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**THE ROTARY CLUB OF MACAU HIGHLIGHTS THE NEED TO ASSIST UNEMPLOYED FEMALE MIGRANTS WHO HAVE RECENTLY GIVEN BIRTH**

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**POLICE ARREST NINE LINKED TO UNLAWFUL BANK LOAN SCHEME**

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**Hong Kong** will further relax social distancing measures tomorrow, allowing gyms and massage parlors to reopen and extending dining-in hours at restaurants as its daily new coronavirus cases dwindle to single digits. Tough restrictions were imposed in July when a new wave of infections hit the territory, shuttering such businesses and limiting public gatherings to two people. Since then, daily infections have steadily decreased from a peak of over 100 in July to eight yesterday, the lowest number in two months.



**Australia's** coronavirus State of Victoria yesterday extended its state of emergency for another six months as its weekly average of new infections dipped. The Victorian Parliament's upper chamber passed legislation by a 20-19 vote to extend the state of emergency, which enhances the government's powers to impose pandemic restrictions. The government had wanted a 12-month extension. The state health department reported 90 new infections and six deaths in the latest 24-hour period.



**India** has reported 78,357 new coronavirus cases in the past 24 hours, raising the country's tally to more than 3.7 million reported cases since the pandemic began. The climb comes as the government eases pandemic restrictions to help the battered economy. The Health Ministry yesterday reported 1,045 deaths in the past 24 hours, taking total fatalities up to 66,333. India has been reporting the most new daily cases in the world for more than three weeks.

More on backpage

# SOLD OUT IN MINUTES

**Shun Tak's 400 property units in Hengqin Port were sold in three minutes on WeChat; 20% of buyers were from Macau and Hong Kong**

P5



## CHARLIE HEBDO: 14 SUSPECTS ON TRIAL OVER PARIS MASSACRE

AP PHOTO



P8

### VULNERABLE FAMILIES TO GET ANOTHER GOV'T PAYMENT

The Macau SAR government is giving over 3,000 vulnerable families another assistance payment, according to a statement released by the Social Welfare Bureau. The money, which ranges from 4,350 patacas to 20,270 patacas, depends on the number of members in each family. In response to the Covid-19 pandemic, the Macau SAR government designed an assistance payment scheme for around 3,100 local families which have been receiving regular governmental financial help. In March, the government issued a one-off financial assistance payment to the families. This is the second distribution and it will cost the government roughly 18.5 million patacas.

### TANZANIAN MAN SUSPECTED OF DRUG TRAFFICKING DETAINED

The Judiciary Police (PJ) has apprehended a Tanzanian man who is suspected of drug trafficking activities in Macau, the PJ reported yesterday. Previously, Hong Kong's customs authority cracked down on a drug-trafficking case involving HKD3.3 million in drugs. The drugs were mailed to Hong Kong from Europe. On Tuesday afternoon, the PJ found the 39-year-old Tanzanian national in his apartment and seized 15 grams of cocaine and 33,000 patacas in cash, believed to be the drug money. According to the suspect, he purchased the drugs from a non-Chinese national at a local night club. The man was also found to be overstaying in Macau.

### CARETAKER SUBSIDY SCHEME EXPECTED IN FOURTH QUARTER

The Macau SAR government is planning to launch a subsidy scheme for caretakers in the fourth quarter of this year, according to the Social Welfare Bureau's reply to lawmaker Song Pei Kei's interpellation. At the end of June, the bureau received a report regarding Macau's seniors' living conditions and their demand for long-term caretakers. Currently, the bureau is examining the feasibility of the subsidy scheme. According to the bureau, since the beginning of this year, the government has been subsidizing caretakers, with varying levels of financial support provided to individuals. The number of beneficiaries has grown to 16,903 this year, compared with about 12,500 last year.

### CRIME

## PJ ARRESTS NINE LINKED TO UNLAWFUL BANK LOAN SCHEME

RENATO MARQUES

**N**INE local men have been detained by the Judiciary Police (PJ) on suspicion of being involved in a scheme that took out bank loans justified by the false acquisition of automobiles, the PJ spokesperson revealed yesterday during a special press conference.

Among the nine suspects detained, four are the alleged scheme operators, including the ringleader. Five are considered participants. All of them have now been accused of document forgery and aggravated fraud.

The PJ received a complaint from the banking institution which claimed on August 19 to have found, during the evaluation of loan applications, that a car dealer located in the ZAPE area had presented several applications for their clients to request bank loans to buy cars.

In the analysis, the bank found that in many of the applications were missing documents and others raised suspicions of being forged. According to the PJ, among those documents were salary declarations, bank account statements, and even employment declarations.

The bank decided to present a formal complaint to the PJ after the applicants failed to present



the original copies of the documents submitted to the credit institution.

On the line were bank loan applications that amounted to HKD2.25 million, including two cases that had already been approved in early June, granting the applicants the combined amount of HKD900,000.

The bank also stated it had conducted an internal investigation which revealed that the car dealership's owner was the brother of the deputy director of the bank branch that granted the loan applications. The bank suspects that the deputy director made use of his position to accelerate the approval processes and bypass the delivery of the necessary documents for the

loans to be approved.

According to information obtained during the PJ's investigation, the scheme originated with the owner of a real estate agency and two of his staff members. The PJ suspects the owner to be the scheme's ringleader.

Since 2016, the agency has allegedly advertised through private networks that they could provide loans to people who had difficulty obtaining them by normal means.

Searching the agency, the PJ officers found documentary evidence in three computers as well as over HKD100,000 in cash.

The PJ spokesperson also said that there was sufficient evidence in the agency to prove that they had been operating

such a scheme since 2016. They collected personal data from several people interested in participating in the scheme to forge documents that would then be submitted by the car dealer to his brother at the bank.

According to the information collected, the scheme participants charged a commission of HKD160,000 from the two applicants whose loans were approved.

Upon questioning the car dealership owner, the PJ also found that after the loans were approved, the cars allegedly involved in the application were quickly sold to other people, who were not aware of the scheme, for a cheaper price.

Although the PJ has arrested the nine men in connection to the case for now, the force said the investigation is still ongoing since it is believed that more people could be involved in the case.

The PJ also said that besides cars, they suspect that the same people have conducted a similar scheme involving housing units and much higher loan amounts.

While the PJ continues the investigation, the nine suspects, with ages ranging from 27 to 38 years old, were presented yesterday to the Public Prosecutions Office.

### CRIME

## Forged gaming chip puts four behind bars

RENATO MARQUES

**T**HE use of a forged HKD100,000 gaming chip at a casino has led to the arrest of four local men, the Judiciary Police (PJ) spokesperson revealed yesterday during the joint press conference of the police forces.

The case dates back to August 30, when the security department of a casino in Taipa called the PJ after another staff member, a casino

cashier, discovered that a chip exchanged at the venue was a fake.

The PJ officers immediately detained three men, who were still in the casino venue, and a fourth suspect later on, also in connection to the case.

After questioning, the PJ found that the man who exchanged the chip at the casino had received it from another suspect, a croupier that he claimed to have met via

the mobile communication application WeChat.

The croupier told the man that he had a gaming chip worth HKD100,000 in his possession which needed to be exchanged and played in the casino before it went "dead." According to the testimony, he also said that he could not play it or exchange it himself as the chip must be used by someone that did not have a previous

gambling record in the local casinos.

The man accepted the deal and, taking a friend with him, met the croupier who was also in the company of another man that later escorted them to the venue in Taipa to play.

After exchanging the chip, the men played at the casino tables for some time, making a profit of about HKD130,000 from the chip until they were stopped by the ca-

sino security.

All of the men involved, ranging in age from 28 to 66 years, denied the crime to the PJ, saying that they had no idea that the chip was a fake. However, the PJ spokesperson said that the police force has gathered enough evidence to prove otherwise.

All four men were presented to the Public Prosecutions Office on September 1, accused of aggravated fraud.

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# SAR vulnerable to job losses if travel restrictions, quarantine continue

LYNZY VALLES

**T**HE Macau SAR is in sixth place globally among the cities for which travel and tourism have the largest contribution to their respective region's employment, making it more prone to job losses if coronavirus-related travel restrictions and quarantines remain in place.

According to the World Travel & Tourism Council's (WTTC) latest report on the economic and employment impact of travel and tourism, 65.5% of the SAR's total employment is in the travel and tourism sector, putting it in the top six worldwide.

Caribbean islands also rely heavily on travel and tourism for employment.

The industry accounted for 90.7% of jobs in Antigua and Barbuda in 2019, followed by Aruba, where tourism jobs made up 84.3% of total employment last year. St Lucia followed with 78.1%, then the U.S. Virgin Islands (68.8%) and the British Virgin Islands (66.4%).



Back in June, the WTTC noted that some 197.5 million jobs in the global sector could be lost, in a "worst-case scenario" where barriers, such as blanket travel restrictions and quarantines, remain in place.

Recent data from the SAR government shows that the general unemployment rate for May-July 2020 was 2.7% and the unemployment rate of local residents

was 3.8%, up by 0.2 and 0.3 percentage points respectively from the previous three-month period, April-June 2020.

Total employment decreased by 6,500 from the previous period to 395,400, due to a drop in the number of non-resident workers living in Macau. Many non-resident workers who utilized the several chartered repatriation flights were employed at integra-

ted resorts, as gaming operators initially laid off blue card holders.

Meanwhile, in the WTTC's "Recovery Scenarios 2020 & Economic Impact from Covid-19" report, the organization suggested that in the worst-case scenario, there should be an immediate removal and replacement of any quarantine measures with 'air corridors' to countries with similar pandemic circumstances, as

well as the removal of travel advisories and bans on non-essential international travel.

