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Novel Coronavirus Response and Coordination Centre

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SHEN BEILI PROMOTED TO VICE-MINISTER AFTER HEADING CHINA'S FOREIGN MINISTRY COMMISSION IN MACAO FOR TWO YEARS

PSP CHIEF SAYS POLICE ARE NOT BANNING MORE DEMONSTRATIONS THIS YEAR

A RESIDENT BROKE HER MANDATORY QUARANTINE BY LEAVING HER DESIGNATED ROOM AND ATTEMPTING TO ACCESS ANOTHER FLOOR OF THE HOTEL

AP PHOTO



India reported more than 50,000 cases for the first time in 24 hours yesterday, taking the national total to 1,583,792. The number of recoveries from the coronavirus also crossed 1 million as the recovery rate of 64.4% continues to improve. The Health Ministry reported another 775 deaths, driving total fatalities to 34,968. India has the world's third-highest caseload after the United States and Brazil.

Australia's coronavirus hot spot, Victoria state, will make masks compulsory statewide after reporting a record 723 new cases yesterday. Masks have been mandatory in the state capital, Melbourne, and a neighboring semi-rural district for the past week. Victoria Premier Daniel Andrews said the measure will be extended starting Sunday.

AP PHOTO



China yesterday reported another 105 confirmed cases of COVID-19, almost all of them in Xinjiang. The northwestern region accounted for 96 of the cases, with five others in the northeastern province of Liaoning and one in Beijing. The remaining three were brought by Chinese travelers from overseas.

China is stepping up testing for COVID-19 in an attempt to get a handle on new outbreaks that have defied the country's considerable success in containing the coronavirus. In the northeastern city of Dalian, authorities issued an open letter urging all 5.6 million residents to get tested following consecutive days of new cases. As of midnight Wednesday, samples had been collected from more than 4 million people, and a second round of tests is being launched in high-risk areas.

More on backpage

HONG KONG ENDING

HKSAR gov't disqualifies 12 pro-democracy nominees from running for LegCo

AP PHOTO



'AN HONEST MAN' PUBLIC SERVANT'S LOBBYIST RITA SANTOS DEFENDS CHANG CHARACTER



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BLOOMBERG



WONG'S OFFICE REJECTS CLAIMS THAT JHO LOW IS IN TOWN

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LYNZY VALLES

SECURITY OFFICE REJECTS CLAIMS THAT JHO LOW IS IN TOWN

THE Office of the Secretary for Security has refuted the claims of Malaysian authorities that fugitive businessman Jho Taek Low, also known as Jho Low, is currently in the SAR. The renewed claims come as Malaysia continues to seek the financier of the state's 1MDB financial scandal, who has eluded law enforcement since at least 2016.

In a statement released yesterday, the Office reiterated that in 2018, the Macau Sub-Bureau of the China National Central Bureau of INTERPOL received a request from Malaysian authorities on the suspicion that he might be in the city. However, Secretary for Security Wong Sio Chak later told the public that the suspect was not in Macau.

The Office then clarified that from 2018 to present, the Malaysian government has not made any communication to local authorities, nor has it made any request regarding the fugitive.

"The Malaysian Police, contrary to the rules and practices in the scope of international police cooperation, unilaterally disclosed that Low XX is in Macau, information that does not correspond to the truth," the statement said.

"It should be noted that the Macau Police always complies with the law and procedures [...] and in accordance with the principles of equality, reciprocity and mutual respect with regard to the development of

effective police cooperation with all countries and regions," it added.

Meanwhile, the Chinese Embassy in Malaysia rejected the accusations of the Malaysian authorities, stating that the claims were "groundless and unacceptable."

It stressed that the position of the Chinese government on combating crime is "consistent and clear-cut," adding that its police had meticulously followed and investigated "each and every relevant clue we received from Malaysian police, in a sincere and responsible manner."

"Unfortunately, no relevant individual was found, and the Malaysian side has been informed accordingly. [...] China does not and will never shelter foreign criminals," the embassy noted, adding that China would "continue to render support and assistance to further investigations on the case, once it receives further information from the Malaysian side."

On Wednesday, Malaysian authorities said they were confident that the most wanted man on their radar was still hiding in Macau. Malaysia's Inspector-General of Police, Tan Sri Abdul Hamid Bador, reportedly felt that the fugitive was being protected by Beijing, noting that it is "as if the Chinese government was being

insincere" in the joint operation with its counterpart to extradite the wanted businessman. "Efforts to bring Jho Low home have been ongoing for a long time, however, until now, there have not been any convincing responses from the republic," he said, referring to China.

Back in February, it was believed that the fugitive was active in Wuhan.

Earlier this year, the 1MDB scandal suspect said he was keen to return to Malaysia to face charges, but only if the political climate was right.

"I am looking forward to the day when the political climate in Malaysia is such that I feel safe enough to return home and the rule of law will be respected so that the facts can be presented, and I can vigorously defend myself," he said via email to The Straits Times.

On Tuesday, a Malaysian court sentenced former Prime Minister Najib Razak to 12 years in prison after finding him guilty in the first of several corruption trials linked to the multibillion-dollar looting of the 1MDB state investment fund that brought down his government two years ago.

The judge said the defense's argument that Najib, as prime minister, was duped by rogue bankers led by Jho Low was "too far-fetched," as the two had a close relationship.



Fugitive businessman Jho Low

Resident breaks quarantine to visit another hotel room

A resident who recently arrived in Macau broke her mandatory quarantine on Tuesday by leaving her designated room without permission and attempting to access another floor of the hotel. The hotel reported the breach to an officer of the Public Security Police Force, who was on duty at the facility at the time.

At about 7 p.m. on Tuesday, a resident undergoing medical observation slipped past a security guard and

left her room without permission in order to access another hotel room on a different floor. She was caught by another security guard on patrol, who immediately escorted the woman back to her room.

The Macao Government Tourism Office (MGTO) condemned the act in a statement issued yesterday. It reminded the hotel to inform all lodgers once again that they must abide by the provisions of the Law on the Pre-

vention, Control and Treatment of Infectious Diseases, which requires those under medical observation to abide by the rules of quarantine.

Those who violate the law may face criminal charges, for which the penalty is a prison term of up to six months or a fine of up to 60 days.

According to the MGTO, the person who left the room has signed a statement of declaration to say she was well-informed of the above regulation. **DB**

SHEN BEILI PROMOTED TO INTERNATIONAL LIAISON DEPARTMENT OF CPC

COMMISSIONER of the Chinese Foreign Ministry in the Macao SAR, Shen Beili, is set to leave her position and become the Deputy Head of the International Liaison Department of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China.

Appointed to her position in Macau in July 2018, the Commissioner's Office has implemented policies desig-

ned to "benefit Macau [and] strengthen Macau residents' national pride and confidence," the commissioner previously said in an interview with Xinhua.

With the new appointment, Shen will lead an agency responsible for conducting relations with foreign political parties, think tanks and academics.

During her post in Macau, Shen stressed that

under the guidance of the country's overall foreign relations, "Macau's external exchanges have maintained a good momentum of continuous expansion, yielding great achievements."

Born in Shanghai in 1963, the newly promoted official was director-general and assistant minister of the Beijing-based department before her posting to Macau. **LV**

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

Rosário provides lawmakers with mid-year update to public works

JULIE ZHU

THE Secretary for Transport and Public Works, Raimundo Arrais do Rosário, was at yesterday's Legislative Assembly plenary meeting to update lawmakers on various public works issues.

At the plenary meeting of the AL, lawmakers including Ng Kuok Cheong, Si Ka Lon, Mak Soi Kun and Zheng Anting discussed their concerns relating to the public works in front of the government representatives.

Major topics included Macau's urban master plan, natural gas supply, the 5G situation, and environment around Ilha Verde. Secretary Rosário and other government officials responded to the questions of lawmakers.

