

The Macao SAR Government urges:

Implement regular epidemic prevention measures;
Do our best to persist;
Wash hands frequently and wear a mask;
Keep a distance and avoid crowd gathering;
Perseverance leads to success.

Novel Coronavirus Response and Coordination Centre

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MACAU RCR electronics

THE GOVERNMENT IS PLANNING TO BUILD A WORLD-CLASS AMUSEMENT PARK ZONE IN THE HAC SA BEACH AREA, ACCORDING TO THE IAM P5

MACAU WORKING ON TRAVEL BUBBLE ARRANGEMENTS, HEALTH AUTHORITIES REVEALED P3

WITH LITTLE OVER A WEEK TO GO, MACAU CROSSES ITS FINGERS FOR A STRONG GOLDEN WEEK POSTING P6



Australia A former Australian correspondent in Beijing said yesterday that he and his 14-year-old daughter were threatened with detention before they left China two years ago. Matthew Carney said he had not revealed the 2018 incident until now because he had wanted to avoid “negative consequences” for Australian Broadcasting Corp.’s operations in China. There was no immediate response from Beijing.



Japan’s Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga held his first talks with U.S. President Donald Trump since he took office, a diplomatic phone call that was one of his first as the country’s leader and one that highlights the close tie between the two allies. Suga was elected as Japan’s new prime minister last week, replacing Shinzo Abe, who forged close personal ties and regularly held meetings and phone calls with Trump.



India A residential building that was due for repairs collapsed in central India yesterday, killing at least 10 people and trapping many others, officials said. Around 20-25 people are feared to be trapped under the rubble of the four-story building in Maharashtra state.

Thailand A plaque honoring struggles for democracy was removed from a royal field less than 24 hours after being installed by anti-government protesters and was submitted as evidence in connection with a complaint by officials that its installation was illegal, police said yesterday.

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RABBIT REPLICANTS

Lanterns installation for Moon Fest removed from downtown garden after plagiarism allegations P5



FinCEN leaks
MACAU BANKS INVOLVED IN LAUNDERING OF MOP544M

Local banks show up in documents of suspicions transactions in a scandal involving \$2 trillion in money laundering orders



ADELSONS PUMP \$25 MILLION INTO GOP SENATE SUPER-PAC IN AUGUST

YOUNGER PEOPLE SAID TO BE AFFECTED BY SPINAL CONDITIONS

A traditional Chinese medicine practitioner says that younger people are now being affected by spinal conditions. Lau Chi Leong recently said that cervical spondylosis is occurring among younger people. According to Lau, in the past, the disease commonly appeared when people were in their 40s or 50s. However, Chinese medicine clinics are finding symptoms of the condition among people in their 30s and even some teenagers. Lau explained that most cervical spondylosis cases are caused by frequent use of electronics, which causes neck strain. As a result, Lau recommends that people to minimize the time spent using electronics, maintain correct body posture, and exercise regularly.

11 ADDITIONAL RENTAL LOCKERS INSTALLED IN PARKS

The Municipal Affairs Bureau (IAM) has installed an additional 11 rental lockers at several public parks. These parks are Sai Van Lake plaza, Reservatório Park, Guia Hill Fitness Trail, Guia Hill Municipal Park, Taipa Houses-Museum, Leisure Area on Taipa Waterfront (Cycle Track), Taipa Central Park (near the basketball court and the football court), and Hac Sa Reservoir Country Park (near the barbecue area). The public can choose from storage cabinets of four different sizes - mini, small, medium and large. The lockers, which are now available, can be rented for 1 to 4 patacas per hour. Users can pay by cash, MPay, WeChat Pay, AliPay or Macau Pass.

TWO FALL VICTIM TO ONLINE ROMANCE SCAM

During yesterday's press conference, the Judiciary Police (PJ) disclosed the details of two online romance scams involving two victims. One alleged victim is a Macau woman in her 50s. She lost a total of 453,700 patacas to her online "boyfriend," who claimed to be an American engineer. They began contacting each other through an unidentified app before switching to WeChat. From May, the American asked the woman to transfer the aforementioned amount of money to him so that he could purchase or maintain petroleum exploration equipment. The second victim is a mainland tourist in her 20s. She befriended an "American doctor" on Facebook before he asked her to communicate on WeChat. The man then asked her to transfer money through WeChat on four occasions so he could ship a package to Dubai.



PASSENGERS ATTACK BUS DRIVERS AFTER BEING ASKED TO WEAR FACEMASKS

JULIE ZHU

The Public Security Police Force (PSP) has arrested two men who attacked bus drivers because they were angry about being made to comply with facemask policies on the bus, the police department reported during the joint police press conference yesterday.

On September 11, a local man in his 50s, surnamed Pun, boarded a bus at Rua Nova da Areia Preta at 6:50 p.m. Pun was not wearing a facemask at the time. The bus driver immediately asked Pun to put a mask on.

However, Pun was angered and refused to comply with the rule. The suspect only agreed to cover his mouth with the facemask but not wear it properly. Pun, who was standing next to the bus

driver, was ordered to get off the vehicle. The police department received reports as the incident occurred. The bus driver then parked the vehicle at the Centro de Actividades Juvenis do Bairro do Hipódromo bus stop located on Avenida Norte do Hipódromo and contacted his company for assistance.

Pun then punched the bus driver's head and ran out of the vehicle. He went in the direction of the Border Gate and the bus driver chased after him.

Suddenly, Pun allegedly took out a key chain with a knife and threatened the victim. He said that he would attack if the victim continued chasing him. The bus driver did not pursue him further.

On September 12, a PSP officer found Pun at his apartment on Rua de Ma Kau

Seak. Pun denied assaulting and threatening the victim, but admitted to arguing with him.

As of press time, investigations were still ongoing. Pun has not been presented to the prosecution authority. Pun is under investigation for violating the city's law in regards to assault and coercion. The bus driver did not sustain any injuries.

The second suspect is a local man in his 60s, surnamed Fong, and the victim is a 44-year-old male bus driver.

Last week, the suspect boarded the bus at Mercado Municipal do Patane without wearing a facemask. The driver reminded him to wear the facemask. The two men engaged in an argument and the suspect cursed at the bus driver before alighting from the bus.

The bus driver chased the suspect, continuing the argument on the street. During their argument, the suspect pushed the driver to the ground and fled the scene. The driver sustained injuries to his hands and waist.

Yesterday, the PSP apprehended Fong.

During the police interrogation, Fong denied the assault accusations. According to Fong, there was physical contact during the chase and the bus driver fell to the ground because he was not careful. Fong admitted to cursing at the driver.

The police authority charged Fong with aggravated assault and aggravated insult. The police have finished investigating Fong's case and have presented him to the prosecution authority.

The Transport Bureau has condemned the behavior of the two individuals.

Since February, drivers of public transport vehicles and their passengers are required to wear surgical facemasks. If a passenger refuses to wear a mask, the driver has the right to stop the passenger from coming onboard.

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Macau working on travel bubble arrangements

ANTHONY LAM

WORK is in progress to develop travel bubbles with nearby jurisdictions, Dr. Leong Iek Hou from the Novel Coronavirus Response and Coordination Center disclosed yesterday at the regular health briefing on Covid-19 matters.

Lau Fong Chi, head of the Public Relations Division of the Macao Government Tourism Office (MGTO), also confirmed that preliminary meetings have been held to discuss the matter.