It suggested the adoption of global health and safety protocols to provide assurance to travelers that it is safe to travel again, and the implementation of a rapid test and trace strategy to help contain the spread of the virus.

The WTTC also called for greater collaboration between the public and private sectors to ensure a standardized, global approach to the crisis and continued government support for the sector in terms of fiscal and liquidity incentives as well as measures to protect workers.

In its Asia-Pacific data, it forecasted a best-case scenario where there would be a 33% year-on-year decrease in travel and tourism jobs and in the sector's GDP, while its worst-case scenario shows a 63% and 64% drop in jobs and GDP respectively.

There were 182.2 million travel and tourism jobs last year in the Asia-Pacific region, while the industry's GDP stood at \$2.97 trillion.

## THE 13 HOTEL IN FINANCIAL TROUBLE AGAIN AFTER SALE AGREEMENT LAPSES

LYNZY VALLES

**T**HE developer of the troubled The 13 Hotel is looking for other prospective buyers after a sale proposal and purchase agreement for the hotel collapsed.

The announcement came 10 months after developer South Shore Holdings announced that it had made an agreement that could lead to the disposal of a 40% interest in the subsidiary that owns the hotel project in southern Cotai.

The stake was valued at HKD750 million.

In a filing on Tuesday, the developer said that it had failed to reach agreement with the three purchasers to further extend the date upon which all precedent conditions must be met, as cited in a report issued by Inside Asian Gaming.

The sale and purchase agreement has therefore expired, forcing the developer to refund a deposit made by each of the purchasers.

Although the developer did not further explain why the sale and purchase agreement had not succeeded, it said that it would seek other prospective buyers.

"The Company intends to continue with its endeavors to seek prospective buyer(s) for the Hotel and/or the Land and execute a sale of the Hotel and/or the Land, and will work with the bank (in relation to the term loan in the outstanding principal amount of approximately HKD2.84 billion (as at 31 March 2020) on any further remedial measures as appropriate," it said.

The developer has previously requested a standstill from its bank to avoid the enforcement of security and liquidation of the company, after the bank demanded the firm make an immediate payment of HKD2.48 billion. The amount includes the entire principal amount with interest and follows an amount of HKD470 million, which was supposed to be paid to the bank on March 31.

## POKERSTARS EXITS OPERATIONS IN CHINA, MACAU AND TAIWAN

**T**HE world's largest online poker site, PokerStars, is said to have exited markets in China, Macau and Taiwan this week.

As cited in an email posted on the Two Plus Two poker forum on August 31, PokerStars informed its customers in those regions that the operator is halting its operations.

The email from "Stars Support" informed players of relaxed methods for withdrawals, noting that the minimum wire amount has been lowered to \$50 for these three regions.

Payment app MuchBetter has also been enabled as withdrawal option without a previous deposit for China and Macau.

Although there is no official response from the firm as yet, in the recent earnings call of

PokerStars' parent company Flutter Entertainment, the operator stated, "[there are] a small number of The Stars Group jurisdictions that Flutter had previously determined it would not operate in and in such cases, we have now switched these markets off."

Real-money online poker play in China, Macau and Taiwan is yet to be legalized. China, in particular, has been holding an anti-online gambling campaign, aiming to combat cross-border gambling. Thus, Flutter Entertainment may be looking to avoid legal issues with these three regions, opting instead for operation withdrawal.

During the second quarter of the year, PokerStars' customers increased by 70% amid the closure of many casinos worldwide. LV

## LAW FIRM THAT DEFENDED NG LAP SENG SUES FOR NON-PAYMENT

**T**HE law firm that defended billionaire real estate developer Ng Lap Seng in his criminal bribery case is accusing the Macau businessman of not paying more than \$1.9 million in legal fees, reported Reuters.

The Law Firm of Hugh H. Mo on Monday sued Ng in the U.S. District Court in Manhattan, saying that the billionaire has "simply failed and refused to pay" \$1.9 million in legal costs.

"Despite repeated demands by the Mo firm, and Ng's repeated assurance that payment would be rendered, Ng has refused to pay," the firm wrote in its lawsuit, according to Reuters.

The firm added that Ng had never complained about or disputed the legal fees or his representation.

Ng was sentenced to four years in prison in 2018 for his role in bribing two United Nations ambassadors so he could build a large-scale conference center in Macau.

Ng was said to have paid more than \$1 million to former UN General Assembly president John Ashe, as well as other officials, in exchange for their support for a conference center that would host the United Nations' annual Global South-South Development Expo.

According to prosecutors, the conference center was to be located on a man-made island off the coast of Macau, where Ng also intended to develop a related complex that included apartments, offices, high-end shopping, a casino and a luxury hotel. DB

## 60,000 SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS STARTED CLASSES

Over 60,000 secondary school students have already started their classes, according to the director of the Education and Youth Affairs Bureau (DSEJ). This number corresponds to the number of students registered as of the first two days of this new semester. As of 8 a.m. yesterday, close to 1,500 students living in Zhuhai had crossed the border to attend schools in Macau. The Public Security Police Force (PSP) opened 12 checkpoints exclusively for these students. The DSEJ director has urged schools to not overload students with studying pressure and to give the students a relaxed learning environment.

## ONE-THIRD OF RESTAURANTS TOLD TO IMPROVE HYGIENE CONDITIONS

More than one-third of the restaurants inspected by the Municipal Affairs Bureau (IAM) have been ordered to improve the hygiene condition of their grease traps. Between August 20 and August 26, the IAM inspected 90 restaurants in the city. These restaurants were on the bureau's key watchlist due to their dissatisfactory history of hygiene conditions. During its inspection, the IAM issued an order of improvement to 33 restaurants, specifically asking for changes to their grease traps, which process the grease and solids. In addition to that, 14 restaurants were prosecuted because they failed to regularly clean the grease traps, which are full of accumulated grease and solids. According to the IAM, the department frequently encountered clogged sewage caused by accumulated grease solids. Illegally disposing of waste jeopardizes the city's flooding situation, the IAM explained.



# UM ACADEMIC YEAR STARTS MONDAY

**T**HE University of Macau's (UM) 2020/2021 academic year will begin on Monday, September 7, a statement from the institution announced yesterday.

In response to the status of the Covid-19 pandemic, courses scheduled for the first semester of the new academic year will be mainly conducted face-to-face. The university will continue to

implement pandemic prevention measures to provide a safe and hygienic environment for faculty, students, and staff.

Classes at UM will be arranged in accordance with the guidelines issued by the Health Bureau and the Higher Education Bureau of the SAR government. Classes of up to 100 students will be conducted face-to-face.

Classes of 100 to 200 students will be divided into two groups according to the number of students, with each group alternating between face-to-face and online classes.

Classes of more than 200 students will be conducted entirely online. The university will also provide online teaching to students who are unable to enter Macau to at-

tend classes.

In addition, students are required to measure their body temperature, put on a face mask, disinfect their hands, and present their Macau health code before entering the classroom. Students returning to the university from outside Macau are required to undergo 14 days of self-health management if they do not have a quarantine completion certificate issued by the SAR government or the Zhuhai municipal government.

According to the UM statement, the university has made thorough anti-epidemic preparations for the start of the new academic year, including disinfection and cleaning at various locations on campus. It said UM will closely monitor the development of the epidemic and adjust the teaching arrangements in a timely manner in accordance with the entry requirements and epidemic prevention guidelines of the government.

Students are advised to wash their hands frequently, wear masks, and keep a safe distance in order to protect the physical and mental health of themselves and others. **DB**

AD

### Concurso Público para o fornecimento de uniformes dos funcionários à MTR (Macau)

(Nº de referência do contrato: MTRM2/CR-2020/07/003)

Após aprovação pela Comissão Executiva da MTR na reunião da Comissão Executiva a 22 de Julho de 2020, a MTR está aberta a propostas sobre o presente Concurso de todos os fornecedores. O presente Concurso inclui, mas não se limita à aquisição dos materiais utilizados na confecção dos uniformes, à manufactura e fornecimento dos mesmos e os respectivos acessórios, à entrega dos uniformes e aos serviços de pós-venda e de adequação. Os interessados podem solicitar o modelo da proposta por email ([procurement@mtr.com.mo](mailto:procurement@mtr.com.mo)) ao Departamento de Aquisição e Contrato da MTR (Macau) e deverão enviar a proposta devidamente preenchida pelo mesmo meio antes de 04 de Setembro de 2020.

Em caso de quaisquer dúvidas, o Departamento de Aquisição e Contrato da MTR (Macau) está ao seu dispor para consultas.

(Nota: Por favor indique o número de referência do contrato no título do email para fins de identificação.)

31 de agosto de 2020

MTR OPERAÇÕES FERROVIÁRIAS (MACAU) SOCIEDADE UNIPESSOAL LDA.

## ROTARY CLUB HIGHLIGHTS NEED TO ASSIST UNEMPLOYED FEMALE MIGRANTS

**T**HE new president of the Rotary Club of Macau has called on assistance for one of the city's vulnerable groups – unemployed female migrant workers who have recently given birth.

João Pinto, the 74th President of the Rotary Club of Macau, spoke at the joint installation ceremony of the new club leaders of the Rotary Club of Macau, Rotaract Club of Macau, Rotaract Club of University of Macau Students' Union, and Interact Club of St Paul School for the Rotary Year of 2020-21.

"The Covid-19 pandemic has changed the way the world works. We can choose, and actually, should look into these challenges as great opportunities," he said, as cited in a statement.

In addition to the club's annual "Joy to the World Xmas Party" for local residents with special needs, annual blood donation drive, and other traditional service projects, Pinto also added that the rotary is concerned with the female



João Pinto

migrant workers that have recently given birth and are unemployed.

