups between the shuttle and Mir are planned, before work on the assembly of an international space station begins in orbit in two years' time.

Courtesy BBC News

IN CONTEXT

After 15 years in space, the Mir space station returned to Earth in March 2001. Over the years, Mir has circled the Earth about 88,000 times, travelling 3.6bn km (2.2bn miles). In many ways, the platform has been humankind's first real home in space, as well as being the pride of the Russian space programme.

MACAU'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

YOUR STARS



Mar. 21-Apr. 19

Commerce is not an ideal thing to be involved in right now, especially if you are interested in selling some of your possessions. Your personal goods will not move as quickly as you think.



Apr. 20-May. 20

There's no going back on this so you will have to summon up your positive attitude once again. Delegating responsibilities will be the best way for you to get through this.



GEMINI
May. 21-Jun. 21

A gift you're given today will require you to call upon all your hidden stores of tolerance. This generous present might not be quite your style, but maybe it is time for you to expand your tastes.



CANCER
Jun. 22-Jul. 22

More than ever, your friends and family are providing you with the inspiration you need to keep yourself motivated and energized. It's time you thanked them all for their support and devotion.



LEO
Jul. 23-Aug. 22

Red tape is sticky stuff, so if you are in the midst of dealing with any type of bureaucracy, beware: You could get stuck in the system. Diligence is your best bet, so keep calling the numbers you have...



VIRGO
Aug. 23-Sep. 22

Give up a little bit of free time today so you can go full steam ahead - this day could bring the completion you've been working so hard for. Plan a sweet and intimate celebration for tonight.



LIBRA
Sep. 23-Oct. 22

Use your tact and charm to get them to re-evaluate their suggestion. Then help them fine-tune it so that it resembles something that can actually come into being.



SCORPIO
Oct. 23-Nov. 21

Why limit yourself? Today offers wonderful experiences for every one of your senses - including your sixth. Take full advantage of every opportunity and keep your eyes and ears wide open.



SAGITTARIUS
Nov. 22-Dec. 21

Another law you should obey is the fact that the more effort you put in, the more rewards you reap - so you may have to trim down your lunch hour if you want to get stuff done!



CAPRICORN
Dec. 22-Jan. 19

Whether or not you are looking for a new romance won't matter to someone who is trying to turn your head. That's why you will have to stay consistent in your reaction to their flattery today.



AQUARIUS
Jan. 20-Feb. 18

The only way that can possibly happen is if you find some silver lining in that cloud. Move forward, and leave the wrongdoers in your past where they belong.



PISCES
Feb. 19-Mar. 20

As focused as a laser, your vision will be directed solely at one goal. But to make real progress, try the indirect approach. If it's a romantic objective, be sure not to come on too strong.

The Born Loser by Chip Sansom



SUDOKU

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

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

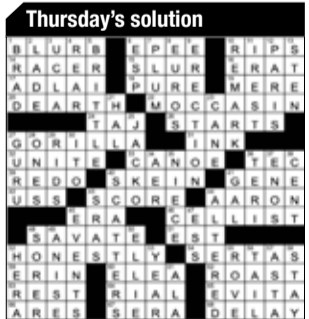
WEATHER

	MIN	MAX	CONDITION
CHINA			
Beijing	22	30	thundershower
Harbin	18	27	thundershower
Tianjin	23	29	overcast
Urumqi	12	19	moderate rain
Xi'an	20	33	clear
Lhasa	13	25	shower
Chengdu	23	35	cloudy
Chongqing	25	33	cloudy
Kunming	19	29	cloudy
Nanjing	26	28	shower
Shanghai	25	29	moderate rain
Wuhan	24	29	drizzle
Hangzhou	26	32	moderate rain
Taipei	26	31	drizzle
Guangzhou	28	35	cloudy
Hong Kong	28	32	cloudy
WORLD			
Moscow	13	23	drizzle
Frankfurt	14	19	overcast
Paris	14	21	drizzle
London	12	19	clear
New York	22	27	drizzle