Regarding land and housing issues, Rosário's sector expects to launch a public consultation on the Macau master urban plan in either September or October. Before the city has an established urban master plan, the local government will not halt the land plot contract outsourcing procedures, meaning that stakeholders of the construction sector will always be able to build projects. New Urban Zone A will have 4,000 units of housing supplied to the private market. The Secretary said that the price of these houses is undecided at present.

Following this was the topic of improvements to the living conditions of Ilha Verde, specifically in relation to pollution caused by car maintenance



services. Currently, Macau has 509 vehicle maintenance shops. Responding to lawmaker Si Ka Lon's proposal to construct a specific building to group all car maintenance service suppliers within the same establishment, the local government disagreed, questioning the financial burden such a project would entail.

Ilha Verde, the most populated area in the entirety of Macau, is unlikely to have any new housing projects, according to Rosário. The Secretary conceded that the Ilha Verde area needs wider streets for pedestrians and, in order to meet such demands, Rosário is considering the abolition of some on-road motorbike parking spaces and the remodeling of the concerned street segments for pedestrians, but only if the affected communities endorse the idea.

In addition to land and space matters, many lawmakers expressed their opinions on 5G development. As of yesterday, local

telecommunication service supplier CTM has entered the last phase of the 5G launch. Once the SAR government outsources the 5G license, the company will start spreading the network.

The land authority is inclined to reserve spaces on the New Urban Zone A and Wai Long public housing land plots to set up 5G base stations. Each tower of these two public housing projects will have a design for the facility. The Secretary remarked that a good 5G network requires the proper positioning of base stations and that some households may refuse to have such facilities near their properties. This difficulty occurred and still exists in regards to the 4G development across town.

Another matter concerns the natural gas supply. Currently, the local government is able to supply natural gas to Taipa and Coloane. Due to the population density and road conditions on the Macau Peninsula, the

authority would find it hard to construct a natural gas pipeline on this side of the city. A natural gas supply will be delivered for the future New Urban Zone A, according to the government.

In addition to the prior projects, the Light Rapid Transit was also on the agenda. Earlier this week, the Infrastructure Development Office sent an invitation to tender for the construction contract for the LRT Seac Pai Van Line. Once the opening of bids is completed, the public will learn the deadlines of the completion of this Coloane railway facility.

Regarding the Hengqin component, the Secretary said that this coming December, when he attends another AL plenary meeting, he will reveal more details related to the Hengqin LRT extension. The deadline for the Barra section remains 2023.

The last and most pivotal aspect of Macau's public works concerned the city's disposal and recycling processes. Lawmakers Chan Hong and Agnes Lam are worried about the awareness of waste classification and recycling in Macau.

Rosário agreed with the two lawmakers' comments about the lack of recycling awareness.

He also said that the government is suspending services at the Taipa landfill facility in the upcoming week. After this seven-day rest period, the authority will also reduce the volume of waste acceptance at this facility due to its capacity. As the Secretary confessed, the capacity is "not enough" to cope with the amount of waste.

DSES INVITES MACAU STUDENTS ABROAD TO REGISTER FOR FACEMASKS

Macau students pursuing higher education abroad can register for the new round of mask supply, which is set to begin July 31. The students can register for the new round on the Higher Education Bureau's (DSES) website between July 31 and August 5. They must nominate a representative to collect their facemasks for them. Students who have already enrolled in the past do not need to submit their basic personal data again or upload the certificate of attendance, and may simply select the date and time for the prior appointment of the mask purchase. The DSES will send a confirmation email to the registered student and a confirmation message to its representative, after verification of the data. The point of sale of masks is now at the Higher Education Students Center located on Avenida Conselheiro Ferreira de Almeida.

NEW MOTOR VEHICLE REGISTRATIONS RISE 7.4% IN FIRST HALF OF 2020

The number of newly registered motor vehicles rose by 7.4% in year-on-year terms in the first half of 2020, according to data released yesterday by the Statistics and Census Service. A total of 5,293 vehicles were newly registered in the first half of the year, with just over 1,000 registrations in June alone. Meanwhile, in the first six months of the year, there were 4,241 road traffic accidents, involving 1,515 victims and 3 fatalities. Cross-border vehicular traffic dropped by 65.1% year-on-year to 908,000 trips, while flight movements declined 74.3% year-on-year to just 9,161 trips and air cargo reduced by 28.1% to 13,215 tonnes.

STUDY FINDS RESIDENTS SEE THEMSELVES AS MACANESE AND CHINESE

The University of Macau has released the results of a five-year study on the city's social development based on a large-scale household survey. The survey covered a variety of topics, including social stratification, migration, family transformation, social identity, physical and mental health, values and norms, addiction and crime, and the influences of gaming and tourism. The research team drew a sample of more than 2,600 households and interviewed over 3,500 Macau residents aged 16 or above in the households. According to the UM, the study yielded several findings. Firstly, Macau is overall a prosperous and wealthy society with stable families. Secondly, a high percentage of Macau residents is composed of migrants and migrant workers, who mostly came from mainland China to reunite with their families or to seek employment. Thirdly, multiculturalism is prevalent in the faith and value systems among Macau residents. Finally, Macau residents report a strong identification with mainland China. Most of them see themselves as both Macanese and Chinese, the study found.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

PSP chief says police not banning more demonstrations this year

JULIE ZHU

THE Commissioner of the Public Security Police Force has defended his bureau's decision to ban several protests this year, adding that all decisions were made according to the law.

Yesterday, at the Legislative Assembly plenary meeting, lawmaker Sulu Sou spoke about

the police decision to ban the June 4 memorial from taking place this year in Senado Square.

On the night of June 4, PSP officers took two individuals from Senado Square to a police station for interrogation because of their presence at the location.

Sou worries that the police authority has been narrowing the scope of Macau people's

civil rights to demonstrate and form assemblies. Sou also questioned the police authority's double standards towards two different gatherings. Also in June, a group of 40 participants formally marched from the Macau Science Museum, passing by the Macau Tower, Barra area, Iao Han and more places, spreading their message.

A police authority representative responded to Sou, saying that, between January and June, the PSP received 308 notifications about demonstrations and assemblies, 11 of which were banned.

PSP director Ng Kam Wa denied an increasing trend in taking the decision to ban any protests. Ng said the PSP carried out law enforcement

in accordance with the law.

Regarding the gathering in support of Hong Kong's national security law, Ng said that the PSP believes that the assembly violated the city's demonstration law and that the department has already prosecuted the concerned individuals.

Despite Ng's efforts to defend the legitimacy of the PSP's decisions, lawmaker Ng Kuok Cheong commented that the police department "deprived citizens of their human rights" and "distorted" the meaning of the city's demonstration law.

MACAU'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

HONG KONG'S DOLLAR PEG IS 'UNASSAILABLE', SAYS BANKING EXEC

STANDARD Chartered Plc Chief Executive Officer Bill Winters said Hong Kong dollar's peg to the greenback is "unassailable" at a time when the U.S. has threatened action against China for imposing a national security law on the former British colony.

"The Hong Kong peg is extremely well-supported with monetary reserves in Hong Kong," Winters said in an interview yesterday with Bloomberg. "Attempts to undermine Hong Kong I'm afraid would have some pretty deleterious effects on the financial system more broadly and it's hard to see any policy maker in the world thinking that's a good thing to do anytime, but particularly now, during a pandemic."

The Hong Kong dollar is pegged to the U.S. dollar in a band that ranges between 7.75 and 7.85 to the U.S. dollar. In turn, Macau's pataca is fixed to the Hong Kong dollar at an exchange rate of 1.03. As the Hong Kong dollar is pegged to the greenback, both special administrative regions essentially import U.S. monetary policy.



Hong Kong's linked exchange rate system is supported by foreign reserves of more than \$440 billion, according to its de facto central bank. The currency is also trading near the strongest it can be and the city has sold billions of local dollars since April to stop it from strengthening further.

U.S. President Donald Trump decided against moving to undermine the Hong Kong dollar's peg after aides in his administration weighed the possibility of limiting Hong Kong banks' access to the greenback as a way

of striking back at Beijing. Those against the move were concerned that it would be difficult to implement and could end up hurting the U.S., people familiar with the matter said, according to Bloomberg.