"We are concerned with the difficulties faced by these women who are facing unemployment and the lack of flights to return to their home countries. They need our help, now, more than ever, to feed their babies, and to ensure the newborn's good health," said the new president.

Meanwhile, the new president of the Rotaract Club of Macau, Christy Ao, said that the group aims to ease the tension built up among our communities during the Covid-19 pandemic period.

The Rotaract Club of Macau also plans to organize workshops and activities in the area of mental health throughout this Rotary year for different age groups. **LV**

# Real estate expert believes Hengqin housing is 'overpriced'

JULIE ZHU

**E**VEN as over 400 housing units in Hengqin sold out in just minutes last week, at least one real estate expert in Macau believes property in some areas across the border is 'overpriced'.

Recently, Shun Tak Holdings Ltd. started selling units at its Hengqin development called "Hengqin Integrated Development", which features office and retail facilities, hotel space and private apartments. Over 400 housing units were sold out within several minutes with an average price of 50,000 yuan (58,000 patacas) per square meter, with a large share going in the first few seconds.

Despite the promising plans for Hengqin, the area's overall housing price is believed to be currently overpriced, although it has the possibility to climb even higher in the future.

On August 29, Shun Tak launched the sale of its residential and commercial Hengqin Port real estate project, which is an adjunct building of the Hengqin Port. More than 400 housing units, consisting of both commercial and residential units, were sold within three minutes through WeChat. Around 20% of buyers were from Macau and Hong Kong.

The project is one of the roughly 20 property projects currently being developed in Hengqin, which is predicted to include over 200,000 housing units, sufficient capacity to host the entire Macau population. These 20 projects' housing units are almost sold out, according to the information shared with Macau Daily Times by Terence Lo, an Associate Director at Ambiente Properties, who is knowledgeable about the market across the border.

The housing unit prices of these developments are higher



A rendering of the Shun Tak development in Hengqin by Hengqin Port

than the average housing price in Hengqin, which is between 40,000 to 42,000 yuan. According to Lo, based on the current market conditions in Hengqin, the area's current residential price and this specific project's are "overpriced".

"Based on current needs, the price would not go up to 50,000 yuan per square meter. The buyers are buying a future and the driving force is mainly the fact that Hengqin is a plan to support the shortage of land in Macau," said Lo.

In future, the real estate agent expects Hengqin's residential prices to close the gap with those in Macau, which currently sits at around 100,000 yuan (116,000 patacas) per square meter. He predicts housing prices will eventually climb to 75,000 yuan per square meter, but he could not provide a date for this.

According to Lo, a studio apartment of 40 to 50 square meters currently commands a rental price of around 3,000 yuan per month.

Hengqin occupies a land area of around 106 square kilometers,

more than triple the area of Macau. The Central Government of China plans to use the island to develop the financial and tourism industries, the Chinese medicine sector, and to diversify Macau's economy. The area also serves another mission: to integrate the lifestyles and different cultures of mainland China and Macau by attracting residents from the MSAR to live in Hengqin. The Central Government has granted Macau residents priority to purchase properties in Hengqin.

In Lo's opinion, one of the key reasons Macau residents should buy houses in Hengqin is the housing price.

"You pay 600,000 or 700,000 yuan for the first installment and you can buy a new high-end house in Hengqin. We are talking about houses on the border. In Macau, for the same price, you may not even get a mortgage with an old house. It's easier to get a house [in Hengqin]," said Lo.

Asked about the attraction Hengqin holds for Macau citizens, Lo still admitted that, overall, Hengqin's "is not yet that

attractive," especially with the current Covid-19 pandemic. Lo explained that the Shun Tak project's popularity is a special case because the building is right by the Hengqin Port.

Lo's colleague Ryan Choi, also an Associate Director at Ambiente Properties, also believes the sale of the Shun Tak units reflects speculation on the behalf of investors.

Choi believes that buyers are paying these prices not for current Hengqin but for the future Hengqin. Choi believes that Hengqin's population will steadily grow and investments in the properties may see a return on investment in five to eight years.

Currently, in Hengqin, human traffic is much lower than that of Gongbei or other major commercial areas of Zhuhai city. However, with the new border and the opening of Zhuhai-Hengqin train routes, the area is expected to be more congested in future.

Choi believes Hengqin's transportation, living facilities and infrastructure will be improved as the population grows.

## SENIORS ACADEMY AT MPI OPENS REGISTRATION

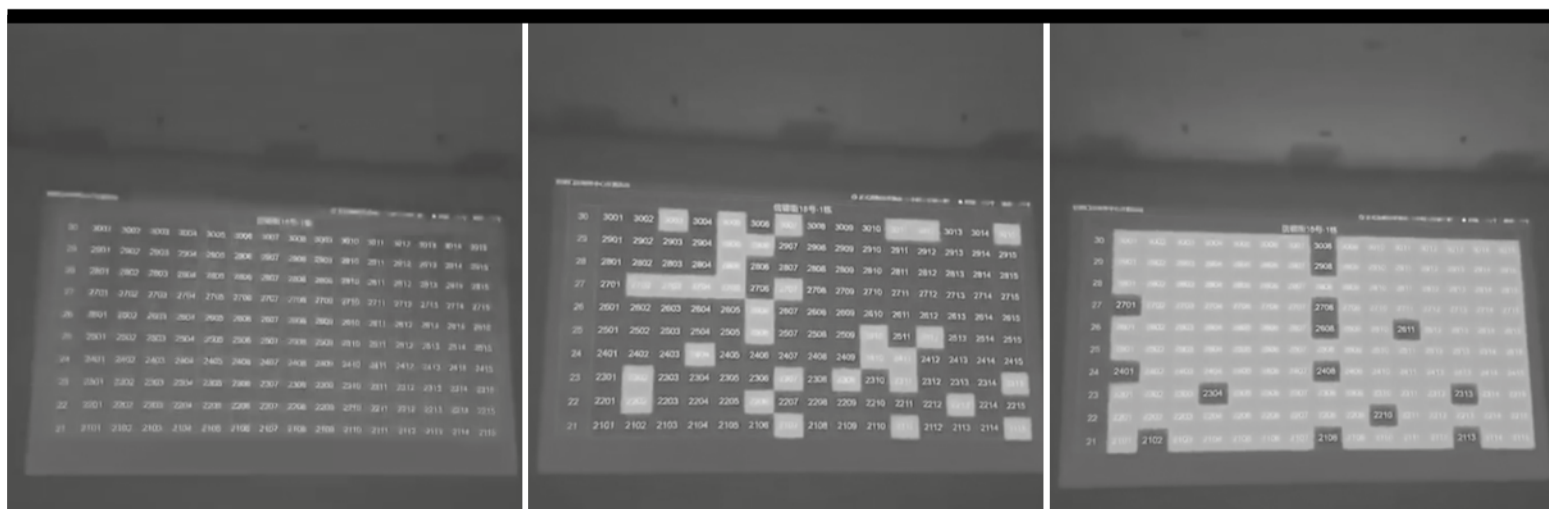
The Seniors Academy (ACS) Taipa School of the Macao Polytechnic Institute is set to launch '2020 Short Courses,' accepting Macau residents aged over 55 years old. As cited in a statement, the ACS Taipa School will launch a number of three-month short courses besides the four-year study program, offering 125 spaces to the seniors who are not yet studying at ACS. The names of the ACS 2020 Short Courses include: Daily English Conversation/ English for Everyday Conversation, Portuguese Language, Singing Techniques, Introduction to Online Shopping and Fitness Exercise. Registration for lot-drawing will take place from September 7 to 9.

## IC TO INCLUDE VIRTUAL EVALUATION IN VISUAL ART COMPETITION

The Cultural Affairs Bureau will include a virtual evaluation in addition to the existing evaluation process for the Collective Exhibition of Macao Visual Arts 2020, due to the effect of Covid-19. Over 300 works were submitted to the competition. The evaluation will run in two stages. During the first evaluation, the jury will conduct a preliminary review online for all entries based on the information and images of works submitted by applicants. Shortlisted works will then qualify for the second round of evaluation, where the applicants will be notified to submit physical works. According to the bureau, about 80 pieces of work will be shortlisted. In response to the alteration of the method of evaluation, successful applicants whose works are three-dimensional, such as ceramics, sculptures and installations, may submit high-definition images and videos of their work via email until September 10.

## CCAC AWARDS OVER 60 LESSON PLAN ENTRIES

The Commission Against Corruption (CCAC) held an awards ceremony for its "Integrity Lesson Plan Design Collection Activity," which was launched to adjudicate the quality of lesson plans developed by schools and higher education institutions. The CCAC received a total of 68 entries from 24 schools and higher education institutions, from which a total of 23 'Excellent Lesson Plans' and 38 'Commendable Lesson Plans' have been selected by a jury panel. Launched in January, the activity was divided into the Open Group and the Student Group. CCAC Commissioner Chan Tsz King stated that the CCAC would continue to devote its efforts to the education of integrity and honesty in schools in order for schools, teachers and parents to collaborate to "foster an honest, righteous and responsible generation."



These stills made from a 15-second video show a selection of property units at the Hengqin Integrated Development being sold with seconds of launch

AP PHOTO



## CORONAVIRUS

# THIRD VIRUS VACCINE REACHES MAJOR HURDLE: FINAL US TESTING

LAURAN NEERGAARD  
& CARLA K. JOHNSON,  
MEDICAL WRITERS

A handful of the dozens of experimental COVID-19 vaccines in human testing have reached the last and biggest hurdle — looking for the needed proof that they really work as a U.S. advisory panel suggested a way to ration the first limited doses once a vaccine wins approval.

