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Novel Coronavirus Response and Coordination Centre

LAW AMENDMENT PROPOSES REDUCED WORKING HOURS, ‘STUDY LEAVE’ SCHEME FOR PUBLIC TEACHERS P2

MAINLAND TOURISTS BAFFLED BY REDUNDANT COVID-19 TEST P3

PRESIDENT XI JINPING SPURNED SUGGESTIONS THAT HIS COUNTRY MIGHT DECOUPLE ITSELF FROM THE US AND OTHER TRADING PARTNERS P10

China yesterday rejected the latest attack on its Hong Kong policy by the U.S. and several of its allies, saying they “should face up to the reality” that the former British colony has been returned to China. Foreign ministry spokesperson Zhao Lijian was responding to a statement on Hong Kong issued by the U.S., U.K., Australia, Canada and New Zealand, which together make up an intelligence partnership known as the Five Eyes. “If they dare to harm China’s sovereignty, security and development interests, they should beware of their eyes being poked and blinded,” he said at a daily briefing.

Taiwan’s government refused to renew the broadcast license of a leading pro-China cable news channel, prompting complaints of political interference. The National Communications Commission cited repeated violations of rules on accurate reporting in saying it had rejected CTiTV’s application to renew its license.



Thailand Thousands of pro-democracy demonstrators rallied in central Bangkok, a day after a chaotic protest outside Parliament was marred by violence that left 55 people injured, including as many as six with gunshot wounds. The protest had been held to encourage lawmakers to approve a motion that would lead to substantive constitutional change, including measures to limit the power of the monarchy.

India Four suspected militants were killed and two Indian police officers were wounded yesterday in a gunfight in Indian-controlled Kashmir, police said. Police Inspector-General Mukesh Singh told reporters that the shooting erupted on the outskirts of the city of Jammu and lasted three hours.

More on backpage

ANOTHER CALL FOR RELIEF

Lawmakers are urging the government to roll out a third round of stimulus packages to locals and SMEs P2



CENTRAL GOV’T YET TO GIVE GREEN LIGHT FOR GROUP TOURS DESPITE MGTO PETITION



LAW AMENDMENT PROPOSES REDUCED LECTURE HOURS FOR PUBLIC TEACHERS

JULIE ZHU

THE Secretary for Social Affairs and Culture, Ao Ieong U, brought the amendment of law no. 67/99/M to the Legislative Assembly (AL) for approval yesterday. The law concerns teachers working for public schools.

As of today, the law has been in force for more than 20 years.

Overall, the amendment aims at reducing the length of teachers' lecture times; proposes regulations in regards to performance assessment of teachers; updates policies concerning teachers' absence and sick leave; and proposes a "study leave" scheme for teachers.

Lawmaker Chan Hong supported the amendment, arguing that the proposed policies mean that public teachers will "spend less time lecturing classes." In addition, Chan also questioned permanent contracts.

The Macau SAR government introduced a "permanent" administrative employment contract, which is a contract signed between the SAR government and "experienced and excellent civil



servants" in order to protect these employees' careers. Such contracts involve higher compensation for the civil servants in the event that they are unreasonably fired.

"Right now, it is really difficult for public teachers to [transfer] to the permanent administrative contract," Chan commented. She asked how the SAR government will design the regulations to address this specific goal.

For the first time, the amendment proposed a mechanism to handle the situation of public teachers seeking medical treatment outside of Macau. The amendment defines seeking medical services in Macau and seeking medical services outside of Macau as distinct situations. Chan wondered whether this new prescription means public teachers will have reduced welfare.

While explaining the prescrip-

tion, Secretary Ao Ieong acknowledged that the policy is different from the policy for civil servants, and that, once the amendment comes into effect, public teachers asking for leave to receive medical services outside of Macau will be handled differently to civil servants.

According to Ao Ieong, in general, civil servants work 36 hours a week. During these working hours, if they take sick leave, such

individuals are required to compensate for the hours they were away from work by working at another time.

However, public teachers can adjust class arrangements to make up for missed hours.

Lawmaker Sulu Sou also raised questions concerning public teachers' working hours.

One of the new prescriptions proposes that teachers can take "study leave" if they pursue further education or training. However, school leaders are excluded from this specific allowance.

"The leaders might question why they can't take the study leave when their subordinates can," lawmaker Song Pek Kei pointed out. Song said that the leaders might think, "I don't even have the right to take study leave, so how can I develop myself?"

Song wants the government to provide the "same treatment, encouragement and support" for both leaders and teachers.

Responding to Song, Ao Ieong U said that leaders of public schools are appointed for a fixed number of years, which makes it difficult for leaders to take study leave.

"If a person in charge is appointed for a one-year term and the person takes study leave during that year, what's the meaning of the appointment?" Ao Ieong asked.

Lawmakers push gov't to launch third stimulus

STAFF REPORTER

SEVERAL lawmakers are urging the SAR government to roll out a third round of economic stimulus as a lifeline thrown to locals and SMEs who have been hit hard by the pandemic.

They put forward the suggestions when addressing the Lawmaker Agenda session prior to the Legislative Assembly (AL) plenary meeting yesterday.

Despite the fact that the pandemic has been under check in Macau, local community has expressed apprehension that the city will soon hit a fresh wave of economic distress, as some economic relief measures will expire at the end of this year.

The subsidy program for businesses, as part of the



MOP10 billion introduced by the government in April this year – which stipulates any companies receiving government grants will not be allowed to dismiss staff within six months without a justifiable reason – is due to roll out at the end of December.

The termination of this scheme portends new shu-

tdowns across sectors if the government does not implement a new subsidy scheme in a timely manner, Lawmaker Ho Lon Sang said in the AL yesterday.

"The government should be more forward-thinking and start formulating a third round of stimulus, with the aid tar-

getting the city's SMEs. It is to help them ride out the storm," Ho stressed.

Considering SMEs as the most vulnerable entity amid the economic fallout, lawmaker Ip Sio Kai suggested the government commit some funds for banks and other financial institutions to reinforce support for providing loans to SMEs.

"If the city's tourism does not recover at the expected pace, such a lending fund can be initiated straight away, so that SMEs can better brace themselves for any further economic stress," Ip elucidated.

Lei Cheng I also pointed out that the recovery speed of the global economy largely banks on the development of a vaccine – which however is still in its "re-

ch stage." She said that it is of a pressing need that the government institutes a new round of stimulus to provide the much-needed boost to rectify the city's climbing unemployment rate.