CROSSWORDS

ACROSS: 1- Pinnacle; 5- Old Testament book; 10- "A Jug of Wine..." poet; 14- Regretted; 15- Signed; 16- Red or white, in the blood; 17- "Judith" composer; 18- Holmes's creator; 19- Hats; 20- Brief advertisement; 22- Divided, anatomically; 24- To a smaller extent; 27- Hwys.; 28- Wingless; 32- Person of exceptional holiness; 35- Yank's foe; 36- Must, informally; 38- Lion sounds; 40- Image; 42- Commerce; 44- Flood survivor; 45- Giver; 47- Continental identity of a Chinese person; 49- Actress Farrow; 50- Penultimate round; 52- By means of this; 54- Wall St. debuts; 56- Radius neighbor; 57- Earthworm; 60- Actress Barkin; 64- Neighborhood; 65- Old-womanish; 68- Network point; 69- Move suddenly; 70- Heals; 71- Ton, for one; 72- Moisturizer ingredient; 73- Adlai's running mate; 74- Connections;

DOWN: 1- Graceful horse; 2- Coil; 3- Computer list; 4- English Channel swimmer Gertrude; 5- Secreted; 6- Lennon's love; 7- The ___ the limit; 8- Conger catcher; 9- Experts; 10- Particular time; 11- Crux; 12- Mont Blanc, par exemple; 13- Literary monogram; 21- Titanic's undoing; 23- Muscle injury; 25- Chimney residue; 26- Collection of Hindu aphorisms; 28- Dry and waterless; 29- Rio Grande feeder; 30- Steak order; 31- Hiding place; 33- Model Campbell; 34- Quality; 37- Old French expression meaning "goodbye"; 39- He ran from Iran; 41- Appoint; 43- British nobleman; 46- Ready for plucking; 48- Branta sandvicensis; 51- Comfort in misfortune; 53- Edible nut; 55- Nasal cavity; 57- Sea east of the Caspian; 58- Emperor of Rome 54-68; 59- Gossip; 61- Burt's ex; 62- Pop singer Brickell; 63- Pulls in; 64- Abbr. on a toothpaste box; 66- Bruce ___ was a famous kung-fu movie star; 67- Double curve;



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



<p>FOR SALE</p> <p>Hellene Gardens, Coloane HK\$15,800,000 2,530 ft² 3 1/2 2 1/2</p>	<p>FOR RENT</p> <p>One Central, Macau- Lovely 2 bedroom \$25,000/mth 1,269 ft² 2 1/2 2 1/2</p>	<p>FOR SALE</p> <p>[Taipa] Hoi Wan Garden 2 1/2 1 1/2 900 ft² \$4,900,000 (ref: 19106003)</p> <p>[Taipa] Taipa Village (2 units) 4 1/2 2 1/2 1,404 ft² \$8,380,000 (ref: 19096006)</p> <p>[Macau] Seaview Garden 3 1/2 2 1/2 1,420 ft² \$10,900,000 (ref: 20016004)</p> <p>[Coloane] Large 3/4 bedroom 2 1/2 3 1/2 2 1/2 2,530 ft² \$12,980,000 (ref: 19096000)</p>	<p>FOR RENT</p> <p>[Taipa] Delightful 1 Bed 1 1/2 1 1/2 820 ft² \$9,500/mth (ref: 20051001)</p> <p>[Taipa] Old Taipa Village Apartment 2 1/2 1 1/2 600 ft² \$9,900/mth (ref: n/a)</p> <p>[Taipa] Great View Apartment 4 1/2 2 1/2 2,060 ft² \$28,000/mth (ref: 20031001)</p> <p>[Taipa] Private house 2 1/2 3 1/2 3 1/2 4,266 ft² \$45,000/mth (ref: 19055006ST)</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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Property of the Week



FOR SALE


Hellene Gardens, Coloane
HK\$15,800,000 2,530 ft² 3 2 2

This apartment feels more like a villa with outside areas off each room, been beautifully renovated and decorated by the current owner. Stunning terraces wrap around three quarters of the apartment, roughly 1250 sq ft of outdoor space. The kitchen is huge with a wonderful island for prepping and entertaining, the area of the kitchen incorporates the original store room, maids room and kitchen. The master bedroom has been made larger by knocking through the fourth bedroom, which can easily be rebuilt again. Air conditioning throughout, mains gas, monthly bills are relatively low as the apartment is well protected keeping it cool in summer and warm in winter. Open plan living dining area have access to front and rear terraces. Two car parks available, one to be sold with apartment, the other can be sold separately. Viewings can be arranged anytime.