AstraZeneca announced Monday its vaccine candidate has entered the final testing stage in the U.S. The Cambridge, England-based company said the study will involve up to 30,000 adults from various racial, ethnic and geographic groups.

Two other vaccine candidates began final testing this summer in tens of thousands of people in the U.S. One was created by the National Institutes of Health and manufactured by Moderna Inc., and the other developed by Pfizer Inc. and Germany's BioNTech.

"To have just one vaccine enter the final stage of trials eight months after discovering a virus would be a remarkable achievement; to have three at that point with more on the way is extraordinary," Health

and Human Services Secretary Alex Azar said in a statement.

NIH Director Francis Collins tweeted that his agency "is supporting several vaccine trials since more than one may be needed. We have all hands on deck."

AstraZeneca said development of the vaccine, known as AZD1222, is moving ahead globally with late-stage trials in the U.K., Brazil and South Africa. Further trials are planned in Japan and Russia. The potential vaccine was invented by the University of Oxford and an associated company, Vaccitech.

Meanwhile, a U.S. advisory panel released a draft plan this week for how to ration the first doses of vaccine. The National Academies of Sciences, Engineering and Medicine proposed giving the first vaccine doses — initial supplies are expected to be limited to up to 15 million people — to high-risk health care workers and first responders.

Next, older residents of nursing homes and other crowded facilities and people of all ages with health conditions that put them at significant danger would be given priority. In following waves of vaccination, teachers, other school staff, workers in essential industries,

and people living in homeless shelters, group homes, prisons and other facilities would get the shots.

Healthy children, young adults and everyone else would not get the first vaccinations, but would be able to get them once supplies increase.

The panel of experts described "a moral imperative" to lessen the heavy disease burden of COVID-19 on Blacks, Hispanics, Native Americans and Alaska Natives, and suggested state and local authorities could target vulnerable neighborhoods using data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

The National Academies will solicit public comments on the plan through Friday.

There's a good reason so many COVID-19 vaccines are in development.

"The first vaccines that come out are probably not going to be the best vaccines," Dr. Nicole Lurie, who helped lead pandemic planning under the Obama administration, said at a University of Minnesota vaccine symposium.

There's no guarantee that any of the leading candidates will pan out — and the bar is higher than for COVID-19 treatments, because these

vaccines will be given to healthy people. Final testing, experts stress, must be in large numbers of people to know if they're safe enough for mass vaccinations.

They're made in a wide variety of ways, each with pros and cons. One problem: Most of the leading candidates are being tested with two doses, which lengthens the time required to get an answer — and, if one works, to fully vaccinate people.

Another: They're all shots. Vaccine experts are closely watching development of some nasal-spray alternatives that just might begin the first step of human testing later this year — late to the race, but possibly advantageous against a virus that sneaks into the airways.

For now, here's a scorecard of vaccines that already have begun or are getting close to final-stage tests:

### GENETIC CODE VACCINES

The Moderna and Pfizer candidates began Phase 3 testing in late July.

Neither uses the actual coronavirus. Instead, they're made with the genetic code for the aptly named "spike" protein that coats the surface of the coronavirus. Inject the

vaccine containing that code, called mRNA, and the body's cells will make some harmless spike protein — just enough for the immune system to respond, priming it to react if it later encounters the real virus.

These mRNA vaccines are easier and faster to make than traditional vaccines, but it's a new and unproven technology.

### TROJAN HORSE VACCINES

Britain's Oxford University and AstraZeneca are making what scientists call a "viral vector" vaccine but a good analogy is the Trojan horse. The shots are made with a harmless virus — a cold virus that normally infects chimpanzees — that carries the spike protein's genetic material into the body. Once again, the body produces some spike protein and primes the immune system, but it, too, is a fairly new technology.

Two possible competitors are made with different human cold viruses.

Shots made by Johnson & Johnson began initial human studies in late July. The company plans to begin Phase 3 testing in September in as many as 60,000 people in the U.S. and elsewhere.

China's government authorized emergency use of CanSino Biologics' adenovirus shots in the military ahead of any final testing.

### 'KILLED' VACCINES

Making vaccines by growing a disease-causing virus and then killing it is a tried-and-true approach — it's the way Jonas Salk's famed polio shots were made. China has three so-called "inactivated" vaccine candidates against COVID-19 made this way.

Sinovac has final studies of its candidate underway in Brazil and Indonesia. Competitor SinoPharm has announced plans for final testing in some other countries.

Safely brewing and then killing the virus takes longer than newer technologies. But inactivated vaccines give the body a sneak peek at the germ itself rather than just that single spike protein.

### PROTEIN VACCINES

Novavax makes "protein subunit" vaccines, growing harmless copies of the coronavirus spike protein in the laboratory and packaging them into virus-sized nanoparticles.

There are protein-based vaccines against other diseases, so it's not as novel a technology as some of its competitors. But it only recently finished its first-step study; the U.S. government's Operation Warp Speed aims for advanced testing later in the fall. AP

# Pentagon says Beijing planning big increase in nuclear arsenal

ROBERT BURNS,  
WASHINGTON

**C**HINA likely plans to double its stockpile of nuclear warheads in this decade, including those designed to be carried atop ballistic missiles that can reach the United States, the Pentagon said in a report released yesterday [Macau time].

Even with such increases, China's nuclear force would be far smaller than that of the United States, which has an estimated 3,800 warheads in active status and others in reserve. Unlike the U.S., China has no nuclear air force, but the report said that gap may be filled by developing a nuclear air-launched ballistic missile.

The Trump administration has been urging China to join the U.S. and Russia in negotiating a three-way deal to limit strategic nuclear arms, but China has declined. Chinese Foreign Ministry officials have said China's arsenal is too small to be included in negotiated limits and that by pressing China to join in such talks the Trump administration has created a pretext for walking away from the existing U.S.-Russia arms treaty known as New START. That deal is due to expire in February but could be renewed for up to five years if Moscow and Washington agree.

In its annual "China Military Power" report to Congress, the Pentagon said the modernization and expansion of China's nuclear forces is part of a broader effort by Beijing to develop a more assertive position on the world stage and to match or surpass America by



Defense Secretary Mark Esper

2049 as the dominant power in the Asia-Pacific region.

"China's nuclear forces will significantly evolve over the next decade as it modernizes, diversifies, and increases the number of its land-, sea-, and air-based nuclear delivery platforms," the report said. "Over the next decade, China's nuclear warhead stockpile — currently estimated to be in the low 200s — is projected to at least double in size as China expands and modernizes its nuclear forces."

Within that force, the number of nuclear warheads on land-based intercontinental ballistic missiles capable of threatening the United States — currently about 100, according to the report — "is expected to grow to roughly 200 in the next five years," it said.

Hans Kristensen, a nuclear weapons expert at the Federation of American Scientists and a specialist in China's force, said the "low 200s" Pentagon estimate is slightly lower than his own estimate of about 300.

"The low number of course somewhat weakens the Trump administration's warnings about Chinese capabilities" and its concerns that Beijing may be aiming to achieve nuclear parity with the United

States, he said.

Yesterday's report to Congress is not the first time the Pentagon has predicted a doubling of China's nuclear stockpile. In a speech at the Hudson Institute in May 2019, the then-director of the Defense Intelligence Agency, Lt. Gen. Robert Ashley, said, "Over the next decade, China will likely at least double the size of its nuclear stockpile in the course of implementing the most rapid expansion and diversification of its nuclear arsenal in China's history." Ashley said China's stockpile was in the "low couple hundreds."

Those predictions fit neatly with arguments the Trump administration makes to justify spending hundreds of billions of dollars to modernize the U.S. nuclear arsenal.

Defense Secretary Mark Esper himself made this connection three days before the Pentagon's China report was released.

"As Communist China moves to at least double the size of its nuclear stockpile, modernizing our nuclear force and maintaining readiness is essential to a free and open Indo-Pacific," he wrote on Twitter.

The Trump administration is pursuing a plan, begun

during the Obama administration, to replace all major elements of the nuclear force — submarines, long-range bombers and land-based missiles — over the next 30 years at a cost projected to top \$1 trillion, including the expected cost of sustaining and operating the force and of updating warheads as well as command and control systems. It's unclear whether the full plan would be pursued in the event Democrat Joe Biden wins in November.

Chad Sbragia, the deputy secretary of defense for China policy, said in an interview Monday with a small group of reporters that China's nuclear expansion plan may foreshadow even more ambitious plans.

"An ability to double the stockpile not only demonstrates a move away from their historical minimum deterrence posture but places them in a position where they can readily grow their force beyond this number," Sbragia said.

The Pentagon report also raised the possibility that China may adopt a higher level of nuclear combat readiness. Currently, it keeps its nuclear warheads stored separately from its missiles and launchers and thus would need advance warning to get them ready for war. The report said unspecified evidence emerged in 2019 indicating that China wants to keep at least a portion of its force on a higher state of alert known as "launch on warning," meaning for example that its silo-based ICBMs would be armed in peacetime and ready for launch on short notice, which is the way the U.S. ICBM force operates. **AP**

## OPINION

### Xinhua Insight

Xinhua Editors

#### **STRONGER CHINA-EU TIES NEEDED TO UPHOLD MULTILATERALISM IN POST-CORONAVIRUS WORLD**

The just-concluded European tour of China's top diplomat further demonstrated a need for stronger ties between the two sides to uphold multilateralism, stick to openness and scale up cooperation in the post-coronavirus world.

Chinese State Councilor and Foreign Minister Wang Yi's trip to Italy, the Netherlands, Norway, France and Germany came at a critical time when unilateralism is hurting global cooperation and international solidarity.