Travel bubbles have surfaced as a discussion topic because Covid-19 has disrupted cross-border

travel. When it first broke out in Macau, links between the city and mainland China were cut, leaving inter-city travel practically impossible.

Leong said yesterday that the Health Bureau has held meetings with the MGTO. "We will not rule out the possibility of commen-

cing such work," she said. "However, the premise is that we can ensure the implementation of our disease preventive measures."

The center fears that the movement of people may bring in new infections and is remaining vigilant as tourism endorsement resumes in mainland China.

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"[In addition], places with which we negotiate the realization of a travel bubble must have similarly safe epidemic condition to ours. We don't want to cause any extra risk to our disease prevention," Leong added.

Although non-resident workers are allowed to exit Macau, once they are out they have no way to get back in. Since the early phases of the outbreak, Macau has banned the entry of foreign passport bearers.

Leong assured that the government was working towards a direction to allow people from other places to travel to Macau. "The main direction is to implement travel bubbles," Leong said.

Lau made additional comments aligning with Leong's revelations.

"In addition, nearby places have started working towards that direction as well," said Lau, referring to neighboring Hong Kong.

Lau noted that comparing and

contrasting each place's epidemic condition is crucial.

"However, when we started thinking about the idea, we [examined] the requirement to examine each place's epidemic conditions, prevention measures, quantity of local and imported infections, etc. We need to get a grasp of [their] situation," she explained.

Leong also explained that travel bubbles concern immigration measures as well. "When we implement the arrangement, both places need to enact corresponding or coordinating immigration policies or measures."

Details about transportation will need to be determined too, according to the official. For example, if tourists from both sides travel by airplane, more considerations will need to be taken, such as the existence of transit passengers.

"We need to determine in advance and in detail if a transit passenger has tested positive when in Macau, and what procedures should be taken," Lau said. "For the time being, we're still at a very early stage of exploration and discussion."

When questioned about the progress of vaccine procurement, Leong disclosed that the government has just signed agreements with two international entities to highlight its will to purchase the Covid-19 vaccine.

"Last week, we have signed agreements with the WHO and The Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunization [GAVI] on our desire to purchase Covid-19 vaccine," Leong disclosed. "However, supply by GAVI will be later and it usually prioritizes places with greater needs."

The SSM will purchase a total of 1.4 million Covid-19 vaccines because two shots are needed for one course of vaccination. This amount is based on the population estimate of 700,000.

Details are still being negotiated and information will be announced when available.

US flags suspicious activity at Macau banks, FinCEN data leak reveals

RENATO MARQUES

THE Financial Crimes Enforcement Network (FinCEN) has detected suspicious activity involving a total of MOP544 million passing through four local banking institutions in Macau, which could be money laundering, a recent data leak from FinCEN revealed.

Over 60 transactions made to or from four local

banks between 2000 and 2017 were flagged by the U.S. government agency, which collects and analyzes information about financial transactions to combat domestic and international money laundering, terrorist financing and other financial crimes.

According to the leaked documents, transactions involving over \$50 million (MOP400

million) were received by the Bank of China, Banco Nacional Ultramarino, the Industrial and Commercial Bank of China-Macau Limited, and the Hong Kong Shanghai Banking Corporation-Macau (HSBC Macau). Around \$18 million of transfers were sent through the same banks to overseas institutions, including the U.S. and a dozen other countries.

The reports of the suspicious transactions were found by FinCEN via filings by banks and other financial institutions headed by China Investment Corporation, The Bank of New York Mellon Corporation, and British multinational banking and financial services company Standard Chartered PLC.

The FinCEN document leak was revealed by the International Consortium

of Investigative Journalists (ICIJ).

According to the ICIJ, the leak only represents a small fraction of all the suspicious transactions in the FinCEN files and there is a probability that both the number of transactions as well as the amount involved is much higher.

The ICIJ noted that the consortium only included cases where the details on file were enough to prove both the origin and recipient banks.

While the data released spans 2000 to 2017, many of the larger and more significant transactions were occurred between 2013

and 2016. One such transaction totaled \$2 million (over MOP129 million) and was transferred by the Bank of China to Swiss multinational investment bank and financial services company UBS Group AG in June 2016.

The ICIJ's investigation also points out several of the flaws of top international banking corporations, including HSBC and JP Morgan Chase & Co., among others who have allegedly failed to comply with their duty to ensure the legality of banking transactions by some of their clients' portfolios, which could include links to organized crime.

GAMING promoter Tak Chun Group is set to acquire the remaining 29% of Macau Legend Development Ltd shares currently held by public shareholders, the Inside Asian Gaming website reported.

The mandatory cash offer will be done in Tak Chun CEO Levo Chan's name, increasing his stake to 49.94%.

The offer was disclosed in a filing yesterday by Macau Legend to the Hong Kong Stock Exchange (HKEX).

In the filing, Macau Legend notes that according to the rules of the market, Perfect Achiever Group Ltd, Chan's sole proprietorship which was used to acquire a 20.65% stake in Macau Legend last week, is required under Hong Kong's Takeovers Code to make an offer on all publicly held shares. This includes the 29.08% held by unnamed shareholders and 0.11% held by Macau Legend's director Carl Tong.

With the offer, Chan will not take ownership of interests currently held by any of the key executives of the company. These include founder and chairman David Chow, CEO Melinda Chan, fellow

Tak Chun to acquire further 29% stake in Macau Legend

directors Sheldon Trainer and Li Chi Keung, and David Chow's mother and former director, Lam Fong Ngo.

The offer does not include the 3.37% stake held by SJM Holdings subsidiary Vast Field Investments Ltd.

According to the filing to the HKEX, Chan will act in concert with the group of key executives. Together, they will be known as the Offeror Concert Party Group and will represent a combined 67.44% of the company's total issued share capital.

Chan, who has a potential stake of 49.94%, will be granted the position of head of the Offeror Concert Party Group.

If the shareholders agree to sell their interests to Chan at the offer price of HKD1.05 per share, he will acquire an additional 1.8 billion shares for HKD1.90 billion. This is

in addition to the HKD1.28 billion that was spent on last week's acquisition.

The filing also noted that Chan has expressed his intention not to make substantial changes to the existing operations of the company, or terminate employees. However, he will conduct a review of its operations and financial position with the aim of defining future business plans and strategies for long-term business development.

Chan will also seek to nominate three new directors to the board after completing the mandatory offer, with Donald Chow, Trainer and Tong stepping down from their current posts.

David Chow and his wife, Melinda Chan, will not be affected by Chan's reshuffling and will retain their roles as chairman and CEO respectively. **RM**



Fisherman's Wharf



ADELSONS PUMP \$25 MILLION INTO GOP SENATE SUPER-PAC IN AUGUST

CASINO mogul Sheldon Adelson and his wife Miriam Adelson gave \$25 million to the Senate Leadership Fund, a super-PAC tied to Majority Leader Mitch McConnell, part of a \$37.4 million haul the group raised in August, according to its latest filing with the Federal Election Commission.

The fund works to defend the Republican majority in the Senate, which is at risk due to several competitive races for incumbents. The fight over how and when to fill the Supreme Court vacancy left by the death on Friday of Ruth Bader Ginsburg only makes those races more uncertain.

In addition to the Adelsons, billionaire Steve Wynn, who stepped down from his casino business in 2018 amid sexual

harassment allegations, gave \$4 million. William Oberndorf of Oberndorf Enterprises, Ronald Cameron, owner of Mountaire Corp., and Beal Bank Chairman Andrew Beal each gave \$1 million.