SCAN ME


Property Hotlist



FOR SALE


Chun Fok, Taipa Village
\$8,998,000
834 ft²
2 2


 SCAN ME



FOR SALE


Apartment in Historical Centre
\$4,580,000
840 ft²
2 1


 SCAN ME



FOR RENT


One Central, Macau
Lovely 2 bedroom
\$25,000/mth
1,269 ft²
2 2

 SCAN ME



FOR RENT

Nova City, Taipa
Great family home
\$22,000/mth
2,503 ft²
4 3 1

 SCAN ME

More Listings

For Sale			For Rent		
[Macau]	Retail space, Areia Preta	170 ft ² \$3,200,000 (ref: 19096003)	[Taipa]	Central Taipa 1 Bed	1 1 820 ft ² \$9,500/mth (ref: 20051001)
[Taipa]	Hoi Wan Garden	2 1 900 ft ² \$4,900,000 (ref: 19106003)	[Taipa]	Old Taipa Village Apartment	2 1 600 ft ² \$9,900/mth (ref: n/a)
[Taipa]	Taipa Village (2 units)	4 2 1,404 ft ² \$8,380,000 (ref: 19096006)	[Coloane]	Grand Coloane Resort	1 1 710 ft ² \$13,200/mth (ref: 20021002)
[Macau]	Seaview Garden	3 2 1,420 ft ² \$10,900,000 (ref: 20016004)	[Taipa]	Great View Apartment	4 2 2,060 ft ² \$28,000/mth (ref: 20031001)
[Coloane]	Large 3 bedroom	2 3 2,530 ft ² \$12,980,000 (ref: 19096000)	[Taipa]	Private house	2 3 4,266 ft ² \$45,000/mth (ref: 19055006ST)

Recent Movements

- Sold**
Nova City, 3 bed, 2 bath
- Sold**
Hellene Gardens, Carnation Court
- Rented**
Vai Fung Triplex, 2 bed, 2 bath

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-  Macau Bats Junior Rugby Team
-  Macau Golf Masters

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REAL ESTATE

Fleeing Chinese buyers leave Hong Kong's office market lifeless

HONG Kong's distinctive Lippo Centre - twin glass-fronted octagonal towers whose facade some say resembles koala bears climbing a tree - has long been a gauge for the health of the world's most expensive office market.

Right now, it's barely showing a pulse.

In a market where buying and selling individual floors, or even just suites in a building, can lead to quick profits, just three deals have been done in the Lippo Centre this year, with the average price dropping 17% from a year earlier. The number of deals is down from as many as 18 in the first half of 2017 - the most active of recent years.

There's no shortage of reasons for the downturn. Hong Kong is in its deepest economic funk on record as last year's investment-chilling anti-government protests were followed by the coronavirus shutdowns. Now disquiet over China's national security laws has rattled the city anew, stoking concern it will lose its status as a regional financial hub and drawcard for expats.

"It's been very quiet," said Daniel Siu, a sales director at Centaline Property Agency Ltd. whose district covers Admiralty where the Lippo Centre is located. "When everything is uncertain both politically and economically,

RENATO MARQUES



buyers are very conservative."

The dearth of activity augurs poorly for the broader office market, where these strata-title transactions for a portion of a building typically account for about 40% of all deals by value. Office valuations in the city may slump as much as 20% this year, according to Jones Lang LaSalle Inc.

Prices have already fallen for the few deals in the Lippo Centre, with the average price at

HKD27,380 (\$3,533) per square foot, data from Midland Holdings Ltd. show.

With vacancy rates in premium buildings in Hong's Kong Central hub reaching a 12-year high of 5% in May, according to JLL, investors are also wary of buying office space when there's no guarantee they will find a tenant.

The Lippo Centre's strata-title structure, which allows individuals to own part of a property, along with its prime location and

long-term tenants including the Taiwanese, Mongolian and Brunei embassies, make it popular with property speculators. They can play the market without having to put together multi-billion dollar deals needed to buy entire buildings.

Yvonne Lui, the former girlfriend of tycoon Joseph Lau, turned a HK\$55 million (\$7 million) profit in 2018 by flipping two office units in the Lippo Centre less than two years after buying them,

local media reported at the time.

The lack of transactions in the Lippo Centre this year is being replicated across the market. The city is set for the lowest strata-title transactions by both value and volume since the data was first collated in 2007, according to Real Capital Analytics.