Reassuringly, upholding multilateralism is a major consensus reached during Wang's trip. "The strongest voice heard during my trip to Europe is that we need to steadfastly safeguard multilateralism, and we agreed on this," he said.

Based on such consensus, it is hopeful that China and the EU, by working together, can help the world stand on the right side of history.

The fight against the COVID-19 pandemic has amplified the world's call for multilateralism more than ever. While certain nation has been tearing apart international deals and shunning its obligations, countries around the world should oppose unilateralism and protectionism by enhancing cooperation within multilateral frameworks and abiding by their multilateral agreements.

Wang also underscored the spirit of openness during his talks with European leaders. "Openness brings progress, while isolation leads to backwardness" in the complicated and changing world, he said.

Accordingly, China is ready to step up negotiations for an investment agreement with the EU and bilateral agreements with EU member countries on free trade and other common interests.

Moreover, by engaging in wider cooperation in trade, investment, and industry, China and the EU are capable of injecting a strong and lasting impetus in their development and the global economic recovery in the post-coronavirus world.

Recent years have already seen mutually beneficial cooperation between China and Europe through the Belt and Road Initiative, the China-Europe railway express, among others.

In fact, Wang's European trip itself is a sign showing China is gradually normalizing high-level visits which were interrupted by the pandemic, creating preconditions for future cooperation, observed Volker Tschapke, honorary president of Germany's Prussian Society.

By reaffirming commitments to multilateralism, openness and cooperation, China and the EU stand a good chance to forge a closer partnership that will bring benefits to both sides as well as the whole world.

## Taiwan unveils redesigned passport

**T**AIWAN has unveiled a redesigned passport in an effort to stop its citizens being mistaken for Chinese while traveling abroad.

The new passport omits "Republic of China" - the official name by which Taiwan refers to itself - in larger English print from the Taiwanese passport cover.

"Republic of China" remains written in Chinese, and in smaller English writing surrounding Taiwan's

official sun emblem in the center of the cover. The new passports will be issued from January.

"Many countries tightened immigration checks after Covid-19 broke out in January," Foreign Minister Joseph Wu said at yesterday's unveiling of the new design. "To help citizens avoid being falsely identified as Chinese, lawmakers agreed in July to make Taiwanese passports more recognizable and

easier to distinguish from Chinese ones to uphold our citizens' dignity."

The redesign is the latest move by President Tsai Ing-wen to assert Taiwan's separate status from the People's Republic of China.

The next high-profile name change could be for China Airlines, Taiwan's flag carrier. Lawmakers approved a resolution in July mandating the government to devise feasible ways to

rename the airline to avoid it being mistaken for a Chinese company.

Since coming into power in 2016, Tsai has sought to strengthen ties with the U.S. through weapons purchases and trade talks to counter increasingly assertive Chinese moves to isolate Taiwan. She has offered to hold talks with Beijing but only on the condition China accepts Taiwan as an equal.

**MDT/BLOOMBERG**

AP PHOTO



French police officers guard the courtroom before the 2015 attacks trial yesterday

# 14 on trial in 2015 Paris attacks that sparked terror wave

LORI HINNANT  
& NICOLAS VAUX-  
MONTAGNY, PARIS

**T**HIRTEEN men and a woman are on trial over the 2015 attacks against a satirical newspaper and a kosher supermarket in Paris that marked the beginning of a wave of violence by the Islamic State group in Europe.

Seventeen people and all three gunmen died during the three days of attacks in January 2015. Later that year, a separate network of French and Belgian fighters for Islamic State struck Paris again, this time killing 130 people in attacks at the Bataclan concert hall, the national stadium, and in bars and restaurants.

Those on trial in France's terrorism court are accused of buying weapons, cars, and helping with logistics. Most say they thought they were helping plan an ordinary crime. Three, including the only woman accused, are being tried in absentia after leaving to join Islamic State.

The attacks from Jan. 7-9, 2015, started during an editorial meeting at Charlie Hebdo, whose offices had been unmarked and guarded by police since the publication of caricatures of the Prophet Muhammad years before. Brothers Cherif and Said Kouachi,

gunned down 12 people before carjacking a vehicle and fleeing. They claimed the attacks in the name of al-Qaida.

Two days later, on the eve of the Jewish Sabbath, Amedy Coulibaly stormed the Hyper Cacher supermarket, killing four hostages in the name of the Islamic State group as the brothers took control of a printing office outside the French capital. The attackers died that day during near-simultaneous police raids.

It took days more for investigators to realize that Coulibaly was also responsible for the seemingly random death of a young policewoman the previous day.

It took further weeks to unravel the network of petty criminals and neighborhood friends linking the three attackers. By then, Coulibaly's wife had left for Syria with the help of two brothers also charged in the case. Most of the 11 who will appear insist their help in the mass killings was unwitting.

"Since 2012, terrorism capitalized on the prevailing delinquency there is around these terrorists," said Samia Maktouf, a lawyer for one of the attack survivors. "They are not second fiddles, they are full accomplices. You know, when you provide a weapon it's not to go and party."

Despite a global outpouring of support, the attacks were also seen as a massive intelligence failure. French authorities ended a phone tap on one of the Kouachi brothers a few months before they stormed the editorial offices. At least one had trained with al-Qaida in Yemen and been convicted of an earlier terrorism offense. The brothers walked away from the carnage they had caused, escaping easily and drove through multiple dragnets before being trapped two days later.

"The government failed. If the intelligence services had done their job, this would not have happened," said Isabelle Coutant-Peyre, lawyer for the only person in court facing a life term. "The victims don't just want a guilty verdict, but real justice. The truth must come out. It's not a justice of vengeance, but a justice to know."

Wednesday's trial opened under tight security, with multiple police checks for anyone entering the main courtroom or the overflow rooms. At nearby newsstands, the latest issue of Charlie Hebdo appeared, defiantly reprinting the caricatures of the Prophet Mohammed cited by the gunmen who killed so many of the publication's editorial staff.

"They died so that you journalists could do your

jobs," said Richard Malka, lawyer for Charlie Hebdo. "Let us not be afraid. Not of terrorism, not of freedom."

The only person in the courtroom facing a life sentence is Ali Riza Polat, who is accused of serving as the link between the Kouachi brothers and Coulibaly. He appears at each stage of planning the attack, according to the judicial investigation, organizing secure phone lines, checking the price of explosives and ammunition, and traveling with Coulibaly to Belgium.

Polat was the first among the accused to speak Wednesday, briefly confirming his name and date of arrest.

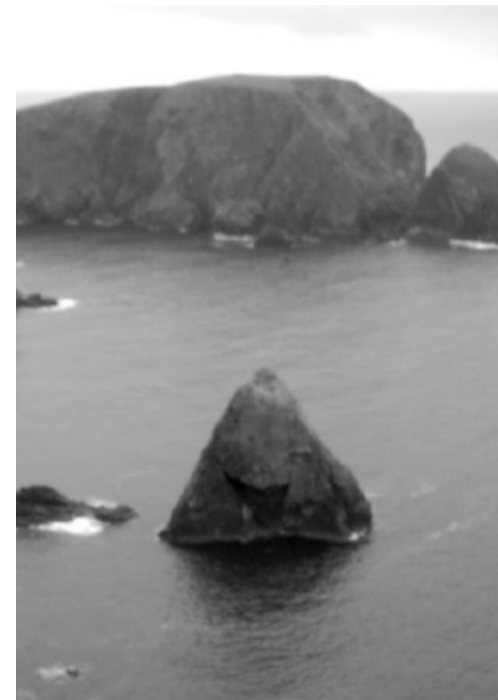
Patrick Klugman, a lawyer for the hostages at the supermarket, said he regretted that the outpouring of support for free speech after the Charlie Hebdo killings was not matched by a similar outpouring over the anti-Semitic nature of the attacks.

"I want to discuss a word, a word that has disappeared from this procedure: anti-Semitism. When you attack a kosher market, you are hitting people in their daily lives, their culture, their rituals ... they knew that on this day, they were hitting Jews at the most sacred, most familial moment of the week."

He said that without those being charged "there would be no Coulibaly." AP

## this day in history

### 1954 NATIONAL TRUST BUYS REMOTE ISLAND



The National Trust for Scotland has taken control of Fair Isle, famous for its bird life and knitted sweaters.

The remote island situated between Shetland and Orkney was bought by George Waterston, an Edinburgh ornithologist, in 1948. He set up a bird observatory which has since built up a worldwide reputation.

The National Trust says it plans to expand research into migratory bird life.

It also plans to ensure greater security and stability for the dwindling population which currently numbers just 45 men, women and children.

The charity was able to buy the island thanks to a £5,500 grant from the Dulverton Trust.

The Pilgrim Trust has given £7,000 to the Bird Observatory Trust to expand their activities and begin a Fair Isle endowment fund.

It is hoped that those interested in birdlife will make donations to the fund to help protect wild birds and research their behaviour.

Mr Waterston told reporters today in Edinburgh that the plan for a bird observatory was concocted in a German prisoner of war camp with fellow inmate and ornithologist Ian Pitman.

Along with fish, Fair Isle's main export is its world famous woollen garments decorated with traditional designs handed down from generation to generation.

The Fair Isle sweater became highly fashionable in the 1920s when the Prince of Wales was often seen wearing one when playing golf.

Courtesy BBC News

## IN CONTEXT

The National Trust was founded in 1895 by Octavia Hill and its Scottish arm set up in 1926 to "protect and promote Scotland's natural and cultural heritage for present and future generations to enjoy".

In 1956 the National Trust organised a conference on Fair Isle to discuss ways of saving the island's economy by improving communications to the remote island.