Still, executives at HSBC Holdings Plc have begun wargaming potential disruptions to the Hong Kong dollar peg, as the worsening political situation endangers its appeal, people familiar with the matter have said.

Standard Chartered and HSBC both count Hong Kong as their largest market and are two of the three note-issuing banks in the city.

"Relations between the U.S. and China remain highly charged, driven by both economic and political considerations," Standard Chartered Chairman Jose Vinals said in its earnings statement yesterday. "We do not expect an easy or quick resolution. We do believe, however, that Hong Kong will continue to play a key role as an international financial hub." **MDT/BLOOMBERG**

COVID-19 MUST SCIENTISTS REPORT BREAKTHROUGH IN VACCINE TESTING

A research team involving scientists from the Macau University of Science and Technology (MUST) has announced a breakthrough in their mission to develop a vaccine for Covid-19.

Led by Professor Zhang Kang from MUST's Faculty of Medicine, the team consists of scientists from both mainland China and Hong Kong.

This study has evaluated the potential of a candidate vaccine based on the receptor-binding domain (RBD) of SARS-CoV-2.

The paper points out that the vaccine had afforded vaccinated animals, including monkeys, potent and complete protection from the virus. There is no evidence of antibody-dependent enhancement or acceleration of pneumonia in mice or monkeys that received the vaccine, and none developed any evidence of pneumonia.

As the main corresponding author of this paper, Professor Zhang said that "our initial thinking when designing our vaccine in January 2020 was to use the smallest part of the S protein

so it produces the best vaccination effect but has the least potential side effects, such as an antibody-dependent enhancement complication."

"Therefore, we painstakingly made several vaccine candidates and tested each of them and concluded that RBD is the best candidate," said Zhang. "In hindsight, that seems obvious now, but back in January 2020, when everyone else was racing ahead with vaccine production, it was a hard decision. We are now glad we did not rush and made the right decision before moving forward."

According to the research team, there are more than one hundred Covid-19 vaccines under development in the world, but they are facing arduous challenges in terms of efficacy, side effects and production.

The MUST-led team believes that the research will provide a viable solution in the world's fight against Covid-19.

However, the efficacy of the vaccine needs to be evaluated and validated in human clinical trials, which will begin shortly. **JZ**

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SPORTS BUREAU UNAWARE OF RUMORED PACQUIAO MATCH IN MACAU

THE Macau Sports Bureau told the Times yesterday that it is not aware of any plan to offer legendary Philippines boxer Manny Pacquiao a "lucrative exhibition match" deal in Macau, as the Manila Bulletin is reporting.

The Philippine media outlet cited an anonymous source who said that an unnamed group in the Macau SAR close to the government was planning to reach out to Pacquiao about an event before the end of the year.

It said that the group was aware of an earlier deal signed by Pacquiao that would "pit the fighting senator against a Japanese boxer in a three-round exhibition match in Papua New Guinea."

"Manny Pacquiao already agreed and signed that contract last February. He was supposed to be paid \$6 million for the exhibition match," the unnamed source told the media outlet, before adding it had been scrapped after the pandemic broke out.

"The group initially



wanted to stage a marquee card with Pacquiao as the main event, but it's too costly. But when they learned that Pacquiao was willing to be part of an exhibition event, that made the group talk about preparing an offer," the source said.

According to the Manila Bulletin, the Philippines' largest English language newspaper, the group is reportedly linked with the Macau government. The newspaper said the aim is to develop sports in the region and the organizer sees a Pacquiao event as a potential Kickstarter for this objective.

However, the Macau

Sports Bureau told the Times that it is not aware of any upcoming event that has links with the boxing champion.

"The Sports Bureau is not aware of the mentioned boxing match involving Manny Pacquiao. In addition, the organization of boxing events is currently not part of the planning of the Sports Bureau for [the] year 2020."

The Filipino icon fought twice in Macau in 2013 and 2014, beating Mexican-American Brandon Rios in a regional title bout and defending his world welterweight crown against Chris Algieri respectively.

DB/LV

CARING FOR THE COMMUNITY: MELCO PROMOTES LOCAL TALENT DEVELOPMENT AND VOLUNTEERISM THROUGH 'SIMPLE ACTS OF KINDNESS'



MELCO Resorts & Entertainment's fundamental philosophy of giving back to the community it serves is realized through the promotion and implementation of its dynamic and innovative Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) strategies. Through ongoing and diversified CSR projects with the help of trusted local charity and association partners, Melco is committed to impacting positive change for the community and contributing to Macau's better and brighter future.



TALENT DEVELOPMENT

Melco is showing no signs of letting the recent economic slowdown impact its commitment towards nurturing local talent – believing diversified development opportunities for local talent as the way forward for Macau's sustainable development. Melco management team members recently volunteered career advice for local students and the broader community through virtual and in-person sharing sessions as part of its 'Simple Acts of Kindness' philosophy. Eight experienced Melco "hoteliers" collaborated with the Macao Institute for Tourism Studies (IFT) to host virtual training sessions for students, sharing their experiences in areas such as Club Management, Events, Finance, Human Resources Training & Development and Service Operations. One of Melco's guest lecturers, Ms. Macy Lam,

Vice President & General Manager, Hotel Operations said, "I am glad to share my experiences and knowledge in crisis management with the students. The 'new normal' under the COVID-19 pandemic requires a different approach in managing situations to accommodate guests' needs. The current situation gives rise to opportunities for improvement, and we hope these lectures help young people understand more about the hotel industry, to achieve their full potential and enrich their lives as part of Melco's commitment to local people and talent development". Additional sessions focusing on Front Office Operations, Customer Relations and Luxury Services were organized for the broader community. One participant said she never had never explored career opportunities in the hospitality industry, and that she felt rewarded after gaining real-life insight and tips on what makes great customer service from the lecture.



SIMPLE ACTS OF KINDNESS

Melco's 'Simple Acts of Kindness' philosophy is based on the principle that little things have a big impact, and each person can do something to touch people's hearts.

Since launching in May, 'Simple Acts of Kindness' has seen:

- Up to 17 volunteering activities per day
- Up to 150 volunteers deployed daily
- ~500 activities
- Participation from ~6,000 volunteers
- 100+ NGOs and SMEs served

To further extend the philosophy into the local community, Melco volunteers joined hands with other voluntary workers from The Macao

Association of Loving Care, Macao Gaming Practitioners Volunteers Association and Gaming Employees Home to implement the 'Elderly Home Support Program' – devoting their efforts to the needs of elderlies living alone or those with financial difficulties by providing assistance on electrical inspections and installation replacements, home refurbishments, cleaning projects and home visits. Hosted in collaboration with the Macao Federation of Trade Unions (FAOM), the Program aims to improve living standards for the many elderly persons living on their own to reduce risk of household accidents and to spread the spirit of 'mutual community friendship' within the community.



'MELCO & COLLEAGUES GIVING STORES' LATEST UPDATES

In partnership with FAOM and the Fu Hong Society of Macau, 'Melco & Colleagues Giving Store' opened in June to support Macau's community in need. The Stores enable beneficiaries access to a broad range of complimentary donated goods from Melco & Colleagues which are in new or almost new condition, whilst larger items such as household furniture are available at a fraction of

their retail price, with proceeds going to charity to benefit the community.

To date, the 'Melco & Colleagues Giving Stores' have benefited:

- 500 underprivileged families
- ~4,000 individuals

Donation inventory made available at the Stores for the local community in need include:

- 59,600+ items
- 53,741 donated by Melco Resorts
- 5,878 items donated by colleagues



COURTS | IPIM

RITA SANTOS CALLED TO DEFEND JACKSON CHANG'S 'HONEST' CHARACTER

RENATO MARQUES

NOW drawing to a close, the case at the Court of First Instance involving corruption allegations against several former high-ranked officials from the Macao Trade and Investment Promotion Institute (IPIM), has heard several witnesses favorable to some of those involved.