A key reason for the downturn is the retreat of mainland Chinese investors, who have kept away since anti-government protests broke out more than a year ago, said Benjamin Chow, an analyst at Real Capital Analytics. Chinese buyers had been a major force behind the market's run-up in 2018, he said.

"Following the extended political unrest, Hong Kong's strata office market has quietened down dramatically," Chow said. "Part of this is due to the withdrawal of cross-border investors, including those from mainland China."

The last strata office investment in Hong Kong by an overseas investor was struck just over a year ago, he added. **MDT/BLOOMBERG**

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OPINION

World Views

Virginia Postrel, Bloomberg

MAKE MASKS ACCESSORIES,
NOT ANNOYANCES

Why all the fuss about masks? Why won't people just wear them?

"Masking has become controversial. It shouldn't be," former Food and Drug Administration Commissioner Scott Gottlieb said on "Face the Nation." To health experts, masks seem like a simple, apolitical precaution. In medical jargon, they're personal protective equipment, or PPE, like surgeons' gowns, gloves and face screens. Nobody thinks a doctor, nurse or emergency medical technician is a coward for gearing up.

On the streets of everyday life, however, masks are something more. They aren't like safety glasses, life preserver vests, or seatbelts — special protection for a limited task in a specialized environment.

Masks are clothing. They cover your body and change how you appear to the world.

Once you understand masks as clothing, the controversy becomes entirely predictable. Clothes don't just protect us from the elements. They aren't purely functional. They provide pleasure and convey meaning. They tell the world, "I like that" and "I'm like that." They help us stand out as individuals and fit in with our tribe.

Choosing your own clothes is a sign of autonomy and power. From toddlers to teens, kids fight their parents over what they wear. Iranian women brave the morality police by skirting veil requirements. School dress codes generate controversy after controversy.

From trouser-wearing feminists in the 1970s to calico prohibition in the 17th century, fashion history is full of people defying clothing regulation to assert their identities or indulge their tastes. The history of sumptuary laws, which banned luxury clothing or limited it to certain classes, is largely the story of people finding ways around the restrictions.

In short, people hate being told what they must or cannot wear. That's as true for masks as it is for other garments.

The good news is that people don't wear clothes because it's illegal not to (even though it is). They wear clothes to meet social expectations, express who they are, and add beauty, comfort and style to their everyday lives. To encourage mask-wearing, we need to tap into those instincts.

Up to now, the primary weapon aside from legal requirements (and fear of Covid-19) has been shame. But, as epidemiologist Julia Marcus writes in the Atlantic, "trying to shame people into wearing condoms didn't work — and it won't work for masks either." Lecturing people about their clothing choices just makes them mad. Instead, Los Angeles Times writer Adam Tschorn suggests humorous public service ads featuring "Darth Vader, Bane from 'The Dark Knight Rises' and a cadre of Lucha Libre wrestlers playing it tough while urging guys to put on their own masks."

Anthony Fauci had the right idea when he wore a Washington Nationals mask at a congressional hearing last week. He demonstrated that masks don't have to be boring. They can express our passions. Instead of annoyances, they can be accessories.

Some people are already treating them that way. Black Lives Matter protesters have used "I Can't Breathe" masks to amplify their message. On the victory stand at Talladega Superspeedway on Monday, Nascar driver Ryan Blaney wore a design featuring race car images, and at an earlier race he displayed Star Wars imagery, including a prominent Darth Vader mask. You can buy Trump 2020 masks, Make America Great Again designs, and masks that will make your lower face look like the president's. (Joe Biden and Barack and Michelle Obama masks are also available.) You can buy masks expressing your hatred of masks, media and government in words that won't get past my editors.

As someone who was wearing a mask back in March, when they were taboo signs of selfishness, I'm entirely sympathetic to efforts to encourage their use. But those efforts will succeed only if they acknowledge that people cherish the freedom to choose what to wear and that masks are clothes. [Abridged]

Three people died and 12 are missing after overnight rainstorms in southwestern China, authorities said Saturday.

Two vehicles fell into a river, killing two people and leaving three others unaccounted for, according to the Mianning county government in Sichuan province.

Another person was killed and nine more are missing in Yihai township, the county said in a post on its social media account. Mianning is about 280 kilometers (175 miles) southwest of Chengdu, the capital of Sichuan.

About 7,500 people have been evacuated from their homes.