By 2003 the population had risen to about 70 islanders.

Fair Isle still houses an observatory for research into the origins, routes, wintering areas and feeding habits of spring and autumn migratory birds.



MACAU'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

**YOUR STARS**

**ARIES**  
Mar. 21-Apr. 19  
Choose wisely. If you take advantage of other people, you'll end up being the person who feels used. Stand up for the people who might not be strong enough to stand up for themselves.

**TAURUS**  
Apr. 20-May. 20  
The energy that is growing between you and another person is giving you two a lot of power over your surroundings. Are you guys ready to use it? Unleash your dynamic-duo-ism on the world today!

**GEMINI**  
May. 21-Jun. 21  
You are in an excellent position to help some of your buddies today, although it might not be the most convenient thing for you to do. Maybe a friend needs to move and you have a truck.

**CANCER**  
Jun. 22-Jul. 22  
Waiting for other people to catch up with you is a total waste of time right now. If they aren't already up to speed, there is no point in getting involved with them. Move on without their input.

**LEO**  
Jul. 23-Aug. 22  
This is a wonderful day to meet new people, too. If you have a job interview or meeting scheduled, you can rest assured that it will go well. Put some happy energy out into the world.

**VIRGO**  
Aug. 23-Sep. 22  
This is not a good day to explore any unknown territory. Try to stick close to home or only go to places where everyone knows your name. But it won't be hard to curb your curiosity.

**LIBRA**  
Sep. 23-Oct. 22  
You're learning your limits, and learning is always a good use of your time. There is no futility here. It's all going to be worth something sooner or later.

**SCORPIO**  
Oct. 23-Nov. 21  
Consider letting other people take control while you just go along for the ride. If you let a friend pick the activity, you'll get to do something you've never done before.

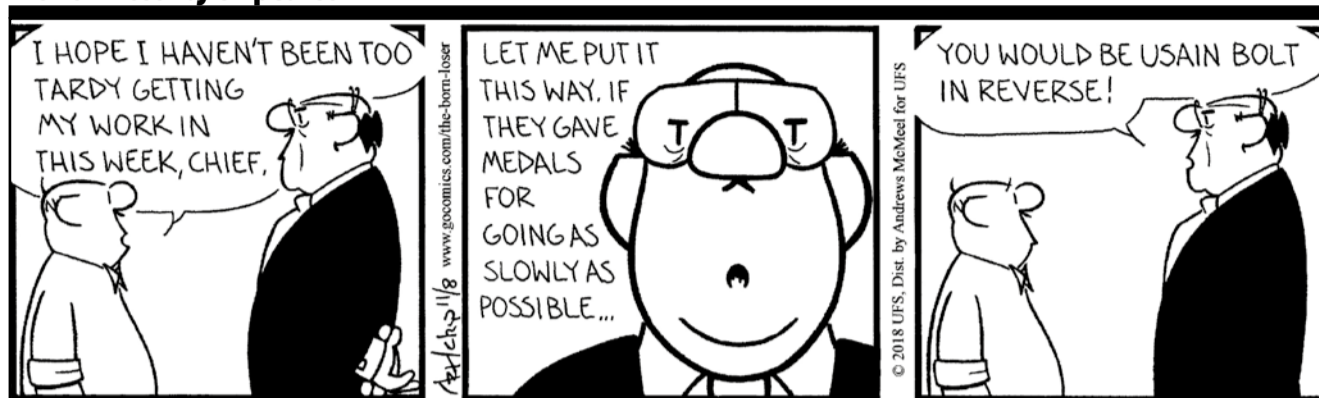
**SAGITTARIUS**  
Nov. 22-Dec. 21  
And while not everything you put your stamp on will be a huge success, just showing the world how you think can score you a big win. Let your choices convey the mood you're in, too.

**CAPRICORN**  
Dec. 22-Jan. 19  
Be patient and natural. Let them come to you in the way they want, and, most importantly, at the speed they want. Waiting won't be fun, but your reward will be sweet, and it will be genuine.

**AQUARIUS**  
Jan. 20-Feb. 18  
Chances are you won't see any big difference in your day, but the exercise will help you get a taste of another kind of life, which will help you be more comfortable in your own routine.

**PISCES**  
Feb. 19-Mar. 20  
Friends might be feeling like you're hiding out from the world right now, so touch base and let them know that you're doing okay. You want to spend some time by yourself, and this is a healthy thing to do.

**The Born Loser by Chip Sansom**



**SUDOKU**

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

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

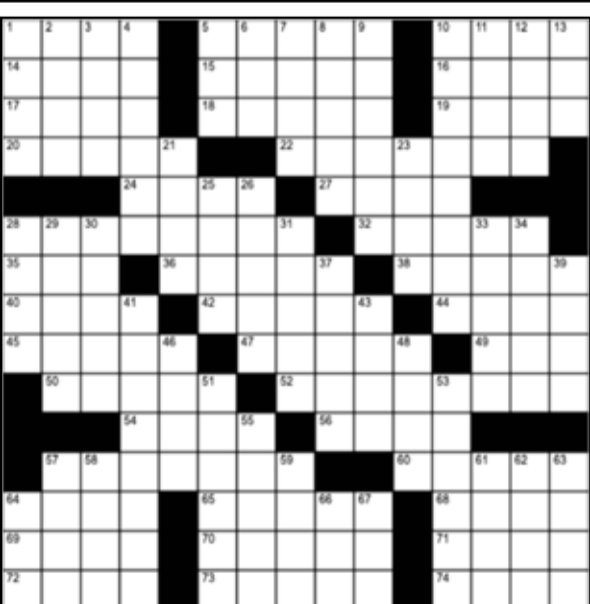
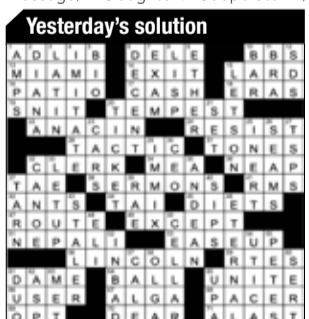
**WEATHER**

	MIN	MAX	CONDITION
<b>CHINA</b>			
Beijing	19	28	cloudy
Harbin	17	21	rainstorm
Tianjin	21	27	overcast
Urumqi	18	32	clear
Xi'an	17	30	clear
Lhasa	12	24	cloudy
Chengdu	20	31	cloudy
Chongqing	25	31	drizzle
Kunming	16	26	shower
Nanjing	21	30	cloudy
Shanghai	24	31	clear
Wuhan	21	33	clear
Hangzhou	24	34	cloudy
Taipei	25	30	drizzle
Guangzhou	27	36	thundershower
Hong Kong	28	33	thundershower
<b>WORLD</b>			
Moscow	12	23	clear
Frankfurt	12	22	cloudy
Paris	14	25	drizzle
London	15	19	drizzle
New York	23	28	drizzle

**CROSSWORDS**

ACROSS: 1- Places to sleep; 5- French port; 10- Wagon; 14- Peace Nobel; 15- Pertaining to the moon; 16- Stead; 17- Scottish loch, home to a monster; 18- Steak order; 19- Quod \_\_\_ demonstration; 20- Coffee choice; 22- Employee; 24- It's as good as a mile; 27- Busy; 28- Duck; 32- Dish of raw vegetables; 35- Flap; 36- Billiards shot; 38- Stopwatch-holder; 40- Sibyl; 42- Groundwork; 44- Big East team; 45- Lerner's partner; 47- Son of Abraham; 49- How about that!; 50- Former Russian ruler; 52- Ruler; 54- \_\_\_ contendere; 56- Any of the Antilles; 57- Teachings; 60- Madagascar monkey; 64- Escudo replacement; 65- Circumference; 68- Casino game; 69- Spain teammate; 70- Participant; 71- Crique; 72- Had the mic, say; 73- Approaches; 74- Make angry;

DOWN: 1- Curve; 2- Gen. Robert \_\_\_; 3- Round object, often used to store computer data; 4- Opening word; 5- Sandwich initials; 6- Massage; 7- Slaughter in Cooperstown; 8- Vixen's master; 9- Picks up the check; 10- Split labium superior; 11- Yorkshire river; 12- The back end of something; 13- Boy king; 21- Money-related; Abbr.; 23- Decree; 25- Thrust with a knife; 26- Turkish palace; 28- Satirist Mort; 29- Dostoyevsky novel, with "The"; 30- Prescribed amounts; 31- Deputised group; 33- Uruguayan friend; 34- Discourage; 37- Heat home; 39- Hwys.; 41- Farewell appearance; 43- Enervates; 46- Greek god of love; 48- Unit of insurgency; 51- Mantra; 53- Joint; 55- In reserve; 57- Hawaiian outdoor feast; 58- Ireland; 59- Lady of Sp.; 61- Biblical gift bearers; 62- Orenburg's river; 63- Got on; 64- Lion tail; 66- Rocky pinnacle; 67- Timecard abbr.;