Adelson is the founder, chairman and chief executive officer of Las Vegas Sands Corporation. He also heads the company's Macau-based subsidiary, Sands China, which operates several properties in the Special Administrative Region including Sands Macao, The Venetian Macao and The Parisian Macao.

After spending \$28.8 million in August, the super-PAC ended the month with \$126.1 million cash on hand. Its Democratic counterpart, the Senate Majority PAC or SMP, has yet to report. **MDT/BLOOMBERG**

FORMER SANDS EXECUTIVES JOIN SJM AHEAD OF COTAI PROPERTY OPENING

Two former senior Sands executives, Benjamin Toh and Daniel Shim, have been appointed to the respective posts of Chief Operating Officer for Finance and Development and Chief Corporate Affairs Officer for gaming operator Sociedade de Jogos de Macau (SJM), Macau Business has reported, citing an internal memorandum from SJM's Chairman of the Board of Directors, Daisy Ho.

Toh and Shim's new positions take effect from today and come ahead of the announced opening of the Grand Lisboa Palace, SJM's first property located in Cotai, which should open by December

this year.

Toh served as Chief Financial Officer (CFO) and Executive Vice President of Sands China between 2010 and 2016 before joining Shangri-la Asia as CFO.

Shim served as Las Vegas Sands' Senior Vice President of Human Resources - Asia between 2007 and 2010 before joining MTR Corporation in Hong Kong as a Human Resources director.

The move is part of a renewal of SJM's top executive team. This includes the recent appointments of Frank McFadden, Bernard Yip, Paul Hung, and Arnaldo Ho, as previously reported by the Times. **RM**

INTERCONTINENTAL HOTELS OPENS NEW HOLIDAY INN EXPRESS



AMID the Covid-19 pandemic, a new low-cost hotel, the Holiday Inn Express Macau City Center, has quietly opened its doors in Macau.

The hotel is celebrating its soft opening with special accommodation packages as low as HKD250, plus several other additional promotions.

The hotel tower is located adjacent to the Oriental Arch, opposite to the Santa Rosa de Lima English Secondary School. Owned by local real estate developer Trust Construction & Investment Co. Ltd., the building has been transformed from an office tower to a hotel.

According to InterContinental Hotels Group, the Holiday Inn Express brand targets the affordable market and provides a "clean, consistent and comfortable stay," as described on the brand's website.

The hotel has 259 rooms with "multifunctional furniture," such as hybrid power outlets with USB ports. The restaurant provides Chinese and Western-style breakfast buffets.

With the addition of this hotel, global hotel chain InterContinental Hotels Group now operates three hotel brands in Macau, including the Holiday Inn Macau and the Crowne Plaza Macau. **AL**



Government to build world-class amusement park in Hac Sa by 2021

JULIE ZHU

THE Macau SAR government is planning to build a world-class amusement park zone in the Hac Sa Beach area, according to a statement written to lawmaker Lam Lon Wai by the Municipal Affairs Bureau (IAM).

As asked by lawmaker Ella Lei earlier, the IAM said that the bureau had already initiated engineering works at a land plot near Hac Sa King Hung Shing Temple in Hac Sa village. The work is the preparatory project in the IAM's long-term plan to transform the area into a "large-scale integrated leisure zone."

The IAM's response to Lei indicated that the area would eventually provide family entertainment, and farming and youth adventure experiences.

Replying to Lam's interpellation, the IAM explicitly revealed that the aforementioned leisure zone was part of the government's aim to build a "world-class adventure and amusement park zone."

Currently, the bureau has in-



vited a consultancy firm to draft a plan for the project which is expected to be ready in 2021.

In order to meet public demand for entertainment facilities as the "world-class amusement park" is being built, the bureau will open temporary activity spaces, including a mountain bike area and, as well as a barbecue space.

Since the world-class amusement park zone will only be ready in 2021, the IAM avoided responding to Lam's question regarding the timeline for the

project's construction.

As for other details, such as the exact size and scale of this project, the bureau is still keeping this information under wraps.

In March 2018, the Land, Public Works and Transport Bureau recovered two land plots in the Hac Sa area. The land plots occupy a combined area of 70,740 square meters. The land plots were used for storing construction machinery and related materials before the government reclaimed them.

RABBIT LANTERN INSTALLATION REMOVED AFTER PLAGIARISM CONTROVERSY

RENATO MARQUES

AN installation for the Mid-Autumn Festival has been removed from Praça de Jorge Álvares garden in central Macau by the Municipal Affairs Bureau (IAM).

The "Rabbits and the Moon" installation was removed from the garden due to suspected copyright infringement. The installation was said to imitate a famous installation and products created by Italian design company Qeeboo, sources who asked to remain anonymous due to the sensitivity of the topic told the Times.

As soon as the installation was assembled and showcased at the garden, it was criticized by many netizens, especially those involved in art and design, for replicating Qeeboo's famous installation in Beijing three years ago.

In the original installation, which was showcased in late September 2017 at Beijing's

Summer Palace and Imperial Garden, the company celebrated the Mid-Autumn Festival with one of its famous products, "the rabbits," created by designer Stefano Giovannoni with the message: "Do you know that on the Moon lives a Rabbit? Wish you and your family a happy Mid-Autumn Festival."

Done in a very similar style using "rabbit lanterns" that were allegedly acquired from the original installation by a different company, the Macau installation was only displayed for two days before it was removed by IAM staff, according to bystanders who witnessed the removal.

The Times attempted to confirm with both IAM and Qeeboo, which owns the product designs, but as of press time no clarification was received.

Nevertheless, sources confirmed that the products used were forgeries and that the installation was ordered to be removed after IAM came aware of this.

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ANALYSIS

FINGERS CROSSED FOR GOLDEN WEEK

DANIEL BEITLER

MACAU is crossing its fingers and holding its breath for some good news during Golden Week, now little more than a week away.

Applications for travel endorsements to Macau resume across China tomorrow after two disappointing phases, first in the city of Zhuhai and then province-wide. According to sources familiar with the matter, it takes about seven days for an applicant to receive the travel endorsement. That would allow the first batch of cross-country visitors to arrive by October 1, China's important National Day holiday, which commemorates the establishment of the People's Republic of China.

After many months of economic hardship, Macau's brightest hope for recovery lies with the upcoming Golden Week next month. Many businesses across town are depending on a promising result that signals the worst of Covid-19 is over. But if that does not occur, doubts about the pace of the recovery will resurface.

Traditionally one of the busiest periods in the gaming calendar, the seven-day Golden Week holiday offers a possible turning point for Macau's downtrodden economy, which has endured many months of economic hardship even after the virus was defeated here. Macau has not seen a locally-transmitted case of Covid-19 in nearly six months.

This city's characteristic over-reliance on gambling makes it prone to enormous swings in gross domestic product that have seen the territory oscillate between one of the fastest-growing economies in the world and one of the fastest-shrinking.

The latest estimates from the Economist Intelligence Unit

project that the local economy will contract by more than 60% this year, "with only a marginal recovery setting in by 2021." By comparison, the World Bank and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development expect the global economy to contract by about 5% this year.

The health of the economy now depends entirely on mainland visitors and their willingness to visit. So far, the evidence says they are not.

Macau welcomed fewer than 30,000 visitors last weekend, barely more than a weekend earlier, or any other since travel restrictions began to ease in late-August. As Macao Government Tourism Office Director Maria Helena de Senna Fernandes told Macau Daily Times, tens of thousands may seem like a lot on paper, but it is nothing compared to the 3 million or more monthly arrivals in 2019.