More than 20 people have died this year in seasonal rains in southern China that swell rivers and flood towns and agricultural fields.

China's worst floods in recent years were in 1998, when more than 2,000 people died and almost 3 million homes were destroyed.

More heavy rain was forecast for several provinces, including Sichuan, Guizhou, Hunan, Shaanxi, Henan and Hubei, China's official Xinhua News Agency said.

SUMMER MAY DECIDE
FATE OF LEADING SHOTS
IN VACCINE RACE



AP PHOTO

PEOPLE on six continents already are getting jabs in the arm as the race for a COVID-19 vaccine enters a defining summer, with even bigger studies poised to prove if any shot really works - and maybe offer a reality check.

Already British and Chinese researchers are chasing the coronavirus beyond their borders, testing potential vaccines in Brazil and the United Arab Emirates because there are too few new infections at home to get clear answers.

The U.S. is set to open the largest trials - 30,000 people to test a government-created shot starting in July, followed about a month later with another 30,000 expected to test a British one.

Those likely will be divided among Americans and volunteers in other countries such as Brazil or South Africa, Dr. Anthony Fauci of the National Institutes of Health told The Associated Press. While he's optimistic, "we've been burned before," Fauci cautioned.

Multiple successes, in multiple parts of the world, are vital.

"This isn't a race of who gets there first. This is, get as many approved, safe and effective vaccines as you possibly

can," Fauci said.

Vaccine experts say it's time to set public expectations. Many scientists don't expect a coronavirus vaccine to be nearly as protective as the measles shot.

If the best COVID-19 vaccine is only 50% effective, "that's still to me a great vaccine," said Dr. Drew Weissman of the University of Pennsylvania.

"We need to start having this conversation now," so people won't be surprised, he added.

And for all the government promises of stockpiling doses in hopes of starting vaccinations by year's end, here's the catch: Even if a shot pans out - and it's one that your country stockpiled - only some high-risk people, such as essential workers, go to the front of a very long line.

"Will you and I get vaccinated this year? No way," said Duke University health economist David Ridley.

Vaccines train the body to rapidly recognize and fend off an invading germ. About 15 experimental COVID-19 vaccines are in various stages of human studies worldwide.

And while there's no guarantee any will pan out, moving three different kinds into final testing offers better odds -

especially since scientists don't yet know just how strong an immune reaction the shots must spark to protect.

Measuring that with the first proven vaccine will "really help us understand for all the other vaccines in development, do they also have a chance?" said Oxford University lead researcher Sarah Gilbert.

Only China is pushing out "inactivated" vaccines, made by growing the new coronavirus and killing it. Vaccines by Sinovac Biotech and SinoPharm use that old-fashioned technology, which requires high-security labs to produce but is dependable, the way polio shots and some flu vaccines are made.

Most other vaccines in the pipeline target not the whole germ but a key piece - the "spike" protein that studs the surface of the coronavirus and helps it invade human cells. Leading candidates use new technologies that make shots faster to produce but haven't yet been proven in people.

Because each vaccine works differently, "which population group it will protect, we don't know yet," said Dr. Mariangela Simao of the World Health Organization, which is advising countries on how to choose. MDT/AP

Iran An explosion that rattled Iran's capital came from an area in its eastern mountains that analysts believe hides an underground tunnel system and missile production sites, satellite photographs showed Saturday.



AP PHOTO

Egypt has lifted many restrictions put in place against the coronavirus pandemic, reopening cafes, clubs, gyms and theaters after more than three months of closure, despite a continued upward trend in new infections.

Russia A metallurgical company admitted yesterday that it improperly pumped wastewater into the Arctic tundra and that it has suspended the responsible employees.



AP PHOTO

Germany Chancellor Angela Merkel says her country can afford to take more debt to help fund an unprecedented economic recovery program for the European Union, because it's in Germany's own interest to see the bloc thrive.

France was holding the second round of municipal elections in 5,000 towns and cities yesterday that got postponed due to the coronavirus outbreak, amid lingering worries about the pandemic and anger at how French President Emmanuel Macron's government handled it.

Brazil Two members of the Yanomami ethnic group in Brazil's Amazon rainforest were shot to death by illegal gold prospectors inside the Indigenous community's territory, according to reports from the group. Their bodies were left in the forest, in accordance with the traditions of the Yanomami.