Crossword puzzles provided by BestCrosswords.com

**USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS**

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



<p><b>FOR SALE</b></p> <p>Big car park space, Taipa Tjoi Long Meng Chu <b>HK\$2,950,000</b></p>	<p><b>FOR RENT</b></p> <p>Va Fat, Taipa <b>\$9,900/mth</b> 950 ft<sup>2</sup></p>	<p><b>FOR SALE</b></p> <p>[Taipa] Hoi Wan Garden 2 1/2 1 1/2 900 ft<sup>2</sup> <b>\$4,900,000</b> (ref: 19106003)</p> <p>[Macau] One Central 2 1/2 2 1/2 1,269 ft<sup>2</sup> <b>\$11,580,000</b> (ref: 19070000)</p> <p>[Taipa] Buckingham 2 1/2 2 1/2 1,439 ft<sup>2</sup> <b>\$11,770,000</b> (ref: 19045004)</p> <p>[Taipa] Nova City 3 1/2 2 1/2 1,494 ft<sup>2</sup> <b>\$12,880,000</b> (ref: 17050001RT)</p>	<p><b>FOR RENT</b></p> <p>[Taipa] Waterfront Duet New studio 1 1/2 469 ft<sup>2</sup> <b>\$9,000/mth</b> (ref: 20081001)</p> <p>[Taipa] Old Taipa Village Apartment 2 1/2 1 1/2 600 ft<sup>2</sup> <b>\$9,900/mth</b> (ref: n/a)</p> <p>[Coloane] Grand Coloane Resort 1 1/2 1 1/2 710 ft<sup>2</sup> <b>\$20,460/mth</b> (ref: 20021002)</p> <p>[Macau] One Central 2 1/2 2 1/2 1,269 ft<sup>2</sup> <b>\$25,000/mth</b> (ref: n/a)</p>
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AVIATION

# SNAPSHOT OF AIRBUS JET USE SHOWS CHINA PROPPING UP FRAGILE RECOVERY

LAYAN ODEH  
& CHARLOTTE RYAN

A snapshot of Airbus SE plane use outlines a tentative recovery still dependent on China, and continued challenges for wide-body aircraft as carriers adjust to a lack of demand.

Of the 10,404 Airbus planes in global fleets, almost two-thirds had flown at least once in the previous five days, according to an Aug. 24 newsletter sent by the European manufacturer to operators and maintenance companies.

The rest - more than 3,600 planes - had not flown, a reminder of the oversupply that Airbus and its U.S. rival Boeing Co. are grappling with six months into the coronavirus pandemic.

The numbers help to fill in the contours of a lopsided recovery that's seen Chinese travel bounce back while the rest of the world flounders. And even as other sectors of the global economy are looking up, air travel remains mired in a downturn that's proving tough to shake.

Leave out China, and more than 40% of Airbus's global fleet is grounded, based on the figures in the newsletter, which didn't include its smallest jet, the A220. China represents nearly a quarter of the Toulouse, France-based manufacturer's commercial aircraft production.

"It is very important for Airbus and Boeing to steer deliveries toward China in this particularly weak year," said George Ferguson, a Bloomberg Intelligence analyst. Demand could improve in 2021, "but right now it looks like even the first half will see parked fleet in most regions."

An Airbus spokesman said the



newsletter confirms that modern, fuel-efficient aircraft are leading the recovery and shows how well the company's teams are supporting customers.

A lack of balance extends to the mix between use of smaller aircraft like Airbus's A320-series workhorse and wide-bodies including the double-decker A380, once the pride of the European manufacturer's lineup.

About 69% of the A320-series

fleet was in use, according to the newsletter, while 51% of its bigger planes, typically used for long-distance travel that's been hit hardest by the virus, sat idle.

Usage of the A220 is back at pre-Covid 19 levels with 90% of the fleet operating within the past five days, the Airbus spokesman said.

Both Airbus and Boeing have ratcheted down production of larger planes, which will struggle to find their spot in the marketplace

until a Covid-19 vaccine is found. The only bright spot for Airbus is the modern A350, which is back at more than 75% usage globally, according to the data.

The planemakers, along with suppliers like engine-maker Rolls-Royce Holdings Plc and fuselage manufacturer Spirit AeroSystems Holdings Inc. have said they'll cut tens of thousands of jobs.

Passenger traffic was down almost 80% in July compared with a

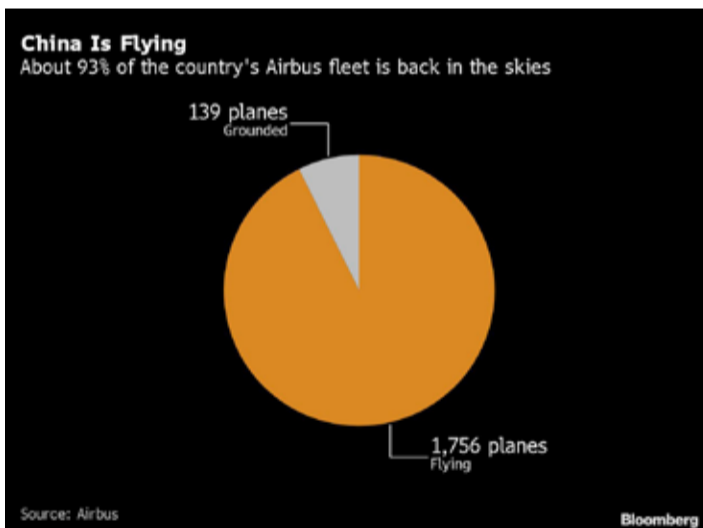
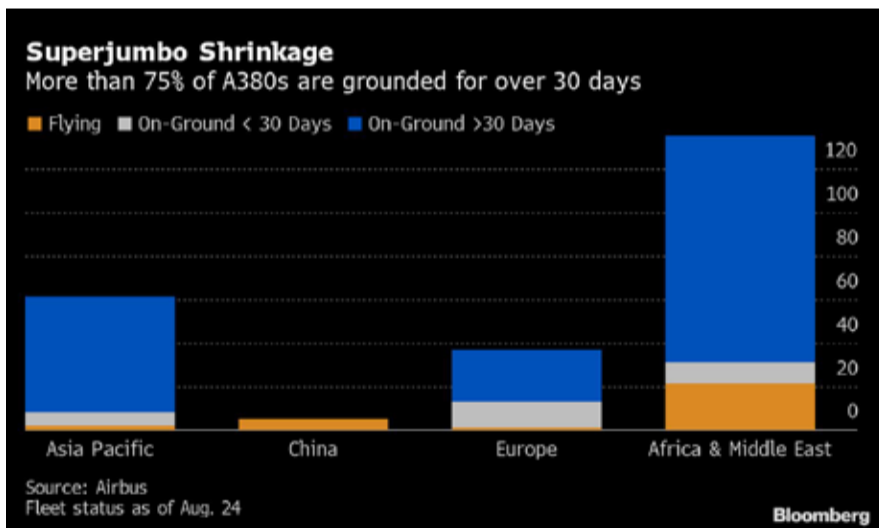
year earlier, according to the International Air Transport Association.

Worst-hit has been the A380, which can easily seat more than 500 people and has formed that backbone of Dubai-based Emirates, the world's largest long-haul airline. The program was already being wound down before the pandemic hit.

The mammoth jet is a tough bet for airlines braced for demand not to return to prior levels until 2023 or later. Air France-KLM decided to retire the jetliner earlier than scheduled, while Deutsche Lufthansa AG has mothballed its A380 fleet.

Emirates, the A380's biggest customer, stopped flying it between Dubai and Amsterdam due to poor demand, two weeks after resuming service.

"To say the 115 to be deployed in our network by next year, I think it is very very difficult prediction to make at this time," Emirates Chief Operating Officer Adel Al Redha said in an interview last month. Still, the airline has said it doesn't plan to accelerate its retirement of the jets. **BLOOMBERG**



## CORPORATE BITS

### Melco supports government's new promotional scheme for tourists



Integrated resort operator Melco Resorts & Entertainment Limited has issued a statement to throw its su-

pport behind the Macau SAR government's newly launched scheme for tourists from mainland China,

which aims to boost the economy and protect local jobs.

Initiated by the Macau SAR Government with support from e-commerce giants Tencent and Alibaba, as well as Air Macau, the scheme aims to attract tourism to the city through promotions on air tickets and hotels, and rebates on shopping and dining to encourage tourist to increase their spending and length of stay.

To support the scheme, Melco says it is striving to maintain epidemic prevention measures as it welcomes guests by working hand in hand with local small business partners for the city's sustainable development.

### Parisian Macao launches 'Parisian Picnic at Le Jardin' experience



Sands China is launching a 'Parisian Picnic at Le Jardin' experience for fans of outdoor eating. From now until November 30, customers

can enjoy the al fresco dining experience at The Parisian Macao's authentic French garden. The destination-the-

med property has crafted a gourmet spread, including French smoked salmon quiche, and quinoa salad with green asparagus, edamame beans and orange yuzu dressing, alongside a variety of delicious sweet treats and refreshing beverages. For those craving a glass of elegant bubbly, champagne is available at an additional cost.

For selfie lovers, The Parisian Macao's Eiffel Tower also offers a picturesque backdrop for amazing photo opportunities.

The Parisian Picnic at Le Jardin is available daily from 12 p.m. to 6 p.m. Twenty-four hours advance reservation is required.

AP PHOTO



Colombia's Egan Bernal is interviewed before the start of the fifth stage of the Tour de France

CYCLING

# World championships moved to Imola after Swiss host backs out

**T**HIS month's road cycling world championships were moved to Imola, Italy, yesterday after Swiss host Aigle-Martigny backed out because of a government ruling limiting mass gatherings amid the coronavirus pandemic.

The revised event from Sept. 24-27 will feature only elite men's and women's categories, eliminating junior and under-23 races.

"The majority of the top athletes in the elite men and women categories are already in Europe, as opposed to their younger counterparts (juniors and under 23) whose national delegations, in a significant number of cases, will not be

able to travel to Italy due to travel restrictions imposed in numerous countries," the International Cycling Union said in a statement.

The Swiss organizers of the championships, which were supposed to be centered around Aigle, where the UCI is based, said they could not continue within a federal limit of 1,000 people for major events during the coronavirus pandemic.

The races in Imola, which hosted the worlds in 1968, will all begin and end on the city's auto racing circuit.