During the recent Policy Address, Chief Executive Ho Iat Seng did not promise another round of relief, yet noted, "We are not reducing any subsidies and support to the population. But we need to follow the legal regimes established for that purpose."

AGNES LAM STRESSES GOV'T'S DOUBLE STANDARDS

LAWMAKER Agnes Lam has again criticized the government for having double standards when it comes to preventive measures against Covid-19.

Lam made the comments in the Lawmaker Agenda session before the Legislative Assembly (AL) plenary meeting yesterday. Earlier, the authorities have relaxed entry restrictions for racers and other staff

of foreign nationalities who are participants in the Grand Prix, as long as they observe the 14-day mandatory quarantine period. Lam denounced the government, saying the relaxation is inequitable, as it does not apply to ordinary people. She made the point that some families have had to separate from each other ever for a long time ever since the border shut down in March.

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Central gov't yet to consider resumption of group travel to Macau

LYNZY VALLES

THE SAR government has been working with the central government in petitioning for the cross-border visits of Mainland tour groups to Macau. However, owing to the pandemic prevention and control measures required by national mechanisms, the central government is currently not considering resuming cross-border group travel at this point.

According to the Macau Government Tourism Office (MGTO) Director Maria Helena de Senna Fernandes, an official reply has recently been received from the Ministry of Culture and Tourism of the People's Republic of China.



The MGTO head disclosed the information during the Tourism Development Committee on Wednesday, where the agency convened its second Plenary Meeting of 2020.

This week, official data from the MGTO shows that, as of mid-November, Macau

is recording a daily average of 20,600 visitors, while the hotel occupancy rate is approaching 45%.

November 6 registered the highest number of tourist arrivals since the pandemic outbreak, standing at 25,444.

Macau is recording a slight improvement in its tou-

rist arrivals this month, compared to data from October, which only showed that the city was seeing an average daily arrival of some 19,000 visitors. Hotel occupancy then stood at 38.1%.

However, these numbers do not suffice to represent a significant increase in tourist expenditure.

The Macau SAR is seeing a plunge of 93.3% year-on-year to 1.01 billion patacas in the total spending of visitors, excluding gaming expenses, during the third quarter of the year, coinciding with the low number of tourist arrivals that the SAR has been receiving.

Data from the Statistics and Census Service indicated that the per-capita spending of visitors decreased by 12.0% year-on-year to 1,349 patacas in the third quarter, of which spending of those from mainland China fell by 20.6% to 1,343 patacas.

Meanwhile, per-capita spending of mainland visitors travelling under the Individual Visit Scheme (3,885 patacas) surged by 78.8% year-on-year, driven by an uplift of 128.7% in the per-capita spending of those from Guangdong province.

MAINLAND TOURISTS BAFFLED BY REDUNDANT COVID-19 TEST REQUIRED FOR CASINO ENTRY

SOME tourists from China have grumbled about what they consider to be the unfair treatment requiring only them, but not casino staff, to present a negative Covid-19 test result received within the previous seven days before entering casinos.

In the Lawmaker Agenda session before the Legislative Assembly (AL) plenary meeting yesterday, lawmaker Mak Soi Kun related the complaints voiced to him by mainland tourists.

Currently, all travelers from China are required to hold a negative virus test certificate before coming to Macau. However, the validity of the test may not coincide with that requested by casinos.

This is to say, mainland visitors who are already in Macau may be barred from getting into casinos, as their Covid-19 certificate conducted earlier is expired.

However, Mak pointed out that, all gaming staff, such as croupiers, do not have to comply with the requirement adding that they are permitted to walk into casinos freely as long as they have tested negative once before.

Visitors already having tested negative and possessing an expired certificate does not necessarily mean they are unsafe to the public, Mak argued, saying some visitors were mystified by the redundant regulation.

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IPIM PLEDGES TO DEVELOP CONVENTION INDUSTRY

The president of the Macao Trade and Investment Promotion Institute, Lau Wai Meng, has pledged to foster the development of the convention and exhibition sector, saying that it could boost the confidence of global travelers in times of crisis. Lau was speaking at the opening ceremony of the International Environmental Crisis Management Forum and Exhibition 2020 (IECMF), which was held yesterday at the Venetian Macao. To accelerate sustainable development, invited speakers at the forum also suggested fostering the development of new green industries and purchasing from carbon offset programs from China to achieve carbon neutrality.

SLIGHT DROP IN OCTOBER CPI RECORDED

The Composite Consumer Price Index for October is 101.91, equating to a 0.75% drop year-on-year. The Statistics and Census Service attributed the change to price drops in relation to tour groups, telecommunications and electricity services. A 1.4% rise in the price index was recorded in the past 12 months compared with the previous year. Of all categories, only medical services as well as household facilities and services recorded an increase of approximately 2%. The increase in household facilities and services was caused by the rise in salary for domestic helpers.

PORK SUPPLY DELAYED DUE TO HITCHES AT ABATTOIR

The pork supply to some wet markets and retail stores was delayed yesterday due to technical hitches with the slaughtering line at Macau Slaughter House. As of 9 a.m. yesterday, fresh pork was delivered to all local wet markets. But the batch to supermarkets and other retail stores came later than expected. A total of 248 pigs were butchered on November 19, approximately the same number as usual. The Municipal Affairs Bureau gave public notification yesterday morning after being notified of the glitch.

AL PASSES LAW AMENDMENT CANCELING SPECIFIC CIVIL SERVICE POSITIONS

JULIE ZHU

DURING yesterday's plenary meeting, an amendment to law No. 14/2009, concerning the career of civil servants, was passed by the Legislative Assembly.

According to the current civil servant law, technicians who serve as clerical assistants for photographic design, mail clerk, public relations and several other types of work are deemed to be involved in specific tasks. These individuals fall under the "special career" classification under the law.

In total, five positions are involved, commonly known as the "195 careers" because the relevant salary equates to 195 points on the workers' remuneration index.

However, considering that these jobs are no longer unique, the amendment proposed removing these occupations from the "195 career" framework.

Qualifying individuals with a secondary education degree, if they meet other conditions, can apply to join other civil service structures within eight years.

Lawmaker Leong Sun Iok and others raised questions regarding this proposal. He, among others, voiced that there are other positions deserving of higher regard. For example, mail deliverers and inspectors from specific departments frequently have higher education degrees and skills, and

MACAU PHOTO AGENCY



are familiar with Macau's laws and multiple languages. However, in reality, the government only requires lower education qualifications for these positions.