Analysts are divided on why the tourists and the gamblers have so far kept their distance.

One possible deterrent is the requirement that mainland visitors be tested for Covid-19 before they travel to Macau. They need to show the negative test result at the border as well as complete the health code conversion between Guangdong and Macau.

However, Macau residents of Chinese nationality are still crossing the border in the other direction in large numbers. Last weekend, Macau residents crossing into China outnumbered those coming to Macau by a ratio of four to one.

Another reason suggested by analysts is that Beijing is directing tourism flows to its domestic market, hoping to boost its slowing economy. Others say the appetite for high-stakes gaming is waning and that the 'whales' of the industry will prefer to spend the next few months trying to

rebuild or salvage their personal fortunes.

Last year, Golden Week visitors to Macau narrowly missed the 1-million mark, totaling some 985,000 visitors during the week spanning October 1 to 7. That October marked the 2019 peak for gross gaming revenue with some 26.4 billion patacas wagered in Macau's casinos. That year, the gambling industry was already in technical recession owing to a slowing Chinese economy, social unrest in nearby Hong Kong and worsening trade hostilities between the world's two economic superpowers.

Now Macau's top official, Chief Executive Ho Iat Seng, has warned that any tourism recovery in the SAR would be gradual. He even hinted that it might not come in time for Golden Week.

Sources among the six gaming concessionaires, who requested anonymity because they are not authorized to speak to the media, privately admit that the expectations for Golden Week are low, despite reports of high occupancy rates at some Macau hotels. Even

so, there are indications that retail and food and beverage staff are being mobilized at some integrated resorts in anticipation of tourist arrivals.

SJM's Chief Executive Officer Ambrose So told Hong Kong media over the weekend that he expects gross gaming revenue over the Golden Week period to be around one-third of 2019 levels.

The economy now depends entirely on mainland visitors and their willingness to visit. So far, the evidence says they are not

In any normal year, a two-thirds contraction in gross gaming revenue would be a catastrophic disappointment. But in 2020, such a posting would make October the second-strongest month of the year in terms of revenue. It would also be a strong boost to the confidence of casino operators and the

small businesses that depend on their spending power here.

Carlos Álvares, chief executive officer of note-issuing bank Banco Nacional Ultramarino, remarked to Macau Daily Times last month that local businesses had proven "very resilient" to the impact of Covid-19. However, the banking chief also conceded that the current situation was far from

sustainable and some shift in the fortunes would have to take place soon.

"Everyone is waiting now," agreed local economist Albano Martins. "We are in a scenario of improvement, but things can turn around quickly. If there is no casino growth, if the tourists do not come, [...] if there is [another outbreak of Covid-19], we will all be in trouble."

For Martins, this worst-case scenario would see more small businesses closing for good and the government resorting to more economic stimulus to try to save the economy.

Macau can do little more than to cross its fingers and hold its breath.

VISITOR ARRIVALS GROW THREEFOLD BETWEEN JULY AND AUGUST

THE number of visitor arrivals to Macau grew threefold between July and August as travel restrictions involving residents of mainland China were gradually eased.

Newly-released data from the Statistics and Census Service showed that the number of visitors soared by 206.9% in August to about 227,000 in total. The rapid growth is mainly attributed to the low comparison base in July.

Compared to a year earlier, last month attracted about 93.7% fewer visitors than in August 2019, showing that the effects of Covid-19 are still weighing heavily on cross-

border travel.

Visitor arrivals plummeted by 87% in the first eight months of 2020 to just over 3.57 million. The split between same-day visitors (1.93 million) and overnight visitors (1.64 million) is basically consistent with the pre-pandemic situation.

2019 was a record-breaking year for Macau tourism, with over 39.4 million visitors according to the official data. The record number prompted concerns that the city was suffering from a social and economic phenomenon known as 'overtourism'. **DB**

AP PHOTO



Pangong Lake in Ladakh region, India

India, China commanders meet again on ending border standoff

AIJAZ HUSSAIN, SRINAGAR

SENIOR Indian and Chinese military commanders are holding talks yesterday aimed at resolving a tense monthslong standoff along their disputed border in the mountainous Ladakh region. Details of the talks, held on the Chinese side in the Moldo area facing the Indian-controlled Ladakh region, weren't immediately disclosed.

For the first time, a senior Indian foreign ministry official was also participating in the military-level meeting, said an

Indian official, speaking on condition of anonymity in line with government regulations. There was no information immediately available from Beijing.

Despite several rounds of talks by military, diplomatic and political officials, including negotiations between the two countries' foreign and defense ministers in Moscow this month, the border tensions have persisted.

Yesterday's military-level talks come less than two weeks after the two nations' foreign ministers

met on Sept. 10 and agreed that their troops should disengage from the tense border standoff, maintain proper distance and ease tensions.

The foreign ministers did not set any timeline for the disenga-

gement of the tens of thousands of troops, backed by artillery, tanks and fighter jets, that have been in the region since the standoff began in May.

Military experts have repeatedly warned that any mistake or miscalculation from either side can have disastrous consequences beyond the cold desert region of Ladakh.

Both India and China have provided little information, but media in the two countries have given extensive coverage to the escalating tensions, which

The foreign ministers did not set any timeline for the disengagement of the tens of thousands of troops

have dramatically changed their bilateral relations.

The standoff in Ladakh escalated in June to the deadliest violence between the sides in decades — a clash on a high ridge between soldiers using clubs, stones and their fists. Twenty Indian soldiers were killed. China is believed to have also suffered casualties, but has not given any details.

After that clash, the two countries partially disengaged from the site in the Galwan Valley and at least two other places, but the crisis has continued in at least three other areas, including glacial Pangong Lake.

In recent weeks, the Asian giants have accused each other of sending soldiers into each other's territory in the Pangong area and firing warning shots for the first time in 45 years, raising the specter of a full-scale military conflict.

Relations between the two countries have often been strained, partly due to their undemarcated border. They fought a border war in 1962 that spilled into Ladakh and ended in an uneasy truce. Since then, troops have guarded the undefined border, referred as the Line of Actual Control, while occasionally brawling. They have agreed not to attack each other with firearms.

The fiercely contested control line separates Chinese- and Indian-held territories from Ladakh in the west to India's eastern state of Arunachal Pradesh, which China claims in its entirety. It is broken in parts where the Himalayan nations of Nepal and Bhutan border China.

According to India, the de facto border is 3,488 kilometers (2,167 miles) long, while China says it is considerably shorter. As its name suggests, it divides the areas of physical control rather than territorial claims. AP

Judge agrees to delay US government restrictions on WeChat

A judge has approved a request from a group of U.S. WeChat users to delay looming federal government restrictions that could effectively make the popular app nearly impossible to use.

In a ruling dated Saturday, Magistrate Judge Laurel Beeler in California said the government's actions would affect users' First Amendment rights, as an effective ban on the app would remove their platform for communication.

WeChat is a messaging-focused app popular with many Chinese-speaking Americans that serves as a lifeline to friends, family,

customers and business contacts in China. It's owned by Chinese tech giant Tencent.

The group of WeChat users requested an injunction after the U.S. Commerce Department said Friday it would bar WeChat from U.S. app stores and keep it from accessing essential internet services in the country beginning Sunday at 11:59 p.m.

Early yesterday, WeChat was still available for download at Apple and Android app stores.