On trial, the witnesses attested to the character of the defendants, namely of the former president of IPIM, Jackson Chang, and the former IPIM's Residency Application and Legal Affairs Division chief, Miguel Ian Iat Chun.

Highlighting the human qualities of Chang was the current president of the general assembly of the Macau Civil Servants' Association, Rita Botelho dos Santos. The former deputy secretary-general of the permanent secretariat of Forum for Economic and Trade Co-operation between China and Portuguese-speaking Countries – Macau (Forum Macau) said she knew Chang since the time she commenced work at the Forum Macau, in 2003, when the organization had strong links to IPIM, including operating within the same office building.

Santos said Chang was “a very responsible and honest person,” noting that he was very diligent in preventing any unnecessary expenses in relation to events organized by IPIM, or in which IPIM participated.

Rejecting any suggestion that Chang was part of a criminal organization, Santos noted the



Rita Santos

many years of constant work and contacts Chang had, both locally and abroad, in the promotion of Macau for businesspeople from China as well as from the Portuguese-speaking countries. In that position, according to Santos, “we do all we can to provide concise and clear information [to the entrepreneurs] about the opportunities existing in Macau and its role as a platform.” “We have the goal of providing confidence so they can invest,” added Santos.

Questioned by Álvaro Rodrigues, the lawyer representing Chang, as to whether she ever saw or was aware of any special benefits granted by Chang to any

particular person or organization, Santos responded, “I never saw him benefiting anyone in particular. All the work done was aiming to benefit all the entrepreneurs in general.”

Furthermore, according to Santos, Chang was also known for being a “rule-abiding person as well as a strict follower of instructions from [...] immediate superiors.”

The defense also called an old friend of Chang to testify, a man who met him during his secondary school years.

The man, who is said to work in Macau in the field of exhibitions and conventions, also admitted to being a good friend of

the family, describing Chang as a man without excessive ambitions.

“I don't believe he could do anything illegal to achieve success,” the witness said, noting that Chang and his family lived without many concerns or financial problems that would justify the kind of unlawful acts for which he is being tried.

In a humorous remark, the witness also advanced that he was “mad at Chang” because for over 10 years he had bid for several IPIM tenders in the conventions and exhibitions field and he never won any of them, adding that despite being close friends for over 40 years, Chang never gives any help or benefit to any of the friend's companies.

The witness noted that Chang was at the top of his career and received a good wage.

“I don't think that he needed money. He did not need to get into trouble [because of that],” the witness said.

Also presenting several witnesses to attest to the good character and personality was the lawyer of the second defendant, Miguel Ian.

Through three different testimonies, Ian's defense tried to prove that the former IPIM chief had a reputation of assisting people without expecting any compensation.

In the court, the witnesses called by lawyer Jorge Ho explained how on previous occasions, Ian helped a friend of his wife to write a letter to the Labour Affairs Bureau regarding the loss of a

quota for a non-resident worker, as well as helping a construction worker who was working for him in home renovation to apply for Social Housing at the Housing Bureau after several failed attempts over many years.

Ian provided assistance through helping the people understand the requirements and how to apply or justify their case to the relevant bureaus. In both cases, after Ian's intervention, the cases were successfully solved without Ian requesting any compensation, they said.

The last of the group of three favorable testimonies regarding Ian came from former lawmaker Ung Choi Kun, who was said to have known Ian since 1995, before the elections for the Legislative Assembly.

Ung, a well-connected businessman in the real estate sector, also said in court that he had sought help from Ian more than once concerning requests regarding residency requirements of his friends.

“He gave us opinions, in a very clear and responsible way,” Ung said in the courtroom, noting that as a former lawmaker he is well aware of the duties and responsibilities of civil servants, remarking that the information provided by Ian was only given from the perspective of clarifying how the process worked and what kind of documents they should present, not providing any details that could be considered illegal or favoring such applicants.

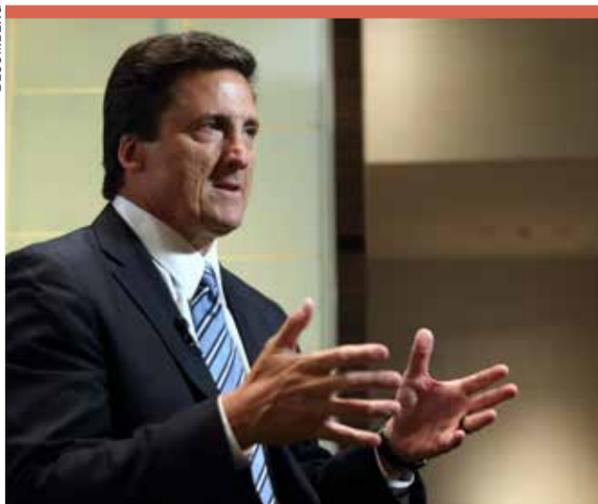
The hearing of defense witnesses from the remaining defendants will continue today, with defense lawyers and prosecutors hinting that the court could conclude this task by the end of the day. The next and final stage will be dedicated to the closing statements from the accusation and defense.

MGM Resorts makes interim chief its permanent CEO

MGM Resorts International said Wednesday acting Chief Executive Officer Bill Hornbuckle will take the top position on a permanent basis, sticking with the longtime company veteran during the coronavirus crisis.

Hornbuckle, 63, took over in March, succeeding Jim Murren. He previously served as president of the Las Vegas-based company, helping to launch its expansion efforts in the U.S. and abroad. As marketing chief before that, he spearheaded MGM's customer loyalty program.

Hornbuckle will also take over as MGM China's new Chairperson, over-



seeing the company's two resorts in Macau, MGM Macau and MGM Cotai.

Hornbuckle also worked at Caesars Palace and at

Mirage Resorts under Steve Wynn. He started his career in Las Vegas as a room service attendant at the Jockey Club.

The company hired an executive search firm and interviewed candidates, but came back to Hornbuckle because of his experience, according to Paul Salem, MGM's chairman and a senior managing director emeritus with Providence Equity Partners Inc. His handling of employee meetings during the shutdown also impressed the board.

“The amount of loyalty Bill has because he's been around for so long really helped us get through this,” Salem said.

MGM, like other casino operators, has been hard hit by the coronavirus, which triggered a months-

long closing of its properties in the U.S. and a severe contraction in Macau.

The company is in a position to weather the storm, having sold nearly all of its resorts to investors in a sale-leaseback arrangement that freed up billions in cash. Still, MGM has cut staff and furloughed others as it copes with far less business due to the virus.

The company had been under pressure from hedge funds and other investors to sell properties and boost its share price, before the Covid-19 crisis. The shares are down 51% this year.

Hornbuckle said in an interview Wednesday that

MGM has about \$8 billion in liquidity that it can tap as it rides out the crisis until a recovery next year. He hopes to begin reopening some of the company's entertainment venues in Las Vegas in the fall.

In the meantime, MGM will focus on online betting and in marketing to its 34 million-name customer loyalty database. Hornbuckle said he's encouraged by the high occupancy he's seeing at a non-casino hotel the company has on mainland China.

“They're returning with great velocity, pretty quickly,” he said. “Once it's perceived as completely safe.” **MDT/BLOOMBERG**

Hong Kong disqualifies 12 opposition nominees for assembly

ZEN SOO, HONG KONG

At least 12 Hong Kong pro-democracy nominees including Joshua Wong were disqualified for a September legislative election, with authorities saying yesterday they failed to uphold the city's mini-constitution and pledge allegiance to Hong Kong and Beijing.

Others who were disqualified include prominent pro-democracy activist Tiffany Yuen from the disbanded political organization Demosisto, as well as incumbent lawmaker Dennis Kwok and three others from the pro-democracy Civic Party.

It marks a setback for the pro-democracy camp, which had aimed to win a majority of seats in the legislature this year. Earlier this month, they held an unofficial primary, with candidates like Wong topping the polls.

Wong and many pro-democracy nominees had been asked to clarify their political stance earlier this week as their nominations were being reviewed.