The amendment also proposes using less time for organizing civil servants' exams. According to the amendment, the government will only reveal the name list of the accepted civil servants on other government official websites, but not the government bulletin.

Lawmaker Agnes Lam voiced her concerns that the exemption may trigger controversy among members of the public in terms of transparency.

"Will the government consider continuing current measures [of

publishing the name list in the official bulletin], so that [the public will have this] important open document?" Lam asked.

Under the current law, ranking civil servants are not allowed to return to an old position immediately after completing another appointment; they must wait six months. The amendment removed this policy, suggesting that these individuals can return to an old position immediately.

Responding to the lawmakers, the Secretary for Administration and Justice André Cheong highlighted that the amendment does not equate to a "salary increase" and that government expenditure will not increase as a result.

According to Cheong, there are currently 1,895 people in the "195 career" category, of which 1,320 have a salary point of 260 or more.

These positions were abolished to improve the civil servants' career system.

Cheong also stated that there are currently 124 maritime staff members commonly referred to as having a "225 career," meaning 225 points on the worker remuneration index. The government has been considering including these people in the "260 career" category. However, the relevant personnel are asking for a salary rise, which is a different problem compared to the aforementioned five positions.

POLICY ADDRESS

5G not for all, CE warns

RENATO MARQUES

THE implementation in Macau of the fifth-generation wireless network (5G) is one of the projects that the government is paying significant attention to regarding the infrastructure to be developed in 2021.

Nevertheless, the Chief Executive (CE), Ho Iat Seng, has announced that the population should not expect to be making use of such technology in the same way they did for 3G and 4G networks, as the costs of building the network infrastructure are very high and the coverage of the network will be limited.

"The coverage of the 5G network will be very limited in comparison with the 3G or 4G. The previous generations [3G and 4G] only needed a few retransmission points around the city and these can be installed in any public facility or private buildings, but the 5G needs its own retransmission sta-

MACAU PHOTO AGENCY



tions, which can cost as much as 3 billion patacas," the CE said in a reply to the lawmaker Chan Hong at the Legislative Assembly (AL).

Ho also noted that 5G technology has many industrial applications, especially in manufacturing

industries and in medicine, but even those advances would require local industries and sectors to adjust to and acquire significant amounts of new equipment to be able to make use of the advantages of 5G.

Due to this state of affairs, the CE warned, "Education and Medicine will be the two major areas of interest [for the use of 5G], but we need to have a new law to regulate this and only then can we negotiate with the company that will manage the network," he said, noting that, due to the high costs of construction, the government is paying special attention to this topic, particularly in regard to those assets that would belong exclusively to the Macau SAR and those that would be shared within the region and with the companies that will explore the service.

The concern arises from previous problems referred to on several occasions at the AL and related to the current situation of the landline and other assets, which, according to several debates in the AL, make it difficult to confirm which part belongs to the SAR and which part belongs to the network concessionaire Companhia de Telecomunicações de Macau (CTM).

"We need to confirm what the government assets are in relation to [5G] this time," Ho remarked.

MACAU'S LEADING NEWSPAPER



MELCO Resorts & Entertainment believes innovation and success is realized through personal growth and advancement. The Melco Learning Academy, Macau's first in-house academy, embraces this commitment to lifelong learning through Whole Person Development. Since its establishment a decade ago in 2010, the academy has offered over 5,845 courses to more than 639,600 colleague participants in Macau and Hong Kong.

In September 2015, Melco's in-house driven Bachelor's Degree program YOU-niversity was launched in partnership with Edinburgh Napier University. Unique in Macau, and one of just very few in Asia, the program recognizes management experience as university credits, allowing direct entry to the third year of study.

The two-year degree program is taught on-premise at Melco properties, and enrolled colleagues' relevant work departments are encouraged to provide flexible duty rosters to support studying whilst working – enabling colleagues to further develop their careers through sustained learning. The first batch of 15 Melco employees graduated from the

WHOLE PERSON DEVELOPMENT

Melco YOU-niversity program nurtures local management talent

program in 2018.

Recently, a second batch of 14 colleagues from across Melco's various departments, including Casino Marketing, F&B, Entertainment, Finance, Information Technology, Table Games, Hotel, Learning Academy and Security completed the program and successfully graduated with Bachelor of Arts in International Business Practice. The customized courses studied include International Marketing, Strategic Management in a Global Context, Service Management, Introduction to Accounting, International Business and Casino Management.

Discussing personal and professional achievements attained from the program, recent graduate Ronald, Senior Operations Manager of Security, said, "This has been a valuable opportunity to better myself in terms of education and personal cultivation, deve-



loping my eagerness to learn as well as the ability to think independently. Applying the technical and interpersonal skills taught through the course benefits my daily work life – helping to strengthen my social network, allowing me to lead my team in a more skillful way whilst enabling me to be more effective in assisting my superiors."

Fellow graduate Charles, Manager of Security Control Room, said, "My parents had always held high hopes for my

education, sending me to the United States at 15 in preparation for attending university there. Unfortunately, our family business closed down after a few years and my parents could no longer afford to support my studying abroad, and I dropped out of college to begin full time work.

"Shortly after Christmas 2017, my mother was admitted to hospital due to chest pain. Here, she mentioned that her greatest regret was her inability to support me in completing my degree. I comforted her by telling her about the company-sponsored Melco YOU-niversity program, and promised that I would fight my way through to enrol and graduate from it.

"She passed away that same night due to heart failure, and I swore to keep my final promise to her by completing my college degree. With my business unit leader's endorsement and

nomination I was selected to become one of the employees to attend the YOU-niversity program in mid-2018.

"It was hard to manage life while working full time and study for a university degree, especially when my wife and I were expecting our firstborn at the beginning of 2019. I wanted to set an example for my son by completing my bachelor degree in my 40s, so that he would understand that learning is a lifelong journey, which is especially true in today's rapidly changing world."

Charles added, "My heartfelt thanks go to Melco for making YOU-niversity possible. I also thank colleagues from Learning Academy who run this program and all my family, friends, colleagues, instructors, tutors and classmates for helping me in the past two years. My dream of obtaining a university degree finally comes true."



LAWYERS ASSOCIATION TO ELECT NEW BOARD ON DEC. 10

THE Macau Lawyers Association (AAM) is preparing to run elections on December 10. As on previous occasions, a ticket headed by veteran lawyer Jorge Neto Valente is running in an uncontested election.

The president Neto Valente will thus be restored to the helm of the Association for another two-year term.