The Trump administration has targeted WeChat and another Chinese-owned app, TikTok, for national

security and data privacy concerns, in the latest flashpoint amid rising tensions between Washington and Beijing. The administration contends that the data of U.S. users collected by the two apps could be shared with the Chinese government.

On Saturday, President Donald Trump said he supported a proposed deal that would have TikTok partner with Oracle and WalMart to form a U.S. company. There is still a chance that TikTok could be banned in the U.S. as of Nov. 12 if the deal isn't completed, under the restrictions put in place by the

Commerce Department.

However, a restriction to bar TikTok from app stores in the U.S., similar to what WeChat faced, was pushed back a week to Sept. 27 after Trump backed the latest TikTok deal.

Yesterday [Macau time], Secretary of State Mike Pompeo told Fox News that the government will ensure that under the TikTok-Oracle-WalMart deal, no American's data would end up in the possession of the Chinese government.

In the WeChat case, the users argued that the moves targeting the all-in-one app with instant-messaging, social media and

other communication tools would restrict free speech.

In her ruling, Beeler found that a WeChat ban "eliminates all meaningful access to communication in the plaintiffs' community," and that an injunction would be in the public's interest. Furthermore, specific evidence about WeChat posing a national security threat was also "modest," she wrote.

The U.S. government earlier argued that it would not be restricting free speech because WeChat users still "are free to speak on alternative platforms that do not pose a national security threat."

The White House did not immediately reply to a request for comment on the injunction, but Kerri Kupec, a spokesperson for the Department of Justice, said the department was reviewing the judge's order.

The dispute over WeChat and TikTok is the latest attempt by the Trump administration to counter the influence of China. Since taking office in 2017, Trump has waged a trade war with China, blocked mergers involving Chinese companies and stifled the business of Chinese firms like Huawei, a maker of phones and telecom equipment. AP

FINCEN

Banks moved \$2 trillion amid laundering orders, ICIJ says

A new investigation by the International Consortium of Investigative Journalists says JPMorgan Chase & Co., Deutsche Bank AG and several global banks “kept profiting from powerful and dangerous players” in the past two decades even after the U.S. imposed penalties on these financial institutions.

The report, based on leaked documents obtained by BuzzFeed News and shared with the consortium, said that in some cases the banks kept moving illicit funds after receiving warnings from U.S. officials.

The documents identified more than \$2 trillion in transactions between 1999 and 2017 that were flagged by financial institutions’ internal compliance officers as possible money laundering or other criminal activity, the report said. The top two banks are Deutsche Bank, which disclosed \$1.3 trillion of suspicious money in the files, and JPMorgan, which disclosed \$514 billion, the analysis found. Other lenders include HSBC Holdings Plc, Standard Chartered Plc and Bank of New York Mellon Corp., it said.

A wave of hefty fines against major banks in the past decade spurred an explosion in the number of transactions that lenders flag as suspect to the U.S. government. Still, it’s not clear all the scrutiny is making a difference. Banks moved money for people or entities they couldn’t identify, and in many cases failed to file the required suspicious activity reports until years afterward, according to the investigation released over the weekend.

“They need to do a better job of shutting down these accounts once they see repeated reasons for filing suspicious activity reports,” Tom Cardamone, managing director of Global Financial Integrity, a Washington-based organization tracking illegal money flows worldwide, said in a telephone interview. There are “clients so bad that numerous SARs are being filed about them, but no one ever does anything about it.”

The documents revealed yesterday [Macau time] shed light on a faulty system where



Among others, JPMorgan processed payments for Paul Manafort (pictured), the former campaign manager for President Donald Trump

banks complain about reports that get no follow-up from authorities, while critics say lenders are checking off boxes without taking meaningful steps to stop financial crime. It all risks another black eye for major international banks that paid a total of \$20 billion from 2012 through 2015 for having lax controls against money laundering, helping clients evade taxes or violate U.S. sanctions.

The investigation was based on more than 2,100 “suspicious activity reports” filed by banks with the U.S. Department of Treasury’s Financial Crimes Enforcement Network. The report, dubbed the FinCEN Files, was the result of an investigation by more than 100 news organizations in 88 countries, BuzzFeed said. Bloomberg News wasn’t included in the consortium and hasn’t seen the leaked documents.

While regulators require banks to file suspicious activity reports within 30 to 60 days, many firms took months or even years on average to flag the suspect transactions they saw, the report said.

Bank Policy Institute, an industry group, said banks are legally prohibited from talking about SARs. Based on past instances, some cases are likely connected to requests by law enforcement to keep a so-called suspicious account open so authorities are able to follow the money trail before mounting an arrest or conviction, it said.

Banks have hired thousands of employees to beef up anti-money laundering and financial crime teams, and some withdrew from certain countries and dropped

correspondent-banking ties with hundreds of smaller lenders. But executives have conceded they won’t be able to stamp out all illicit activity.

“It’s the nature of banking: They move money,” Jim Richards, former head of anti-money laundering at Wells Fargo & Co. and Bank of America Corp., who now runs his own advisory firm RegTech Consulting.

One example highlighted in the report: JPMorgan moved more than \$1 billion for the fugitive financier behind Malaysia’s 1MDB scandal, based on records. The bank also processed payments for Paul Manafort, the former campaign manager for President Donald Trump, after he resigned from the campaign amid money laundering and corruption allegations from his work with a pro-Russian political party in Ukraine, according to the investigation.

JPMorgan told ICIJ that it was legally prohibited from discussing clients or transactions. It said it has taken a “leadership role” in pursuing “proactive intelligence-led investigations.”

Compliance staff in big banks, often overworked and lacking in resources, relied on basic Google searches to find out the identity of the people behind money transfers, the ICIJ said. Banks often filed suspicious activity reports only after a transaction or customer became the subject of a negative news report or a government probe, when the funds are long gone, ICIJ says, citing the documents.

Standard Chartered, Bank of New York and Barclays Plc were other lenders that flagged more than \$20 billion of

suspicious activity in the files obtained by ICIJ. A spokesman for Bank of New York said the firm “takes its role in protecting the integrity of the global financial system seriously, including filing Suspicious Activity Reports.” Barclays said in a statement to BuzzFeed that they invest significant resources in detecting and flagging suspicious activity.

As markets open in Asia, shares of banks fell. Standard Chartered slumped 6.2% at the close in Hong Kong, while HSBC plunged 5.3% to its lowest in a quarter of a century.

In a statement yesterday, HSBC said it started a “multi-year journey” eight years ago to overhaul its ability to fight financial crime in more than 60 jurisdictions, making it “a much safer institution than it was in 2012.” Standard Chartered said in a statement it takes the responsibility to fight financial crimes “extremely seriously and have invested substantially in our compliance programs.”

In reaction to the report, Deutsche Bank said ICIJ raised “a number of historic issues” and those related to the bank are “well known” to regulators. “The issues have already been investigated and led to regulatory resolutions in which the bank’s cooperation and remediation was publicly recognized,” it said.

That firm’s former chief executive officer, John Cryan, in 2016 summed up the industry’s unique role, with all the challenges that brings.

“We’ve been slow to recognize that we are an extension of law enforcement,” Cryan said. **MDT/BLOOMBERG**

this day in history

2001 SIMPSON SMUGGLED INTO AFGHANISTAN



The BBC’s world affairs editor has become the only television reporter to broadcast from Taliban-held Afghanistan as the country prepares for an American attack.