Other nominations were still being reviewed, the government said in a statement expressing support



Pro-democracy activists Lee Cheuk-Yan (right) and Yeung Sum speak to media outside a district court in Hong Kong yesterday

for the disqualifications.

"We do not rule out the possibility that more nominations would be invalidated," it said.

Earlier yesterday, Hong Kong pro-democracy activist Lee Cheuk-yan rebuked a tough national security law that Beijing had imposed following last year's massive protests calling for greater freedoms. He criticized authorities for arresting four youths on suspicion of inciting secession via online posts.

"Hong Kong politics keeps changing," said Lee. "Now they are using the national security law against the young people ... these young people are

"Now they are using the national security law against the young people [who] are being charged just for the things they said."

LEE CHEUK-YAN

being charged just for the things they said."

The four, aged between 16 to 21, were detained

Wednesday for announcing on social media that they had set up an organization for Hong Kong independence. An organization called Studentlocalism – which had disbanded ahead of the national security law taking effect on June 30 – said in a Facebook post that four of its former members had been arrested on secession charges.

Lee was speaking ahead of a court appearance with 14 other pro-democracy activists, including former lawmaker Martin Lee and media tycoon Jimmy Lai. The group was arrested in April over anti-government protests last year and was charged with participating and inciting others

to take part in an unauthorized assembly.

Lee said that the U.N. Human Rights Committee recently affirmed that the notification of an assembly is not a requirement, and that participation in an unnotified assembly should not be a criminal offense.

"It very clearly vindicates us, we are exercising our rights," Lee said. AP

Harvard professor faces tax charges tied to Chinese school

A Harvard University professor already facing federal charges for allegedly lying about his ties to a Chinese-run recruitment program now faces additional charges of failing to report income from a Chinese university to the IRS, federal prosecutors said.

Chemistry professor Charles Lieber, 61, was indicted by a grand jury on two counts of failing to file reports of foreign bank and financial accounts and two counts of making and subscribing a false income tax return, the office of U.S. Attorney Andrew Lelling said



in a statement this week. Lieber is accused of failing to report income from Wuhan University of Technology.

Lieber was previously indicted on two counts of lying to federal authorities

and pleaded not guilty.

His attorney disputed the allegations.

"The notion that Professor Lieber was engaged in improper work with China is laughable," Marc Mukasey said in an email to The

Boston Globe. "He didn't hide anything, and he didn't get paid as the government alleges. ... He is innocent and his name will be cleared."

A Harvard spokesman declined to comment.

The Ivy League school put Lieber on administrative leave in January when he was first arrested.

He was charged then with hiding his involvement in China's Thousand Talents Plan, a program designed to lure people with knowledge of foreign technology and intellectual property to China. AP

ADVERTORIAL

GREAT TIMES

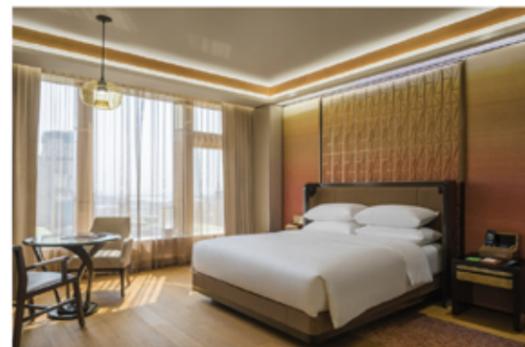
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MICHAEL LIEDTKE,
MARCY GORDON & MATT
O'BRIEN, WASHINGTON

USA

Lawmakers batter Big Tech CEOs, but don't land many blows

CONGRESSIONAL lawmakers finally got a chance to grill the CEOs of Big Tech over their dominance and allegations of monopolistic practices that stifle competition. But it's not clear how much they advanced their goal of bringing some of the world's largest companies to heel.

Invective flew Wednesday as legislators questioned Facebook's Mark Zuckerberg, Amazon's Jeff Bezos, Sundar Pichai of Google and Tim Cook of Apple at a hearing of the House Judiciary subcommittee on antitrust. For the last year, that panel has probed the business practices of the Silicon Valley giants with an eye to determining if they need to be regulated more heavily, or even broken up.

In nearly five hours of testimony and questioning, however, there were few startling revelations or striking confrontations. While the executives faced hostile questioning and frequent interruptions from lawmakers of both parties, little seemed to land more than glancing blows.

The CEOs testified via video to lawmakers, at times appearing together on the committee room display as tiny individual figures in a mostly empty array of squares. Most committee members were seated, masks on, in the hearing room in Washington.

The execs provided lots of data purporting to show how much competition they face and just how valuable their innovation and essential services are to consumers. But they sometimes struggled to answer pointed questions about their business practices. They also confronted a range of other concerns about alleged political bias, their effect on U.S. democracy and their role in China.

The panel's chairman, Rep. David Cicilline, a Rhode Island Democrat, said each platform controlled by Facebook, Amazon, Google and Apple "is a bottleneck for a key channel of distribution."

"Whether they control access to information or to a marketplace, these platforms have the incentive and ability to exploit this power," he said. "They can charge exorbitant fees, impose oppressive contracts, and extract valuable data from the people and businesses that rely on them."

"Simply put: They have



too much power."

The four CEOs command corporations whose products are woven into the fabric of everyday life, with millions or even billions of customers, and a combined market value greater than the entire German economy. One of them, Bezos, is the world's richest individual; Zuckerberg is the fourth-ranked billionaire.

And they had a few rough moments. Pichai and Zuckerberg, for instance, appeared discomfited when pressed about unsavory aspects of their companies' businesses, but got respites when their inquisitors ran out of time. Bezos also acknowledged that alleged misdeeds at Amazon — such as reports that the company has used data generated by independent sellers on its platform to compete against them — would be "unacceptable" if proven to be true.

Outside observers were able to draw radically different conclusions from the event. Richard Hamilton Jr., a former Justice Department antitrust lawyer, said that everyone on the committee seemed to be in agreement on the need for tougher regulation of all four companies — an "ominous" sign, he said. But Stephen Beck, CEO of the management consulting firm cg42, said the tech companies and their brands emerged relatively unscathed.

In particular, he said,

Cook was particularly polished and well prepared, enabling the Apple CEO to put on what Beck called "a master class in terms of how to handle these situations." Cook drew less attention from lawmakers than did the other CEOs after arguing that Apple isn't dominant in any of its markets.

Among the toughest questions for Google and Amazon involved accusations that they used their dominant platforms to scoop up data about competitors in a way that gave them an unfair advantage.

Bezos, who was appearing before Congress for the first time, said he couldn't guarantee that the company had not accessed seller data to make competing products, an allegation that the company and its executives have previously denied.

"We have a policy against using seller specific data to aid our private label business," Bezos said in a response to a question from Rep. Pramila Jayapal, a Washington Democrat. "But I can't guarantee to you that that policy hasn't been violated."

Pichai deployed an old Washington trick — appealing to the specific interests of legislators. In his opening remarks, he touted Google's value to mom-and-pop businesses in Bristol, Rhode Island, and Pewaukee, Wisconsin, which just happen to be located in the home districts of Cicilline and Rep. James Sensenbren-

ner of Wisconsin, the panel's senior Republican.

But the Google executive struggled as Cicilline accused the company of leveraging its dominant search engine to steal ideas and information from other websites and manipulating its results to drive people to its own digital services to boost its profits.

Pichai repeatedly deflected Cicilline's attacks by asserting that Google tries to provide the most helpful and relevant information to the hundreds of millions of people who use its search engine each day in an effort to keep them coming back instead of defecting to a rival service, such as Microsoft's Bing.

As Democrats largely focused on market competition, several Republicans aired longstanding grievances, claiming the tech companies are censoring conservative voices and questioning their business activities in China. "Big Tech is out to get conservatives," insisted Rep. Jim Jordan of Ohio.