In 2018, the board of members, including the president, was elected with a total of 242 votes from the 256 members who cast their vote.

Contrary to what happened two years ago, when the election saw a potential challenger in Sérgio de Almeida Correia, who announced his intention to contest the position, this year no other lawyers have come forward to formally express their intentions of running for the position. Although an initial intention was expressed, Correia never formalized his candidacy, leading Neto Valente to run unopposed. **RM**

CRIME

STUDENT ASSAULTS TEACHER AS REVENGE FOR BAD GRADING

RENATO MARQUES

A 23-year-old university student, a resident from the mainland who is studying at a higher education institution located in Taipa, is being charged in connection to an assault on a 37-year-old professor who works in the same institution, the Public Security Police Force (PSP) has informed in a press conference.

The incident took place last week around 2:30 p.m., when the professor was walking in the institution's administration building and was hit by liquid that had been spilled on him by someone on a higher floor.

He immediately called for help and the university security guards tried to locate the perpetrator.

When the police arrived at the scene around 3 p.m., the security guards had already found and detained the suspect, who was then handed over to the authorities.

According to the victim's report, he was hit with a liquid substance, which seemed to resemble glue, on the neck and body, and which had also hit him in one eye,

MICHAŁ PARZUCHOWSKI



causing minor injuries.

His clothes, briefcase, and some personal items such as a watch, a mobile phone, and some other items were also affected and damaged by the liquid.

To the police, the professor also stated that this was not the first time that he had suffered an assault. He recalled that on Oc-

tober 29, a similar incident took place in one of the lavatory facilities of the university but failed to cause any damage.

Taken in for questioning, the student admitted to being the instigator of the attack and that he had used glue in the assault on the Professor.

The student revealed that the

attack was motivated by a desire for revenge against the teacher, who had allegedly failed him in one of his subjects.

The student has presented to the Public Prosecutions Office to be charged with offenses against the physical integrity of the professor as well as the material losses.

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ANTHONY LAM



CRIME

Suspect of robbery-stabbing case involving HKD183,000 arrested

ANTHONY LAM

POLICE authorities have arrested the suspect of a stabbing and robbery case that took place in a hotel guestroom in Rua de Cantão in Zape.

Information released by the Public Security Police Force (PSP)

points to the Hotel Fortuna as the site of the crime.

At about 4 p.m. on Wednesday, the Judiciary Police (PJ) was notified by the PSP about the case that involved HKD183,000.

At 2 p.m. that day, the suspect, surnamed Zhu and in his 30s, requested that the victim, a woman, exchange HKD200,000 in

the hotel room. The hotel room was rented under the victim's name because the suspect was overstaying his permit.

When the victim responded to the suspect that she only had approximately HKD180,000 in cash, the suspect agreed to the deal and asked that the transaction be conducted in the hotel

room.

Upon arriving at the hotel room, the suspect used a knife to threaten the victim, who immediately screamed for help. Zhu then stabbed the woman's left thigh, leaving a wound about 4cm long. Zhu then fled from the room.

The PJ deployed more than 20

investigators and intercepted the suspect in Taipa at around 6 p.m. that evening. The money was retrieved from the man.

Zhu denied the allegations, claiming that the money was given to him by the woman for safekeeping.

In a separate case, at around 1 p.m. on November 17, the PJ received a report from the victim, a businessman surnamed Fu in his 40s, about the loss of his premium merchandise, such as handbags and a wallet, which he stored at a storage facility in an industrial building. The victim told the police that he put the merchandise into storage the day before.

The next day, when he returned to the storage facility at about noon, he discovered that the door to his storage space had been opened and the merchandise was nowhere to be found.

After reviewing surveillance camera footage from the storage facility, the police found that, at 9:30 p.m. on November 17, three men made their way to the facility and according to the police, pretended to retrieve their belongings.

Police disclosed that the three men later moved into the victim's storage space, damaged the surveillance camera system and took all the merchandise to a residential unit on the Macau Peninsula.

AD

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Administrative Regulation No. 22/2020
(Construction materials waste management regime)
Entry into force: 17 January 2021

The disposal of construction materials waste in the ARMC will be subject to the payment of a fee calculated according to its nature and weight.

<p>Demolition and construction inert materials: MOP70/ton</p> <p>Gravel and earth</p> <p>Concrete blocks</p> <p>Concrete with little reinforcement</p>	<p>Special demolition and construction materials: MOP200/ton</p> <p>Sludges</p> <p>Asphalt</p>	<p>Other demolition and construction materials: MOP200/ton</p> <p>Chemical wastes</p> <p>Recyclable materials</p>
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Other demolition and construction materials should preferably be transported, according to their nature, to the following facilities for treatment:

- 1) Macau Solid Waste Incineration Plant, in the case of combustible waste;
- 2) Macao Special and Hazardous Waste Treatment Station, in the case of chemical waste;
- 3) Installations of recycling operators, in the case of recyclable and reusable materials.

ON THE ROAD TO GP INTERVIEW | CHARLES LEONG, MACAU F4 RACER

RENATO MARQUES

MACAU race driver Charles Leong will be contesting this year's Macau Grand Prix (GP). Already a customary participant of the Formula 3 GP, Leong will be racing the streets of Macau in a Formula 4 (F4) category car this year. It will be the first-ever running of the beginner level category of the most prestigious Asian motorsports event.

In an exclusive interview with the Times, Leong talks about his high expectations for the race and how he is preparing for the bigger and unexpected challenges presented to him in this peculiar year of 2020.

Macau Daily Times (MDT) – How is your preparation for the Macau GP going? Was it difficult to adjust back to the F4 car?

Charles Leong (CL) – The last time I drove the F4 car, I was 15 years old [4 years ago]. It is good to be back in a racecar [after not racing for almost a year], getting back to the rhythm and trying to gain my race fitness back. During the China F4 event in Zhuhai, held from October 6 to 8, I was struggling to get everything together and drive consistently, especially when transitioning between the break and the throttle. This was what I was struggling with the most at the start.

But I still managed to do a good qualifying session and the races went well. I believe I can still be faster [than I was in Zhuhai] in this car and extend the gap even more from the other drivers because I feel that I was not driving at my 100 percent as I still was not at my full race fitness. I believe there is still more that I can gain because when I looked at my old data records in that car and com-

'I am looking forward to winning the

pared it with what I did recently, I have been losing 1 or 2 tenths of a second. It just takes some time to adjust.

MDT – You were racing in Zhuhai to prepare for the Macau GP. What do you think about this year's event and how do you feel about F4 coming to the Guia Circuit?