John Simpson and a cameraman were smuggled into the Nangarhar Province, near the border with Pakistan, by heavily armed smugglers.

On the advice of their escorts, the two men donned burqas - the traditional full-length garment compulsory for all women living in Taliban-controlled Afghanistan.

The United States is targeting Osama Bin Laden and other al-Qaeda members present in Afghanistan after blaming them for the 11 September attacks.

Mr Simpson, who has reported from many of the world’s trouble spots over the past 20 years, said the disguises worked “superbly”, despite both of them being more than six feet tall.

“Merely putting on the burqa, I found, has an extraordinary effect - it seems to make you disappear,” he said.

“Behind their burqa, women have become an invisible sex in Afghanistan.”

The BBC duo spent several hours in Afghanistan before being taken back over the border into Pakistan.

Mr Simpson reported a heavy Taliban presence along large stretches of the frontier, but said there was still an “eerie emptiness” in the province they visited.

He said people appeared to have either fled their homes in anticipation of an American attack or were keeping their heads down.

The BBC correspondent also noted talk in Afghanistan of a “gradual defection” from the Taliban as their popularity declined.

Courtesy BBC News

IN CONTEXT

The US attack began on 7 October, with air strikes targeting the airports of Kandahar and Kabul, and terrorist training camps near Jalalabad. The offensive was the first retaliatory response to the 11 September 2001 terror attacks in which nearly 3,000 people died. Nato’s International Security Assistance Force began peace-keeping duties in 2002 and maintains a heavy presence in Afghanistan. Infighting between local commanders over power and territory became a feature of the post-Taliban period. The authorities in Kabul have been able to exert little control beyond the capital and militant violence has continued. John Simpson went on to report from northern Iraq when the US and Britain attacked the country in 2003. In April 2003 he was injured in a “friendly fire” attack by a US Navy jet which killed his Iraqi translator.

YOUR STARS



ARIES

Mar. 21-Apr. 19

Things happen, and every time you can let the stress roll off of your back, you grow and learn. Of course, if you are in a situation where you know someone is working against you, you should feel free to unsheathe your claws.



TAURUS

Apr. 20-May. 20

The art of flirtation takes a lot of time to learn, but you are becoming quite an expert. It's time to stop holding back and start using those killer skills you have learned!



GEMINI

May. 21-Jun. 21

You need to know where to go for the information that will help you most in life. Instead of asking friends for advice on how to fatten up your rapidly thinning piggy bank, ask an expert.



CANCER

Jun. 22-Jul. 22

Probably the last thing you want to do is proofread or double-check your work one more time, but you should do it. It will save you a lot more of your time (and your pride) in the long run.



LEO

Jul. 23-Aug. 22

Skip any splurges and stay close to home. You can have just as celebratory a time cuddled up with a good book or your partner as you can at a big party.



VIRGO

Aug. 23-Sep. 22

You will be totally fiery and full of energy, so put it to good use by pushing the envelope and pushing past one or two of the boundaries you've built for yourself.



LIBRA

Sep. 23-Oct. 22

If you are stuck in the middle of a dilemma right now, doing something that you think is right (even if you aren't totally sure it's right) is better than doing nothing at all. Stop trying to nail down every single detail.



SCORPIO

Oct. 23-Nov. 21

Can you have too many friends? The answer, you may be beginning to fear, is yes! There are only so many free hours in your week, and it might be getting tough to prioritize who gets to share them with you.



SAGITTARIUS

Nov. 22-Dec. 21

You aren't in the right frame of mind to deal with feeding people's egos or sacrificing your own desires. What you need now is to be surrounded by people who get you, the people who use the same shorthand you use.



CAPRICORN

Dec. 22-Jan. 19

Are you running the risk of getting too big for your britches? Just in case, you should give yourself a reality check today before someone else does! Make an effort to get more grounded.



AQUARIUS

Jan. 20-Feb. 18

This might seem like a typical day early on, but as each hour goes by, you could start to see more and more mysterious actions and events cropping up. Who are the perpetrators?



PISCES

Feb. 19-Mar. 20

Be a hero and be the first one to extend an olive branch. Call or e-mail them today. Let them know you're thinking about them and be honest about how you feel. Let down your guard and speak from the heart.

The Born Loser by Chip Sansom



SUDOKU

EASY

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

EASY+

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

MEDIUM

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

HARD

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

WEATHER

	MIN	MAX	CONDITION
CHINA			
Beijing	13	26	clear
Harbin	12	16	drizzle
Tianjin	16	27	clear
Urumqi	12	22	cloudy
Xi'an	15	29	clear
Lhasa	9	24	cloudy
Chengdu	15	24	cloudy
Chongqing	18	26	cloudy
Kunming	16	22	cloudy
Nanjing	18	26	cloudy
Shanghai	18	21	drizzle
Wuhan	16	26	cloudy
Hangzhou	19	20	drizzle to moderate rain
Taipei	26	31	cloudy
Guangzhou	26	31	moderate rain
Hong Kong	25	29	heavy rain

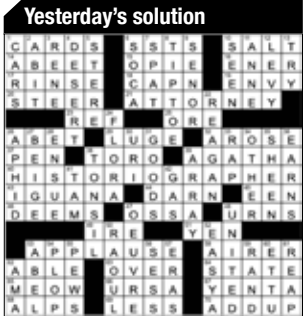
WORLD

Moscow	8	12	drizzle
Frankfurt	4	20	clear
Paris	14	29	cloudy
London	12	21	clear
New York	10	20	cloudy

CROSSWORDS

ACROSS: 1- "Otello" composer; 6- Thick slice; 10- La-la lead-in; 13- Movie critic Roger; 14- Able was _____; 15- The Emerald Isle; 16- Lover of Juliet; 17- Blues singer James; 18- Absent; 19- Inter ____; 20- Maintains; 22- Maximally; 24- Stylish; 28- Compositions; 31- New Mexico's state flower; 32- Monte ____; 34- Greek goddess of the dawn; 36- Carson's predecessor; 37- Back muscle, briefly; 38- Pertaining to compounds of carbon; 41- Historic beginning; 42- On ____ with; 44- Paving material; 45- Female horses; 47- 1957 hit for the Bobbettes; 49- Cut into; 51- Seaport in N Spain; 53- Current; 56- Craftsman; 59- Desperate; 61- Clubs, e.g.; 64- Island of Hawaii; 65- Ultimate; 66- Give the eye; 67- Crikey!; 68- For want of ____; 69- Sow or cow; 70- A bit; 71- Nimble;

DOWN: 1- Aloe ____; 2- Deadly virus; 3- Pardon; 4- Unrealistic person; 5- Judge in 1995 news; 6- Midday nap; 7- Permits; 8- Commedia dell' ____; 9- Facial hair; 10- Credit-tracking corp.; 11- Inlet; 12- One or more; 15- Relax; 20- Catalog; 21- Attempt; 23- Capital of Norway; 25- Land's end?; 26- Surgery souvenirs; 27- Dextrous, lively; 29- Long; 30- Mama's boy; 32- Island in the Bay of Naples; 33- Whatsoever; 35- Apelike; 37- Gentle creature; 39- Moo goo ____ pan; 40- Support for a broken limb; 43- Allow as a discount; 46- Convex fluting; 48- Decoration at the top of a chair leg; 50- Composer Debussy; 52- Siouan speakers; 54- Egyptian peninsula; 55- Bring up the rear; 57- Othello villain; 58- Ersatz; 60- Paris pronoun; 61- Message in a bottle?; 62- Yuck!; 63- ____-de-France; 65- JFK watchdog;



USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

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



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950 ft² \$9,900/mth (ref: 20081003)

[Coloane] Grand Coloane Resort 1 1 1
710 ft² \$16,500/mth (ref: 20021002)

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HSBC SHARES FALL TO 25-YEAR LOW ON CHINA FEARS, BANKS REPORT

HSBG Holdings Plc slumped below its financial crisis low set more than a decade ago as pressures mount on several fronts, including a potential threat to its China expansion plans and increased scrutiny of money laundering controls.