In its bipartisan investigation, the Judiciary subcommittee collected testimony from mid-level executives of the four firms, competitors and legal experts, and pored over more than a million internal documents from the companies. A key question: whether existing competition policies and century-old antitrust laws are adequate for overseeing the tech giants, or if new legislation and enforcement funding are needed. AP

this day in history



1991 SUPERPOWERS TO CUT NUCLEAR WARHEADS

The United States and the Soviet Union have signed an historic agreement reducing their stockpiles of nuclear warheads by about a third.

The Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty, known as Start, was signed in Moscow by US President George Bush and Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev.



At a joint news conference after the signing ceremony, Mr Bush described the Start treaty as "a significant step forward in dispelling half a century of mistrust".

Mr Gorbachev said it promised to be the start of "an irreversible process" of arms reduction, but stressed there was "still a lot to do".

The agreement took more than nine years to negotiate, and reduces each side's strategic nuclear weapons by about 35% over seven years.

The Soviet Union's land-based intercontinental ballistic missiles will also be cut by 50%.

It is the first major agreement between the two countries over arms reduction since the Salt treaties, signed in 1972 and 1979, which limited the numbers of long-range nuclear missiles.

The Start treaty goes further, however, by committing the superpowers to scaling down their fleets of nuclear missiles and bombers, rather than just limiting expansion.

However, it still leaves the US and the Soviet Union with 9,000 and 7,000 warheads respectively. There was also no agreement over space weapons, or sea-launched cruise missiles.

Throughout the two-day summit, the emphasis has been on a new era of cooperation between the two sides.

Mr Bush and Mr Gorbachev spent much of their time discussing Mr Gorbachev's attempts to reform the ailing Soviet economy and the help that might be offered by the West, although neither leader would be drawn on specific details.

They are also understood to have discussed a jointly-sponsored Middle East peace conference.

Mr Bush's visit takes place at a time of increasing unrest in the Soviet republics.

Six months ago Moscow put down an uprising in Lithuania, and just yesterday six Lithuanian border guards were killed in suspicious circumstances.

Both Mr Bush and Mr Gorbachev said they regretted the incident, but refused to comment further.

In an indication of the delicate balance of power in the Soviet Union, Mr Bush has taken time during his visit to meet the President of the Russian Republic, Boris Yeltsin, for private talks.

However, he was quick to reassure journalists in Moscow he continues to support Mr Gorbachev and the Soviet government.

Courtesy BBC News

IN CONTEXT

The Soviet Union collapsed in December 1991, before the Start treaty could be ratified.

After an intense period of diplomacy, agreements were reached with the Russian Federation and three former Soviet states where nuclear weapons were stationed - Ukraine, Belarus, and Kazakhstan.

The Start Treaty finally came into effect in December 1994, although the targets set out in the treaty were not met until 2001.

In 1993, the Start II treaty agreed to scrap a further 3,000-3,500 warheads. It was ratified by the US Congress in 1996. In 1997, US President Bill Clinton and Russian President Boris Yeltsin extended the treaty's deadline to 2007, and set out to begin negotiations on a Start III treaty for further reductions. Eventually Start II and Start III were superseded by a further arms reduction treaty signed in 2002.

The Strategic Offensive Reductions Treaty, better known as the Treaty of Moscow, aims to cut the nuclear warheads of each side to between 1,700 and 2,200 by 2012 - a reduction of about two-thirds.

MACAU'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

YOUR STARS

ARIES
Mar. 21-Apr. 19
You put aside wishes and wants, and a very influential person took notice. With your selfishness deterred, you have opened up your ego to appreciate the respect you are about to receive.

TAURUS
Apr. 20-May. 20
For optimum emotional and physical health, look to fresh air and sunlight. The sights and sounds of nature are the best cure for whatever ails you, so try to get outside and enjoy the landscape.

GEMINI
May. 21-Jun. 21
Relationship issues could come to the forefront when it feels like someone is holding you back from happiness. Reevaluate what is going on and ask yourself if this is a positive partnership for you.

CANCER
Jun. 22-Jul. 22
While your focus has been on other people in your life lately, thinking completely about your current relationships isn't going to be possible. But that is a good thing.

LEO
Jul. 23-Aug. 22
This is a sign that you're doing the right thing right now, and that where you are in life is the perfect place to be. Congratulate yourself and prepare to enjoy the happiness in your life.

VIRGO
Aug. 23-Sep. 22
You can feel free to look, but you can't touch - and you most certainly can't buy! Your urge to splurge is a fun one, but it could put you in some tricky or unpleasant situations.

LIBRA
Sep. 23-Oct. 22
On thing to remember is don't go for easy jokes or silly come-ons. You don't want to get off on the wrong foot. Just be your witty, intelligent self and get ready to make more friends.

SCORPIO
Oct. 23-Nov. 21
An everyday choice could carry additional weight for you now. Be careful not to make any decisions too quickly, because there are other people involved in the outcome of your situation.

SAGITTARIUS
Nov. 22-Dec. 21
You're going to have to conserve your money to retain the peace in your friendships. Some folks are letting the green stuff get in the way of things. And keep in mind that money isn't the only thing that's green.

CAPRICORN
Dec. 22-Jan. 19
You're starting to feel much more confident about your position in life right now, so it's a great time to build on this confidence to create a stronger air of authority around yourself.

AQUARIUS
Jan. 20-Feb. 18
The attention you've been getting for your appearance might be convincing you to start working the room a bit more in search of your next goal, but that would be unwise.

PISCES
Feb. 19-Mar. 20
If you're considering turning back on an emotional journey, try to hang in there just a little longer! If you keep going a little further, you could turn a corner very soon and see a broad, beautiful road ahead of you.

The Born Loser by Chip Sanson



SUDOKU

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

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

WEATHER

	MIN	MAX	CONDITION
CHINA			
Beijing	25	33	thundershower
Harbin	21	29	thundershower
Tianjin	27	33	thundershower
Urumqi	16	28	clear
Xi'an	23	32	shower
Lhasa	12	23	shower
Chengdu	22	27	overcast
Chongqing	26	31	overcast
Kunming	17	26	thundershower
Nanjing	27	32	thundershower
Shanghai	28	34	overcast
Wuhan	25	33	cloudy
Hangzhou	26	36	cloudy
Taipei	26	32	clear
Guangzhou	26	33	moderate rain
Hong Kong	26	30	thundershower
WORLD			
Moscow	13	21	cloudy
Frankfurt	16	29	clear
Paris	19	31	clear
London	17	26	clear
New York	24	31	drizzle

CROSSWORDS

ACROSS: 1- Continue; 5- Blame; 8- Galoots; 12- ___ Domini; 13- Tint; 15- Soft cheese; 16- Goes out with; 17- Pass into disuse; 18- First-class; 19- Association; 22- Sawbuck; 23- "Michael Collins" actor; 24- Movable barrier; 26- Pines; 29- Add vitamins to flour, e.g.; 31- Curse; 32- Affairs of honor; 34- Hitching post?; 36- South American Indian; 38- Golfer Calvin; 40- Country singer McCann; 41- Inscribed pillar; 43- Judges; 45- ___ out (relax); 46- Empire State capital; 48- Brooding hen; 50- Emit coherent light; 51- O.T. book; 52- ___ Ventura was played by Jim Carrey; 54- Pottery of hardened clay; 61- Radius neighbor; 63- Up; 64- A Baldwin brother; 65- Pier; 66- Square one; 67- Impulsive; 68- Inking; 69- 100 square meters; 70- Bandleader Puente;

DOWN: 1- Breathe convulsively; 2- Fit for service; 3- Doozy; 4- Cosa ___; 5- Laugh loudly; 6- Swiss peaks; 7- Ritz; 8- Attorney's org.; 9- Tending to guard; 10- Mozart's "___ kleine Nachtmusik"; 11- Witnessed; 13- Make a killing; 14- Monarch's rule; 20- Dweeb; 21- Graph prefix; 25- Work the soil; 26- Gossipmonger; 27- Eminence; 28- Squalid; 29- Politico Kefauver; 30- More robust; 31- "___ and hers"; 33- Shelter; 35- Old cloth; 37- Jessica of "Dark Angel"; 39- Distinguished; 42- Smooth sailing; 44- Type of gun; 47- Approaches; 49- Frustrate; 52- Autobahn auto; 53- Lump of earth; 55- Comic Rudner; 56- Boris Godunov, for one; 57- In this place; 58- Jai ___; 59- Repose; 60- Bounce back; 62- Alias letters;



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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
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MACAU'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

CHINA HAS AMASSED \$1 BILLION GLUT OF US COTTON IT DOESN'T NEED

CHINA has bought more than \$1 billion worth of American cotton in the past three months. And it doesn't even need it.