CL – I think it is still pretty good that the F4 comes to Macau (at least something is happening this year). Macau is in a much better position than many other countries and regions regarding the Covid-19 pandemic. We did pretty well in controlling the Covid-19 pandemic.

I think the F4 race here will be fun. It gives a lot of opportunity to people here, especially to those who never had the chance to race in Macau, to do it this year. This can also work as good preparation and incentive for some new drivers.

The F4 car is slow [when compared with F3 cars] but it's still kind of a hard car to drive because there isn't any electronic assistance and it also has limited downforce [aerodynamics]. It is just like a huge Go-Kart.

MDT – Do you think you are in an advantageous position due to your experience and knowledge of the track when compared with most drivers that will be entering the Guia Circuit for the first time?

CL – If you are a good driver, I don't think you will find a huge problem when you arrive at a new circuit. If you know the car well you just need to drive around a



couple of laps to know the track, it is pretty easy.

To me and [according to] my personal experience, what is more difficult is to learn the car because you can't have enough time inside a car, especially in the F3. After all, it requires a very high budget as it is very expensive to have track time and so it becomes impossible to clock a lot of mileage in the car.

I think most of them [F4 racers] will be fine, but maybe some of them will experience some crashes in the practice sessions.

I think the bigger challenge will be related to the lack of down-

force from the car. This will be particularly clear especially in the mountain section. It's going to be hard to drive there and it's also very bumpy, which is another factor affecting the car in my experience.

Most of the Macau track is bumpy, so we can't avoid that. What we can do is to try to learn and avoid some of the bumps especially at the braking points, particularly on the Lisboa [Bend].

MDT – Does the size of this F4 car (much smaller than the previous F3 cars) have any influence on the competitive-

ness of the race?

CL – I don't think so. The size of the car doesn't matter as [much as] what you need to do is to get as close as possible to the wall/barriers. There isn't a big difference coming from the car's size that influences the way to drive them, except maybe there is a little more space for you to go for the limits of the track [while exiting from the turns].

MDT – You are most probably the top favorite to win this race. Do you agree?

CL – I'm looking forward to winning in Macau this year. I think from what I have seen from the results of F4 China races, all I need is just to have a bit of luck at the Lisboa corner, especially at the start of the race and after that, I think I can lead the race till the end.

I look at the results from the last four races in Zhuhai, which is a track that everyone knows. I was also racing against drivers that know the car well and I could still manage to create a gap from the following car while racing on old tires.

I think I'm in a pretty good shape compared to the majority of the competition.

MDT – Do you think Andy Chang will be your bigger challenger?

CL – Andy knows the track and he has been racing on F3 cars, but he has also not driven for a long time. But honestly, I don't bother much in trying to find who my bi-

JUNIOR FORMULA RETURNS AFTER 10 YEARS GP TRIVIA

MACAU has not hosted a junior formula racing event as part of its main program since 2010, when the loud Formula BMW Pacific cars, powered by the "Flying Brick" K1200RS sport-touring motorcycle engine took to the roads of Macau during the 57th Macau GP.

The race in Macau also marked the final race of the seventh and last season of the competition. The winner of the race was Spaniard Carlos Sainz Jr., who is currently racing in Formula One for McLaren but is already confirmed to be moving to Ferrari next year, replacing four-time Formula One World Champion, Sebastian Vettel.

During the 60th Macau Grand Prix in 2013, a race was held by Formula Masters China. F3 regulation cars powered by a 1.4L turbo 180bhp engine raced in the competition. Formula Masters was one of the competitions that was involved in the first of two consecutive weekends of races, held specially in Macau that year. **RM**



e Macau F4 race'



front if, for some reason, you end up in the middle of the pack.

Even if you are faster, there are not many chances to overtake and you take a serious risk of being crashed by someone with a slower race pace.

MDT – This opportunity comes unexpectedly after you were about to drop formula racing, is this correct? What are you aiming to do next?

CL – Yes, that is true. After struggling with sponsorship and not finding a budget to continue racing in formula cars last year, I had decided to stop racing and I was starting a project which aimed to help people like me who had an interest in racing but did not know how to do it.

I had my racing simulator to practice at home and I partnered with a group of people that had a big interest in e-sports at the University of Science and Technology. I provided my simulator to them so as to allow young people who have an interest in racing to try and experience racing.

If they like it and want to try the “real thing,” I can help them, taking them to the Go Kart track or do training sessions in the Mainland.

I want to see someone from Macau appear again and to continue this legacy that we have in racing.

I am probably the last young driver in Macau. I don't see anyone else after me and I believe that it is pretty easy to find new people. If you go to these simulator places, you will find many kids that want to race but they just don't have the money. What they

need is just support.

You can also see this through the summer activities [organized by the Education and Youth Affairs Bureau together with the Sports Bureau] that include a Go-Kart activity. Youngsters get interested but then when the parents see the price for them to continue, they get shocked. This is not a sport for “normal people” and every race can cost around 30,000 patacas or more. It is just really hard for a normal family to spend that money.