"I congratulate the Imola organizing committee for the excellent quality of its bidding file which it

succeeded in producing in a short lapse of time," UCI president David Lappartient said. "I would also like to thank the three other candidates Peccioli (Italy), Alba Adriatica (Italy) and the Haute-Saône (France) who also sent solid files to the UCI. ... It goes to show that even in this difficult period that we are going through, the UCI world championships are still very attractive for cities and their regions."

The new schedule features the women's individual time trial on Sept. 24, the men's time trial on Sept. 25, the women's road race on Sept. 26 and the men's road race on Sept. 27 — exactly a week after the Tour de France ends. AP

RUGBY

# Up to 20,000 fans could attend England-Barbarians game

**A** crowd of "up to 20,000" could attend a rugby match between England and the Barbarians at Twickenham next month, the Rugby Football Union said yesterday.

The match has been arranged for Oct. 25, a week before England plays Italy in Rome in their rearranged final game of the Six Nations that has been delayed because of the coronavirus outbreak.

The RFU said a test event will be held before England's game against the Barbarians — an invitational team made up of players from different clubs and countries — "to put into practice our operational plans and demonstrate that Twickenham Stadium is well prepared" amid the pandemic.

The stadium has an 80,000 capacity.

"Numerous measures are being implemented for the events that either adhere to

or exceed the guidance provided by the government" and safety authorities, RFU chief executive Bill Sweeney said.

The measures include the "mandatory use of face coverings by spectators" except when in seats or eating or drinking, one-way systems to manage crowd movement, and assigned entry gates. All tickets for the match will be digital.

Local police are "supportive" of the plans for the return of fans, the RFU said.

The British government is currently running a pilot scheme to assess how spectators can return to sports venues on a more permanent basis during the pandemic.

Around 2,500 fans were allowed into Brighton's stadium on the south coast of England for a football friendly against Chelsea on Saturday. The spectators had to abide by social-distancing measures. AP

AP PHOTO



Saracens' Manu Vunipola attempts a conversion against Gloucester

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**OPINION**

**World Views**

Anjani Trivedi, Bloomberg

**CHINA BANKS HAVE A PROBLEM \$96 BILLION CAN'T FIX**

This isn't the bottom for Chinese banks' bad loans. Be prepared for more and weaker balance sheets.

China's lenders reported large declines in net profit for the first time in decades Sunday, citing dire economic conditions fueled by Covid-19. In preparation to deal with ballooning bad debts and future losses, provisions rose sharply by 656 billion yuan (\$95.8 billion) for souring loans. Prudent as that may seem, the worst is yet to appear.

Much of this isn't a surprise. Between small enterprises struggling before the outbreak, to the pandemic itself and now the bumpy recovery, these were going to be brutal times for lenders. The economic gloom cast by the virus has given banks a reason to bring out the worst of their assets. Under new accounting rules, they need to provision more upfront if they expect things to deteriorate. It appears they do.

Consider what's happening with bad debts. The industry regulator has already said that banks will dispose of 3.4 trillion yuan of bad loans this year, up almost 50% from 2019. In the first half of 2020, 1.1 trillion yuan were written off. Compare that to the 5.8 trillion yuan of such loans culled from the books between 2016 and 2019. In addition, the regulator says that about 4% of banks' troubled debts have been "deferred," equivalent to about 7 trillion yuan of loans headed for delinquency and put on hold until next year.

System-wide non-performing loans rose by more than 300 billion yuan between January and June this year. Last week, authorities said the value of outstanding non-performing loans for small companies was reaching its tolerance limit at 400 billion yuan, rising 9.25% in the first half, but they're giving companies and banks room to manage the tough terrain.

Yet the reality is, bank assets are also growing because Beijing is pushing credit to shore up sentiment and keep companies afloat. Authorities aren't ready to let the shutters come down on businesses that aren't viable. At China Construction Bank Corp., the world's second-largest lender by assets, for instance, loans to small and medium enterprises grew 31% in the first half compared to the previous period, or 8% of total loans. These companies were struggling even before Covid-19. Their debts were at risk and future borrowings may be even tougher to manage. Meanwhile, non-loan assets are rising as shadow banking rears its head again while regulators delay new rules to rein it in.

Moody's Investors Service expects "a considerable lag time before NPL metrics fully capture the increase in loan delinquency pressure." Weak consumer sentiment and slow recovery from the pandemic will keep the squeeze on bank assets. According to the rating agency, non-performing loans across the \$45 trillion banking system rose to 1.94% in the first half from 1.86% at the end of 2019, "led by regional banks" that mainly lend to China's millions of small businesses.

With defaults rising despite forbearance, it's difficult to see how this is the bottom. For now, there's little trust, with banks trading at multiyear lows in terms of price-to-book value. Maybe it's the moment to clean up balance sheets and give investors a better look at the books. They may actually begin to see the real case for value in Chinese bank stocks.

Australia's economy suffered its sharpest economic contraction since the Great Depression due to the pandemic, with data released yesterday confirming the country is in its first recession in 28 years.

The economy shrank 7% in the June, the biggest contraction since records began in 1959, the government reported.

Prime Minister Scott Morrison told Parliament: "This is a devastating day for Australia."

The country is now in recession for the first time in 28 years following a 0.3% drop in the first quarter of the year, since it has logged two straight quarters of contraction.

"Today's national accounts confirm the devastating impact on the Australian economy from COVID-19," Treasurer Josh Frydenberg said.

"Our record run of 28 consecutive years of economic growth has now officially come to an end," he added.

The previous biggest downturn since Australia began keeping records in 1959 was a 2% fall in June 1974. Economists estimate a sharper decline of 9.5% in 1930, when Australia became one of the countries worst affected by the Great Depression.

Prime Minister Scott Morrison told Parliament: "This is a devastating day for Australia."

**THAILAND'S KING RECONCILES WITH OUSTED CONSORT**

THAILAND'S king has reconciled with his royal consort, whom he stripped of her titles last year after accusing her of seeking to undermine his official wife, the country's queen.

The restoration of Sineenatra Wongvajirabhakdi to the good graces of King Maha Vajiralongkorn was confirmed by an official announcement published yesterday in the Royal Gazette. The announcement, dated Aug. 29, said she was being given back her royal and military titles.

It said Sineenatra was not tainted by any wrongdoing, and the record should not show that she ever lost her privileges.

Bloggers who follow royal news had reported last week that Sineenatra had been rehabilitated. She had not been seen publicly after her fall from grace last year and her whereabouts were never made clear.

In July last year, Vajiralongkorn gave Sineenatra the royal consort title of *chao khun phra sineenatra bilasakalayani*, reviving an old palace tradition of taking a junior wife that had not been practiced for almost a century.

In May last year, Vajiralongkorn named long-time companion Suthida Vajiralongkorn Na Ayudhya his queen when they were married a few days before his formal coronation. Vajiralongkorn assumed the throne after the 2016 death of his father, King Bhumibol Adulyadej, who reigned for 70 years.

Then last October, less than three months after making Sineenatra his royal consort, the king issued a command rescinding the appointment. In a statement, he accused



King Maha Vajiralongkorn (left) with Major General Sineenatra Wongvajirabhakdi, the royal noble consort (undated picture)

her of misbehaving by actively seeking to block Suthida's appointment as queen in order to take the position herself, and saying that when she failed to block Suthida, her "ambitions and aspirations" led her to continue to seek ways to promote herself.

**Sineenatra was not tainted by any wrongdoing, and the record should not show that she ever lost her privileges**

That statement said the king tried to alleviate the problem by appointing Sineenatra his official royal consort but that she remained unsatisfied and continued to compete with Queen Suthida.

Both Queen Suthida, 42, and Sineenatra, 35, have served as senior officers in palace security units. Suthida was previously a flight attendant with Thai Airways, while Sineenatra was an army nurse. The 68-year-old king has seven children by three previous marriages, all of which ended in divorce.

Sineenatra's fall had been particularly stunning because only two months earlier, a palace website released scores of photos of her and the king, some in formal settings and others in markedly casual poses, such as taking part in flying, shooting and skydiving. Others showed her and the king holding hands, unusually intimate photos for members of the royal family. AP

Nepal began limited commercial flights after months of suspension to stop the spread of the coronavirus. Malaysia's Malindo Airlines flew from Kuala Lumpur to Kathmandu while a Nepal Airlines flight arrived from Tokyo on Tuesday afternoon. Nepal's government is limiting flights to about two a day. The flights are only for Nepalese nationals or foreign diplomats based in the country. Only repatriation flights had been allowed by authorities since Nepal first went into lockdown in March.



South Korea has seen a triple-digit daily jump in reported coronavirus infections for the 20th straight day, prompting authorities in recent days to impose tough social distancing rules. The Korea Centers for Disease Control and Prevention said yesterday the 267 new cases took the country's tally since the pandemic began to 20,449 reported infections with 326 deaths. South Korea has seen a rise in infections since early last month, many associated with churches, restaurants and schools.



Cambodia The Khmer Rouge's chief jailer, who admitted overseeing the torture and killings of as many as 16,000 Cambodians while running the regime's most notorious prison, has died. Kaing Guek Eav (pictured), known as Duch, was 77 and had been serving a life prison term for war crimes and crimes against humanity. He died at a hospital in Cambodia early yesterday morning, said a spokesperson for the tribunal in Phnom Penh that handled the trials over the regime's crimes.

Sports The International Federation of PGA Tours confirmed the inevitable yesterday when it canceled the HSBC Champions World Golf Championships event in China. The tournament was scheduled for Oct. 29-Nov. 1 at Sheshan International Golf Club in Shanghai.