The London-based bank's Hong Kong shares yesterday slid below their closing low for March 2009, hitting as low as HKD29.60. They have plunged 51% this year, reaching the lowest since 1995. In London, HSBC fell 3.3% as of 8:05 a.m. local time, compared with the 1.7% decline in the benchmark FTSE 100 Index.

Europe's largest bank is a possible candidate for China's "unreliable entity list" that aims to punish firms, organizations or individuals that damage national security, the Communist Party's Global Times newspaper reported Saturday. A day later, HSBC was among global banks named in a report by the International Consortium of Investigative Journalists on lenders that "kept profiting from powerful and dangerous players" in the past two decades even after the

BLOOMBERG



U.S. imposed penalties on the institutions.

"If the company is listed as an unreliable company by China, which looks certain since it's a Global Times article, the bank will be facing lots of difficulties to do business in China," Banny Lam, head of research at CEB International Investment Corp.,

said by phone Monday. "They may have trouble expanding the mainland business, after investing so much there over the past few years."

The bank has rankled China over its participation in the American investigation of Huawei Technologies Co. Penalties include restrictions on

trade, investments and visas on companies, countries, groups or persons that appear on the list.

HSBC declined to comment on the Global Times article. In a statement yesterday in response to the ICIJ report it said that "starting in 2012, HSBC embarked on a multi-year journey to overhaul its ability to com-

bat financial crime across more than 60 jurisdictions. HSBC is a much safer institution than it was in 2012."

HSBC now risks being caught in deepening turmoil after a swirl of trouble over the past year amid political unrest and an economic slump in its biggest market, Hong Kong. It also faces difficulties in navigating low interest rates and surging loan losses sparked by the global pandemic.

HSBC Chief Executive Officer Noel Quinn, who took over as the bank's permanent head in March, last month issued a stark warning about tough times ahead while reporting that first-half profit halved and predicting loan losses could swell to \$13 billion this year. Quinn said the bank would attempt to hasten a shakeup of its global operations, accelerating a further pivot into Asia as its European operations lose money.

Struggling to boost returns, the lender has come under fire both in the West and in China as it attempts to steer through political tension. To make matters worse, HSBC sparked anger in Hong Kong earlier this year, alienating some of its most loyal investors, after scrapping its dividend in response to the pandemic. The bank is the worst performer on the benchmark Hang Seng index so far this year. **MDT/BLOOMBERG**

AD

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FOOTBALL | EPL

Son nets 4 as Spurs triumph; Mane double in Liverpool win



Tottenham's Son Heung-min celebrates after scoring his side's fourth goal

ROB HARRIS, LONDON

No fans but no shortage of goals.

There were 18 goals in the Premier League's four games yesterday [Macau time]— with Tottenham's 5-2 victory over Southampton producing the most.

Heung-min Son was rampant, scoring four in a league game for a first time — all assisted by Harry Kane, who got Tottenham's fifth.

Liverpool's trip to Chelsea was a cagey encounter until Andreas Christensen saw red, giving the champions a man advantage. Sadio Mane took advantage, grabbing two goals in five minutes to give Liverpool a 2-0 win at Stamford Bridge.

Neal Maupay was also on target twice as Brighton won 3-0 at Newcastle. And there were six different scorers as Leicester beat Burnley 4-2.

GIFTS FOR LIVERPOOL

A tepid game at Stamford Bridge swung in Liverpool's favor when Christensen hauled down Mane in first-half stoppage time.

As the champions pressed immediately after the break, Mane took five minutes to head in the opener after an interchange between Roberto Firmino and Mohamed Salah.

Yet another blunder by Kepa Arrizabalaga gifted Liverpool a second. The Chelsea goalkeeper stopped Fikayo Tomori's back pass before trying to clear to Jorginho. But it was easily intercepted by Mane to slot into the net.

Chelsea did gain a unexpected chance to stage a comeback when Thiago Alcantara on his Liverpool debut brought down Timo Werner but Jorginho's penalty was saved by Alisson.

TOTTENHAM BOOST

Fresh from securing Gareth Bale's return from Real Madrid, Tottenham produced an emphatic response to losing the opening game to Everton.

But first Jose Mourinho's side had to recover from Danny Ings meeting a high ball from Kyle Walker-Peters to put Southampton in front in the 32nd minute.

But Tanguy Ndombele released Kane, who squared for Son to equalize at the far post in first-half stoppage time.

Two minutes into the second half, Kane played in Son again as Tottenham went in front. The South Korean secured his first Premier League hat trick in the 64th minute after being set up by Kane's lofted pass.

Kane became the first player to set up a Premier League teammate for four goals, crossing for Son

to chip goalkeeper Alex McCarthy.

When Erik Lamela's shot was turned onto the post, Kane was primed to net for himself.

There was still time for a slightly frustrating end for Tottenham when Matt Doherty was adjudged to have handled in the box and Ings netted from the penalty spot in the 90th.

LEICESTER WINS AGAIN

For the first time since the 2015-16 season, Leicester has opened with two wins. That campaign ended with Leicester's shock surge to the title.

Just qualifying for Europe would suit Leicester fine this time, after being denied Champions League qualification on the final day of the last season in July.

Although Chris Wood put Burnley in front in the 10th minute,

Harvey Barnes leveled 10 minutes later and Erik Pieters' own-goal put Leicester ahead five minutes into the second half. James Justin extended the lead in the 61st.

Although Jimmy Dunne pulled a goal back, Dennis Praet's powerful shot in the 79th made sure of the win.

BRIGHTON RECOVERS

After opening with a loss to Chelsea, Brighton was quick off the mark to secure the win over Newcastle.

Maupay scored twice in the opening seven minutes, the first from a penalty after Allan Saint-Maximin's challenge on Tariq Lamptey.

Aaron Connolly wrapped up the victory in the 83rd. Brighton had Yves Bissouma sent off for catching Jamal Lewis in the face with his studs in the 89th. **AP**

AD



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OPINION

Our Desk

Renato Marques



MACAU'S STRANGER THINGS

In the past few days, strange and mysterious things have been happening in Macau which have not been mentioned.

Over the last week, the Health Bureau (SSM) has issued five notifications about “seasonal flu” infection clusters in Macau schools involving a total of 33 students from different year levels.

According to the most recent comparison study of influenza and Covid-19 by Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine, “Both the flu and Covid-19 spread in similar ways. Droplets or smaller virus particles from a sick person can transmit the virus to other people nearby. The smallest particles may linger in the air, and another person can inhale them and become infected [...] Or, people can touch a surface with viruses on it, and then transfer the germs to themselves by touching their face.”

Why am I bringing this up? Simple! This brings us a dilemma. Either the measures enforced by local health authorities to contain the Covid-19 are not effective or the schools where these flu outbreaks occurred are not following those guidelines set by the Education and Youth Affairs Bureau (DSEJ).

One thing's for sure: with Covid-19 containment measures in force, there should not have been a cluster of influenza infections, since the same preventive measures apply for both viruses.