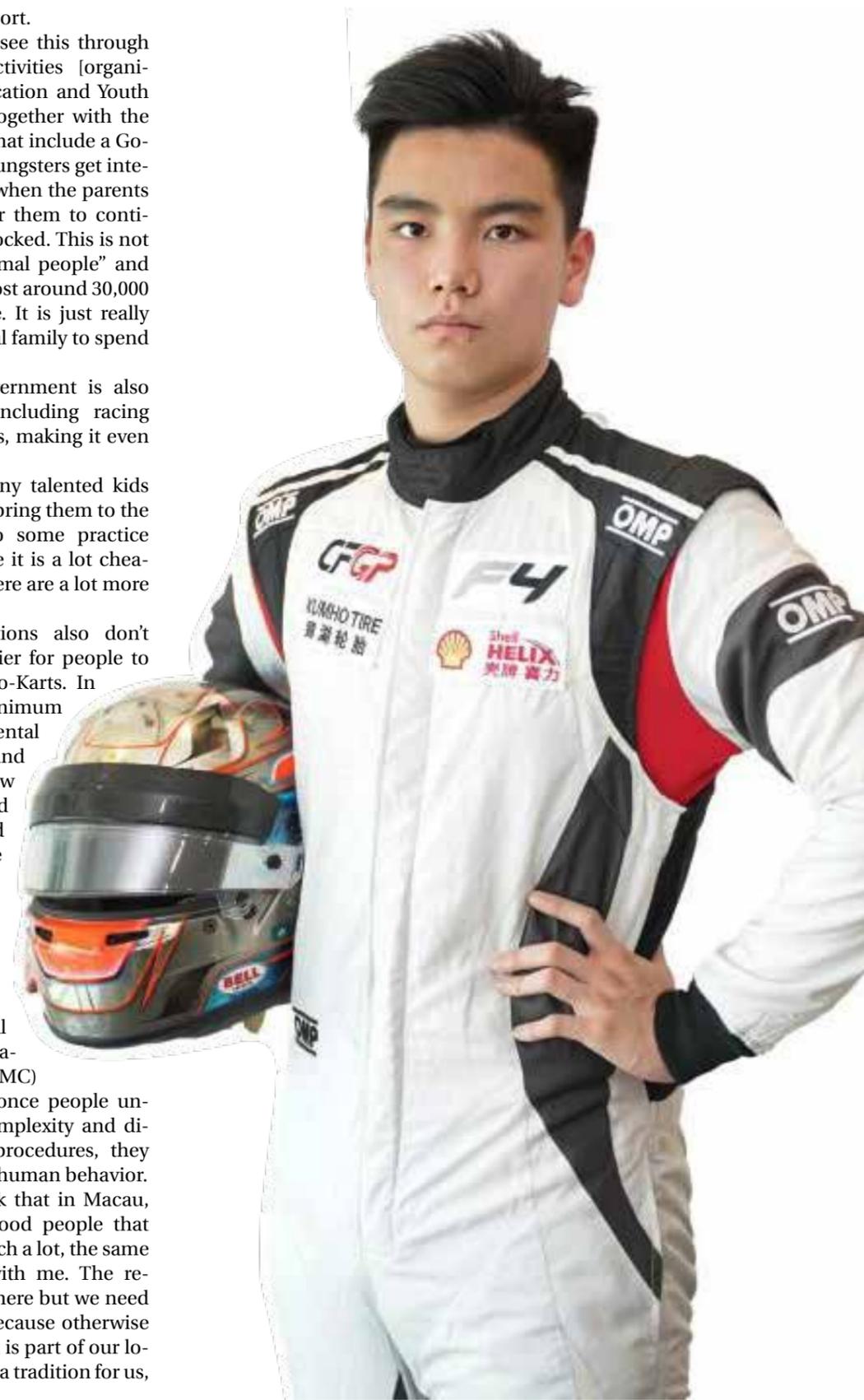
The new government is also cutting costs, including racing activity subsidies, making it even harder now.

If there are any talented kids in Macau, I can bring them to the mainland to do some practice sessions because it is a lot cheaper there and there are a lot more resources.

Local regulations also don't make it any easier for people to step into the Go-Karts. In Macau, the minimum age to drive a rental Go-Kart is 18 and no one knows how to proceed, and which steps need to be taken to be able to practice or race a Go-Kart at an earlier age.

It involves going to the Automobile General Association Macao-China (AAMC) to register and once people understand the complexity and difficulty of the procedures, they quit. It is part of human behavior.

But I do think that in Macau, there are still good people that can help and teach a lot, the same way they did with me. The resources are still here but we need some support because otherwise this sport, which is part of our local DNA and it is a tradition for us, will die.



ggest challenge is. I prefer to focus on myself and on what I need to do. I know I need to calm myself and start a bit slow in practice sessions and then maybe push forward a bit and take a little risk in one or two qualifying laps, so that I can achieve a good result. I'm focused on myself only.

MDT – We know that in every race, starting at the front is very important. In Macau, is it even more decisive?

CL – Yes, especially in this race where we expect the level of the racers not to be that balanced. It will be really hard to get to the

NOVEMBER 20 - 22

November 20 (Friday)

6:00 Circuit Closed
6:30 ~ 7:00 Circuit Inspection
7:20 ~ 7:50 Safety, Rescue and Extrication Cars - Testing laps
8:00 ~ 8:35 Macau Touring Car Cup - Free Practice 1
8:50 ~ 9:25 Greater Bay Area GT Cup - Free Practice 1
9:40 ~ 10:15 Formula 4 Macau Grand Prix - Free Practice 1
10:30 ~ 11:05 Macau Guia Race - Free Practice 1
11:20 ~ 11:55 Macau GT Cup - Free Practice 1
12:25 ~ 13:00 Macau Touring Car Cup - Free Practice 2
13:15 ~ 13:50 Greater Bay Area GT Cup - Free Practice 2
14:05 ~ 14:40 Formula 4 Macau Grand Prix - Free Practice 2
14:55 ~ 15:30 Macau Guia Race - Free Practice 2
15:45 ~ 16:20 Macau GT Cup - Free Practice 2
18:00 ~ ** Circuit Opened

November 21 (Saturday)

6:00 Circuit Closed
6:30 ~ 7:00 Circuit Inspection
7:30 ~ 7:50 Macau Touring Car Cup - Qualifying
8:15 ~ 8:35 Greater Bay Area GT Cup - Qualifying
9:00 ~ 9:20 Formula 4 Macau Grand Prix - Qualifying
9:45 ~ 10:05 Macau Guia Race - Qualifying
10:30 ~ 10:50 Macau GT Cup - Qualifying
11:35 ~ 12:05 Special Event
12:30 ~ 13:00 Macau Touring Car Cup - Qualification Race - 8 laps
13:25 ~ 13:55 Greater Bay Area GT Cup - Qualification Race - 8 laps
14:20 ~ 14:50 Formula 4 Macau Grand Prix - Qualification Race - 8 laps
15:15 ~ 15:45 Macau Guia Race - Qualification Race - 8 laps
16:10 ~ 16:40 Macau GT Cup - Qualification Race - 8 laps
18:00 ~ ** Circuit Opened

November 22 (Sunday)

6:00 Circuit Closed
6:30 ~ 7:00 Circuit Inspection
7:30 ~ 8:30 Safety, Rescue and Extrication Cars - Testing laps
9:00 ~ 9:40 Macau Touring Car Cup - 12 laps
10:05 ~ 10:45 Greater Bay Area GT Cup - 12 laps
11:40 ~ 12:20 Macau Guia Race - 12 laps
12:45 ~ 13:25 Macau GT Cup - 12 laps
13:40 ~ 14:30 Special Event
15:10 ~ 15:20 Lion Dance
15:30 ~ 16:10 Formula 4 Macau Grand Prix - 12 laps
18:00 ~ ** Circuit Opened

MACAU'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

XI SAYS CHINA WILL AVOID DECOUPLING AMID TENSION WITH US, EUROPE

CHINA'S President Xi Jinping yesterday spurned suggestions that his country might decouple or separate itself from the U.S. and other trading partners, amid tension with Washington and Europe over technology and security.