The purchases - made as part of the phase one trade deal between Washington and Beijing - are hitting just as the pandemic shuts down clothing stores, decimating demand. That means China's state-run companies are stashing away the cotton they bought, dimming the outlook for further imports.

The trade deal requires China to buy \$36.5 billion in U.S. agricultural products this year. That's created a disconnect between real demand and purchases, which are running at the fastest pace since 2013. More than 50% of the defaults reported to the World Cotton Exporters Association and the American Cotton Exporters Association in the past year involved Chinese counterparts.

"Recent Chinese purchases have not been correlated with downstream demand," said Jon Devine, chief economist for Cary, North Carolina-based researcher Cotton Inc. "Much of that cotton is believed to be destined for the



Chinese reserve system. If it moves into storage, it can be used against future demand and offset future purchases."

The spread of Covid-19 has caused havoc in the global cotton industry, with shutdowns and bankruptcies of retailers including J.C. Penney Co. and Neiman Marcus Group Inc. hurting demand. World consumption is forecast to drop 23 million bales, the most on record, the U.S. Department of

Agriculture estimates.

China's mills haven't seen any growth in orders since June and 45% of the facilities surveyed were losing money by the end of that month, 17 percentage points higher than a year earlier, according to the nation's Cotton Textile Association. U.S. mill use also dropped to an all-time low.

"While agriculture was deemed critical and essential and supply chains remained open, retail

clothing sales suffered immensely due to closures," said Buddy Allen, president of the American Cotton Shippers Association. That caused a "tidal wave of disruption through cotton's global supply chain creating incredible costs, losses, and risks for participants."

With Chinese mills struggling, performance on purchases made prior to both the trade war and the coronavirus remains "weak," Allen said. Other countries inclu-

ding India, Pakistan and Bangladesh have also defaulted, he said.

The recent rise in U.S. cotton prices is further weighing on the outlook for Chinese imports. New York futures have rebounded more than 25% from the a 10-year low reached in April, in part due to concerns about drought in the U.S. and Australia. China's state purchases have also added fuel to the recovery.

China hasn't issued additional import quotas to mills as in 2019 and if anything, it has canceled U.S. purchases in the two weeks to July 16. The nation is also selling government reserves to textile mills at a cheaper price than imports. All of that could point to a potential slowdown in purchases.

To be sure, China's purchases of U.S. cotton could still increase further as the government seeks to meet its phase one pledges, said Wang Qianjin, head of the information department at the Shanghai International Cotton Exchange. China is still far from meeting the target.

"We are excited to see these increased purchases but acknowledge the gap that still exists from commitments," Allen said. "We hope to see mill use ramp up in China and around the world very soon, otherwise we are just moving stock from to U.S. to Chinese balance sheet." **MDT/BLOOMBERG**

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 張偉鴻 Cheong Wai Hong
 李莉 Lei Lei
 陳健雄 Eurico Chan
 吳雲鋒 Ng Teng Fong

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GOLF

Koepka says knee is improving, eager to defend WGC title

TERESA M. WALKER,
MEMPHIS (TENN.)

BROOKS Koepka loves TPC Southwind, and he's hoping for the same boost he got here a year ago when he won the first World Golf Championship.

Last year, Koepka only felt a bit ill.

This year, the man who won three times last year, including a major, is trying to defend his FedEx St. Jude Invitational title with an injured left knee that's affecting his swing because he's hesitant to shift his weight.

"I feel like I'm getting better and better every day," Koepka said yesterday [Macau time].

"Last week I saw signs of it, made some adjustments this weekend as far as just seeing how scared I was to get on my left side. ... You can battle through it all the time, but still, pain will make you adjust really quickly, and just seeing where I was made a few adjustments in my setup just to kind of help ease it and help get my body through that."

Koepka reinjured his left knee in South Korea at the CJ Cup last October and has a partially torn patella tendon. He's holding off surgery unless the tear worsens.

"We'll see when my season ends and go get stem cell again most likely and figure it out from there," Koepka said.

His victory here last year was his seventh on the PGA Tour and most recent. Koepka finished seventh at the RBC Heritage in June,



Brooks Koepka (left) lines up a putt on the practice green at the World Golf Championships-FedEx St. Jude Invitational

his only top 10 since the tour returned from its shutdown because of the coronavirus pandemic. He's missed the cut twice in his last three events and tied for 62nd at the Memorial. Ranked No. 1 in the world at the beginning of the year, he has slipped to sixth.

After missing the cut last week at the 3M Open, Koepka worked with both British-based coach Pete Cowen and Claude Harmon to fine-tune his game. Koepka

said having Cowen watch him hit balls in person and not on video was much more helpful.

"It was nice to see him, work on some things," Koepka said. "Just good to have. That's why I have Claude and Pete there, to bounce ideas off of and see where you're at. They're both saying the same thing. And I think this weekend, if there was ever a good cut to miss, I think it was that one."

Koepka's struggles and achy

knee haven't affected his confidence as he prepares to defend his title this week and again next week at the rescheduled PGA Championship at TPC Harding Park in San Francisco.

"I'm defending, aren't I?" Koepka said.

Koepka's competitors are showing much more consistent form. Jon Rahm will make his debut at No. 1 in the world after winning the Memorial two weeks

ago. The 78-player field features the world's top eight players and 27 of the top 30.

Second-ranked Rory McIlroy, who played in the final group with Koepka last year, and Justin Thomas could reclaim the No. 1 spot by winning.

"I just want to put four solid rounds together," McIlroy said. "I haven't really done that since coming back out of the lockdown. And if I do put four solid rounds together, then I know I'll have a chance to win."

Daniel Berger, who won at TPC Southwind in 2016 and 2017 before the tournament became a World Golf Championship, is back after failing to qualify last year. Henrik Stenson will be making his first start since the PGA Tour returned in June. Viktor Hovland of Norway will be making his first start at a WGC after stringing together five straight top-25 finishes.

Michael Thompson won the 3M Open last week for his first victory in seven years, getting him into the Memphis field. His family was traveling to Memphis on Wednesday for a belated victory celebration.

"So we're going to celebrate tonight but with some cupcakes with my son," Thompson said. "He's all excited about that."

Though plans for limited fans at TPC Southwind were canceled earlier this month, the tour is allowing players to bring a wife or significant other. Tournaments and title sponsors also will be allowed to have no more than 50 guests per day and limited to specific areas, like hospitality tents or a room in the clubhouse.

TPC Southwind also had its bunkers renovated with a couple erased and others added. The par-5 third hole, with a lake down the right side of the fairway, has been lengthened by 25 yards. The par-70 course now measures 7,277 yards. AP

Macau Racing Tips

By Davy Chiu



THE BARNET RACE 3

2020-08-02 | Sun | 16:10

I am bullish on **Qian Gua**'s chance from K.H.LEUNG's yard in THE BARNET Race 3 this Sunday Class 1 & 2 1500 m turf race. His last two races were either drawn wide or too green in the running and also heavy weight on his back. This time I would like to see things go smoothly in his way for this son of Cape Blanco in Macau. **Qian Gua** (pictured) will shoulder only 116 and have S. Nakano riding him, although barrier 8 is not ideal but with S. Nakano's well judge of pace, this son of Cape Blanco should well use his stamina with his light weight of 116 to find a good firing position down the straight. There are a few chances in this race with **Luen On Poseiden**, **Luen On Dance Kid**, and of course **Kelowna Star**, **Pearl Green** and **Bring Me Speed**. **Qian Gua** with a modest rating of 83, he will find this race to suit and hopefully he can climb up to a higher ranking in the rating scale.