If this wasn't strange enough, it is even stranger that the five groups infected with flu went unnoticed and did not receive notes or comments in the biweekly press briefing from local health authorities.

Should we not be concerned? Should we be investigating how this was possible? The answer to both questions is apparently not.

Still, it sure makes me feel glad that we have not had any Covid-19 locally transmitted cases in Macau since the beginning of the outbreak. As SSM reports show, if there had been any cases, even with all our preventive measures in force, we would have all been infected by now.

Another strange (or not) thing that was widespread over the last week was ... xenophobia.

In times where racism, xenophobia, and all other forms of discrimination have been central to constant and prolonged debates, I was almost shocked (I said almost) when I saw the birth of the anti-foreigner movement, or should I say, anti-non-Chinese nationals movement in Macau.

The cause is the Macau Grand Prix, or more specifically, the information that the government is arranging for the entry of foreign drivers and riders onto Macau's pure soil for the “event of the year” which will apparently only attract half a dozen visitors to our tourist-thirsty economy.

Maybe, just maybe, we are (just) in the presence of what I want to believe is a misinformation campaign. So, I dare to explain that: 1) to board an airplane before even reaching Macau, “devil” foreigners need to present a negative Covid-19 nucleic acid test; 2) to enter Macau they also need to undergo the same medical checkups that allowed all those infected Macau residents from abroad to enter (remember?); 3) they still need to undergo a 14-day quarantine in an isolation facility designated by the government for which they will have to pay 5,600 patacas per person as requested by the local authorities.

Can you explain to me now how this constitutes any added risk to the community when compared to previous returnees? I am looking forward to hearing these explanations. Otherwise, it is just xenophobia!

UK SCIENCE ADVISERS WARN OF DARKER COVID-19 DAYS AHEAD

Britain's top medical advisers yesterday painted a grim picture of exponential growth in illness and death if nothing is done to control the second wave of coronavirus infections, laying the groundwork for the government to announce new restrictions later this week.

After a slow rise in Covid-19 infections over the summer, the number of new cases is now doubling every seven days, and if nothing is done to slow the spread of the disease this could lead to as many as 49,000 cases a day by mid-October, Chief Scientific

Officer Patrick Vallance told the public during a televised briefing.

The experience in other countries shows that this increase in infections will soon lead to a rise in deaths, Chief Medical Officer Chris Whitty added.

“We have, in a very bad sense, literally turned a corner,” after weeks of rising infections, Whitty said.

Prime Minister Boris Johnson later this week is expected to announce a slate of short-term restrictions that will act as a “circuit breaker” to slow the spread of the disease.

THE BUZZ

FILM

OUTLOOK NOT IMPROVING FOR BELEAGUERED US MOVIE THEATERS

AP PHOTO



Elizabeth Debicki (left) and John David Washington in a scene from 'Tenet'

ABOUT three quarters of the country's movie theaters are open, but Americans are not going back in significant numbers in the COVID-era, even with new films coming into the marketplace weekly.

The biggest movies continue to limp along. According to studio estimates yesterday [Macau time], Warner Bros.' “Tenet” earned \$4.7 million in its third weekend from nearly 2,930 locations, Disney's “The New Mutants” added \$1.6 million in its fourth weekend, “Unhinged” brought in \$1.3 million and Sony's rom-com “The Broken Hearts Gallery” picked up an additional \$800,000 in its second frame.

And newcomers aren't faring any better. The faith-based “Infidel,” which stars Jim Caviezel, did the best with \$1.5 million from just over 1,700 theaters.

This weekend also saw the limited release of two adult dramas, IFC's “The Nest,” with Jude Law and Carrie Coon, and Bleecker Street's “The Secrets We Keep,” with Noomi Rapace. Both played in under 500 theaters across the country and neither got much more than \$200 per location. “The Nest” earned an estimated \$62,000 from 301 locations and “The Secrets We Keep” brought in just under \$90,000 from 471 theaters.

“There's no question that this is an extraordinarily challenging marketplace, especially for North America,” said Paul Dergarabedian, Comscore's senior media analyst. “This is a slow roll out. It's going to take some time.”

The nation's biggest chains have been open for about a month after nearly six months of being closed due to the pandemic and a lack of new releases. But since reopening with enhanced safety measure and the promise of new blockbusters, they haven't gotten the infusion of business they were hoping for. Indoor theaters are still not open in two of the country's biggest markets, New York and Los Angeles.

The North American earnings have not been promising for studios with theatrical releases on the horizon either. Christopher Nolan's “Tenet” has only earned \$36.1 million from

North American theaters to date. The performance has led some studios to push back releases even further and some wonder whether more will follow. The next major release on the calendar is Disney and Marvel's “Black Widow” on Nov. 6.

“It's natural that we're going to see release date changes for many movies,” Dergarabedian said. “It's a very unpredictable marketplace.”

Globally “Tenet” has also managed to cross a major milestone this weekend: The \$250 million mark.

Still, just because theaters are doing more business internationally does not mean a new movie will be a surefire hit, as Disney's live-action “Mulan” has proven in China.

After a disappointing debut in China last week, “Mulan” dropped 72% in its second weekend where local audiences have criticized it for being “inauthentic.”

AP PHOTO



US The newly formed U.S. Space Force is deploying troops to a vast new frontier: the Arabian Peninsula. Space Force now has a squadron of 20 airmen stationed at Qatar's Al-Udeid Air Base in its first foreign deployment. The force, pushed by President Donald Trump, represents the sixth branch of the U.S. military and the first new military service since the creation of the Air Force in 1947.

Mexican authorities said they have seized a ship, arrested 21 crewmembers and shut down a warehouse presumably used to store stolen fuel along the Gulf of Mexico. The navy statement said it found 16 storage tanks for fuel in the warehouse, along with five trucks. Two other trucks were found supplying the ship with apparently stolen fuel.

Germany Shares in electric- and hydrogen-powered truck startup Nikola plunged yesterday after the company's founder, Trevor Milton, resigned amid allegations of fraud - just two weeks after signing a \$2 billion partnership with General Motors. The departing executive chairman said he would defend himself against accusations that the company made false claims about its vehicles, allegations that Nikola rejects.

AP PHOTO



Greece's government spokesman says more than 200 people have tested positive for the coronavirus among thousands of asylum-seekers admitted to a new camp on the island of Lesbos after the old one burned down. Speaking during a regular briefing yesterday, Stelios Petsas said 7,064 people who entered the new camp at Kara Tepe had been tested, and 243 of them were found positive.

New Zealand Two men from Britain and Australia who were working in the Solomon Islands to locate bombs left behind from World War II have died after one of the bombs exploded, authorities said yesterday. The Norwegian People's Aid agency said the men were staff members who were working with the government to develop a database of unexploded bombs from the war.

BOX OFFICE

1. “Tenet,” \$4.7 million.
2. “The New Mutants,” \$1.6 million.
3. “Infidel,” \$1.5 million.
4. “Unhinged,” \$1.3 million.
5. “The Broken Hearts Gallery,” \$800,000.
6. “After We Collided,” \$304,986.
7. “Spongebob Movie: Sponge on the Run,” \$210,000.
8. “Alone,” \$190,000.
9. “Bill & Ted Face the Music,” \$187,761.
10. “The Personal History of David Copperfield,” \$150,000.

Estimated ticket sales for Friday through Sunday at U.S. and Canadian theaters, according to Comscore.