Speaking by video link from Beijing to a meeting of Asia-Pacific CEOs, Xi promised to open China's market wider but announced no initiatives to respond to complaints the ruling Communist Party improperly subsidizes and shields technology and other

industries from foreign competitors.

Xi rejected suggestions Beijing might respond to U.S. sanctions on its fledgling technology companies by trying to separate their industries from global trading partners.

The ruling Communist Party has promoted its own standards for mobile phones and other technology, which would encourage customers that adopt them to use Chinese suppliers. That has prompted fears world markets might split into smaller segments



Xi Jinping delivering speech via virtual meeting during the APEC CEO Dialogues 2020

with incompatible industry standards, hurting productivity.

"We will never go back in history by seeking to decouple or forming a 'small circle' to keep others out," Xi said.

Yesterday's event came ahead of a meeting of Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation leaders hosted by Malaysia. The meeting today is due to be conducted via internet due to the pandemic.

Xi's comments followed Sunday's signing of the world's largest free trade agreement, the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership, by Beijing and 14 other Asian neighbors.

The Chinese-initiated RCEP

appeals to other developing countries because it reduces barriers to trade in farm goods, manufactured goods and components, which make up most of their exports. It says little about trade in services and access for companies to operate in each other's economies, which the United States and other developed countries want.

The Trump administration has cut off Chinese tech giant Huawei's access to most U.S. components and technology on security grounds. Washington has shut Huawei and a rival Chinese telecom equipment vendor, ZTE, out of the U.S. market. The White House is pressing the Chinese ow-

ner of video service TikTok to sell its U.S. operation, which American officials say is a security risk.

Xi promised to cut tariffs but gave no details.

"We will further reduce tariffs and institutional costs, cultivate a number of import trade promotion innovation demonstration zones, and expand imports of high-quality products and services from various countries," he said.

China's repeated promises to set up trade zones and ease import restrictions prompt complaints by the United States, Europe, Japan and other trading partners that Beijing is using such isolated steps to avoid complying with promises made when it joined the World Trade Organization in 2001 to allow foreign companies to compete freely in its economy.

China is one of the world's biggest importers, but the United States and other governments complain Beijing is dragging its feet on carrying out two-decade-old promises to open its markets to foreign competitors in banking, finance and other services. AP

PRESIDENT CALLS FOR COOPERATION ON VACCINE

CHINESE President Xi Jinping is calling for closer international cooperation on making a vaccine for the coronavirus available. Xi said: "To beat the virus and promote the global recovery, the international community must close ranks and jointly respond to the crisis and meet the tests." He said cooperation would include closer coordination on policies for development and

distribution of a vaccine. Chinese companies Sinovac and Sinopharm are in the late stages of testing vaccines, putting them among nearly a dozen companies at or near that level of development. That has introduced both commercial and political competition among countries and companies to be the first to offer a solution to the pandemic.

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US Justice Dept.'s China focus likely to continue under Biden

ERIC TUCKER, WASHINGTON

PRESIDENT Donald Trump has identified China as the country's biggest foe and the Justice Department mirrored that emphasis over the last four years with a drumbeat of cases against defendants ranging from hackers accused of targeting intellectual property to professors charged with grant fraud.

But even after a new administration arrives, the law enforcement focus on China may not look radically different, in part because of actions by Beijing that U.S. officials, lawyers and analysts say run afoul of international norms. Even if the anti-China rhetoric is cooled in the White House, cases against agents of the Chinese government may well continue apace, especially since some of the focus — including against trade-secret theft — preceded the Trump administration.

"I think this is going to continue because it's not really up to the U.S. It's the Chinese who are being really aggressive," said James Lewis, a senior vice president at the Center for Strategic and International Studies.

The Justice Department in 2018 launched what it called the China Initiative to combat what officials saw as a multi-pronged effort by Beijing to steal intellectual property and conduct foreign influence operations in the U.S. It was part of an administration-wide focus on China, which accelerated in the last year as Trump blamed the country for the spread of the novel coronavirus and as leaders of multiple agencies, including Secretary of State Mike Pompeo, delivered speeches blasting Beijing.

Department officials expect the focus to persist.

"There is no turning back the



President-elect Joe Biden, accompanied by Vice President-elect Kamala Harris

clock to an era when free market liberal democracies turned a blind eye to the PRC's theft of intellectual property, appetite for sensitive personal data, and repression and censorship," John Demers, assistant attorney general for national security, said in a statement, referring to the People's Republic of China.

"The Department's commitment to disrupt the illegal and predatory Chinese activity aimed and America and its allies, as illustrated in prosecution after prosecution, will not waver," he added.

President-elect Joe Biden referred to China during the campaign as a "serious competitor." As president, analysts expect him to make few major changes to U.S. policy in conflicts with China over trade, technology and security amid widespread frustration with Beijing's trade and human rights record and accusations of spying and technology theft.

The Trump administration's emphasis on China opened the president to criticism that he was trying to deflect attention away from Russia, which had interfered in the 2016 presidential election and which officials and experts regarded as the bigger threat for meddling in this month's election. The Justice Department, for its part, did keep an eye on Moscow, unsealing an indictment last month that accused six Russian military officers in a global hacking campaign.

But most of the department's high-profile actions have centered on China. FBI Director Chris Wray has said the FBI opens a Chinese counterintelligence case about every 10 hours. The Justice Department says it has charged more than 10 trade-secret theft cases tied to China since the China Initiative began.

In the last year, prosecutors charged Chinese hackers they said were working with the government

with targeting companies working on coronavirus vaccine research, and accused others in a major hack of Equifax. The U.S. government also closed China's consulate in Houston in July and charged six people in recent months with studying in the U.S. while hiding ties to People's Liberation Army military institutes.

A particular area of emphasis has been on American college campuses and research institutions, where dozens of professors have been charged in cases that for the most part accuse them of failing to disclose research grants they had received from universities in China. A persistent concern is that professors enrolled in talent recruitment programs linked to the Chinese government are being used to steal research from American universities for Beijing's economic benefit.

Peter Zeidenberg, a Washing-

ton defense lawyer who represents Chinese professors across the country, said that though he expected a new Justice Department to continue to prioritize intellectual property theft, he believes the China Initiative had "gotten so far badly off course" by targeting academics without any allegation that they had stolen research or passed along secrets. The scrutiny is causing professors to be summarily fired from universities, he said.