RACE 3 Horse no. 8 Qian Gua. SMALL Win, and a good Place bet



OPINION

China Daily

Cong Peiyong*

DECOUPLING WILL ALSO
HURT US AND ITS FIRMS

Sino-U.S. relations have taken a turn for the worse, prompting many analysts to say the world's two largest economies could be moving toward decoupling.

As two highly interdependent economies, can China and the U.S. decouple easily? And what impact will the rising Sino-U.S. tensions have on global economic recovery, especially as the novel coronavirus pandemic is yet to be contained globally?

Since the establishment of diplomatic ties 41 years ago, China and the United States have developed a deeply interdependent relationship; in particular, their interests and links are intertwined and inseparable in the economic and trade field.

Amid all this, the U.S. has dealt another severe blow to bilateral ties by ordering the closure of the Chinese consulate in Houston, Texas, forcing Beijing to respond by asking Washington to close the U.S. consulate in Chengdu, Sichuan province.

To top it all, U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo delivered a fiery speech at Nixon Library in California recently, which could be considered a declaration of a new "Cold War", accelerating the "decoupling" trend.

But contrary to what the White House says, any decoupling in the trade and economic field will also cause heavy losses to the US.

First, decoupling with China will result in giant U.S. enterprises suffering big losses, as statistics show that one-third or more of the sales revenues of America's top five listed companies in 2017 came from China. And given the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the global economy, it will be difficult for those companies to find a market as big as China's.

Second, many relatively small U.S. companies will also suffer, for they have long relied on components and parts supplied by China which have no ready substitutes. The new tariffs the U.S. government has imposed on Chinese goods have seriously hurt the interests of small and medium-sized U.S. enterprises, while the tariffs have failed to bring back jobs to the US, as the White House had claimed.

As a recent article in The Washington Post said, neither COVID-19 nor trade tensions will deter U.S. companies from entering the Chinese market. In fact, in April ExxonMobil launched a large chemical project in Huizhou, Guangdong province, with an investment of \$10 billion, mainly due to the huge potential of the Chinese market.

Some U.S. economists have even said that China's would be the only large economy in the world to register GDP growth in 2020, and that the numbers of middle-and upper-middle-income groups in China will continue to grow over the next decade. And some U.S. media outlets have stated that if U.S. companies withdrew from the Chinese market, they would lose a lot of business opportunities.

Since China is the world's largest exporter and the U.S. largest importer, the impact of Sino-U.S. trade frictions will be felt around the world.

If U.S. politicians forcibly push for economic "decoupling" of China and the U.S. in a bid to garner popular votes for their candidates in the presidential election, they could fracture the security of the global industrial and supply chains, trigger turmoil in the international financial market, and endanger international trade and economic growth. Artificial intervention in market economy and violation of free competition norms not only run counter to economic globalization but will also bring serious shocks and challenges to the world economic order and hinder the recovery of the global economy even after the pandemic is contained.

In addition, the rising tensions between China and the U.S. will prompt some other countries and regions to take sides, increasing the political divisions in the world.

Since the antagonism between China and the U.S. will harm international relations, the global economy and the international community, the two sides would do good to re-build mutual trust and renew their cooperation in order to sustain the global economic recovery.

* Researcher at the China Youth University of Political Studies

The biggest, most sophisticated Mars rover ever built — a car-size vehicle bristling with cameras, microphones, drills and lasers — blasted off for the red planet yesterday as part of an ambitious, long-range project to bring the first Martian rock samples back to Earth to be analyzed for evidence of ancient life.

NASA's Perseverance rode a mighty Atlas V rocket into a clear morning sky in the world's third and final Mars launch of the summer. China and the United Arab Emirates got a head start last week, but

all three missions should reach their destination in February after a journey of seven months and 300 million miles.

The plutonium-powered, six-wheeled rover will drill down and collect tiny geological specimens that will be brought home in about 2031 in a sort of interplanetary relay race involving multiple spacecraft and countries. The overall cost: more than \$8 billion.

NASA's science mission chief, Thomas Zurbuchen, pronounced the launch the start of "humanity's first round trip to another planet."

US NAMES NEW ARCTIC
ENVOY IN PUSH TO
EXPAND REACH IN REGION



Secretary of State Mike Pompeo (right) and the Danish Prime Minister met last week near Copenhagen

MATTHEW LEE,
WASHINGTON

THE Trump administration yesterday [Macau time] named a special envoy for the Arctic, filling a post that had been vacant for more than three years as the administration seeks a greater role in the region and tries to blunt growing Russian and Chinese influence there.

The State Department's appointment of veteran career diplomat Jim DeHart to be U.S. coordinator for the Arctic came just a week after Secretary of State Mike Pompeo vowed enhanced U.S. engagement in the Arctic on a visit to Denmark and a month after the White House ordered the construction of a fleet of new icebreakers to ply the region by 2029.

The U.S. opened a consulate in Denmark's semi-autonomous territory of Greenland earlier this year as part of its new Arctic strategy, and Pompeo met with officials from Greenland and the Faroe Islands while he was in Copenhagen.

The opening of the consulate in Greenland attracted attention because of President Donald Trump's stated interest last year in purchasing it from Denmark, which drew

strong objections. Although that possibility is off the table, the U.S. has announced a \$12 million aid and development package for Greenland that DeHart will help shepherd, according to officials.

Russia has
expanded
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itself a 'near-
Arctic nation'

Pompeo has spoken in the past about the Trump administration's determination to prevent Russia and China from playing a dominant role in the Arctic, which is heavily affected by climate change. Russia has expanded military bases in its Arctic regions, and China has sought to declare itself a "near-Arctic nation" despite having no territory near the area.

Environmentalists criticized Pompeo last year when he spoke at an Arctic Council event in Finland and said the U.S. and others should exploit changes, including sharp reductions in ocean ice, for economic benefit, including

the opening of new sea lines and greater opportunities for energy and mineral extraction.

DeHart's appointment fills an empty slot in the department's senior ranks that had been created during the Obama administration but remained vacant since President Donald Trump took office and the previous coordinator, retired Coast Guard Adm. Robert Papp, stepped down.

"The United States plays a critical leadership role on Arctic issues within the international community and remains committed to ensuring a peaceful region where U.S. interests are safeguarded, the U.S. homeland is protected, and Arctic states work cooperatively to address shared challenges," the State Department said in a statement.

DeHart is 28-year foreign service officer and was most recently senior adviser for security negotiations and agreements. He had been leading discussions with South Korea over the continued presence of U.S. troops there. He has also served as the No. 2 diplomat in Norway, which has extensive Arctic interests. AP



Vietnam yesterday reported nine more cases of COVID-19, as the first outbreak in over three months spread to cities while authorities say they cannot trace its source. The Health Ministry said eight of the new infections are from hot spot Da Nang, while the other case was confirmed in Hanoi in a man who returned from the coastal city. The outbreak has spread to five other cities and provinces.

Africa's top health official says "this is no time for us to panic and fear" as the continent approaches the milestone of 1 million confirmed coronavirus cases. The director of the Africa Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, John Nkengasong, tells reporters that Africa still has a "very good chance of beating back this virus" if authorities do the right things like test assertively. But testing in Africa is challenged by shortages of materials and weak healthcare systems.

Britain is raising the self-isolation period for people who test positive for the coronavirus or have symptoms to 10 days from seven days. The U.K.'s chief medical officers say there's evidence people may still be able to spread the virus for more than a week after developing symptoms. They say "people with COVID-19 who are mildly ill and are recovering have a low but real possibility of infectiousness between seven and nine days after illness onset."



Britain's government has appointed the Foreign Office's political director as the new chief of the Secret Intelligence Service, or MI6. Richard Moore (pictured), who served as British ambassador to Turkey from 2014 to 2017, was named Wednesday to succeed Alex Younger as the head of the foreign intelligence agency.