"The result is that a lot of really super-talented professors are having their lives wrecked unnecessarily. My hope is that they keep in mind the harm that it is that they're trying to prevent and then go after the people who are causing that harm," Zeidenberg said of federal prosecutors.

"Because right now what they're doing is entirely counterproductive to the United States' interests because they're decimating our science and technology, and alienating loyal citizens and scientists," he said.

To be sure, the Justice Department had begun a focus on Chinese hackers well before Trump took office. It brought a first-of-its-kind indictment in 2014 against five Chinese military officers, accusing them of hacking into major American corporations to siphon corporate secrets.

The following year, President Barack Obama and Chinese President Xi Jinping announced that their countries had agreed not to conduct or support hacking for economic espionage. But China's activities continued.

"I think there is broad consensus that individuals who engage in grant fraud and who fail to disclose foreign ties in violation of U.S. law pose a real risk to our intellectual property in the U.S. and to the integrity of our federal grants process," said Justin Danilewitz, a former federal prosecutor and Philadelphia attorney.

"Regardless of what side one is on politically, I think that is going to continue to receive a lot of focus and attention," he said. AP

Beijing calls for action from Australia amid worsening ties

CHINA called on Australia to take action to stem worsening relations between the two countries, in the latest indication that Beijing will offer few if any compromises to resolve their disputes.

Foreign ministry spokesperson Zhao Lijian's comments this week came the same day that China's embassy in Canberra delivered a list of 14 areas of disagreement between the sides in which China expects Australia to change direction, Australian media reported.

Zhao made it clear China holds Australia responsible for the deterioration in ties, saying that "whoever started the trouble should end it."

"I want to stress that the Australian side is completely aware of the crux of the decline of the bilateral relations," Zhao told reporters at a daily briefing. "We hope the Australian side should do more to improve the mutual trust and cooperation and enhance the comprehensive strategic partnership between the two countries."



Australian PM Scott Morrison

Relations have been strained in recent years amid Chinese anger over a range of issues, including Australia's crackdown on perceived political interference by Beijing, Chinese investments and a call for an independent investigation into the origins of the

coronavirus pandemic that was first detected in China late last year.

China has retaliated mainly by barring Australian exports including barley, wine and coal, throwing billions of dollars of trade into question.

In a move likely to further irk Beijing, the leaders of Australia and China's historic rival Japan reached a basic agreement Tuesday on a bilateral defense pact that would allow their troops to work more closely, part of a push to bolster their ties and coun-

ter China's growing assertiveness in the Asia-Pacific region.

In a joint statement, Australian Prime Minister Scott Morrison and his Japanese counterpart, Yoshihide Suga, expressed "serious concerns about the situation" in the South and East China Seas and "strong opposition" to militarizing disputed islands and other unilateral attempts to change the status quo, without identifying China — signaling their sensitivity toward their biggest trading partner. MDT/AP

G-20

Online summit lacks glam, and maybe results, amid virus

AYA BATRAWY, DUBAI

THIS weekend's summit of leaders from the Group of 20 stands out more for what it is not than for what it is.

Held online this year because of the coronavirus, the gathering of leaders of the world's preeminent rich and developing nations will not be an opportunity for kings, presidents and prime ministers to conduct the intimate diplomacy of closed-door meetings or pose for memorable photo-ops. Without red carpet arrivals, it will not be an occasion for its Saudi hosts to dazzle the world's media.

And it is not expected to yield a globally unified response to the worst pandemic in decades. While billions of dollars have been pledged for medicines and vaccines, G-20 countries have mostly focused on securing their own supplies.

A virtual summit does spare Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman the possibility that some leaders may have stood him up in Riyadh, two years after Western intelligence agencies said he bears ultimate responsibility for the killing of writer Jamal Khashoggi in Turkey by Saudi agents — a slaying he's denied any involvement in. But an online meeting also deprives the Saudis of a media spectacle to tout their position in the world.

Beyond putting a kink in Saudis plans, the pandemic has offered the G-20 an opportunity to prove how such bodies can facilitate international cooperation in crises — but has also underscored their shortcomings.

The G-20 — whose member-countries represent around 85% of the world's economic output and three-quarters of international trade — was founded in 1999 as a way for finance ministers and central bank governors to discuss the global economy.

In March, when border closures and lockdown orders to slow the spread of the virus affected well over a quarter of the world's population, Saudi King Salman convened G-20 lea-



G-20 summit in June 2019: what a difference a year makes

ders virtually.

At the time, the recorded global death toll from the virus had just climbed past 22,000. G-20 leaders vowed to share information and the material needed for research, to exchange epidemiological and clinical data, and to strengthen health systems. They also promised to work together to increase funding for vaccine research.

Quick research and sharing of scientific information for the development of COVID-19 tests and vaccines has happened. The work on vaccines, which began only this year, may result in viable candidates soon.

But it's arguable whether health systems have been strengthened; even in the wealthiest nations like the U.S. and those in Europe, hospitals have become overwhelmed, and testing and contact-tracing programs have struggled.

The Associated Press also found that China — a key G-20 member — was not entirely transparent with the World Health Organization in the initial stages of the pandemic, although many other nations have also not provided thorough details about their outbreaks.

The disease has now claimed more than 1.3 million lives, according to a count kept by Johns Hopkins University.

In a recent letter to G-20 leaders, U.N. Secretary-General Antonio Guterres said the world faces its biggest test since the Second World War.

"The pandemic must be a wake-up call to all leaders that division is a danger to everyone, and that prevention saves money and lives," he wrote.

He commended the recent G-20 decision to offer the hardest-hit poor nations an extension on debt repayments, and in the most severe cases, possible debt write-offs. But he also urged the group to expand coverage to include vulnerable middle-income countries.

Aside from offering an opportunity for global cooperation, G-20 summits are also an occasion for host countries to seize the spotlight. Saudi Arabia's turn at the rotating presidency for the first time has been an immense point of pride for the kingdom, and it has touted that role by using the G-20 logo as a backdrop for press briefings big and small.

That it was deprived of hosting in-person events may cut both ways. While the range of virtual G-20 meetings the Saudis organized throughout the year would have otherwise brought to Riyadh hundreds of influential delegates, they would have also courted controversy — as they did, even from afar.

The mayors of New York and London, for example, refused to participate in a G-20-related meeting on urban development, citing Saudi Arabia's crackdown on human rights activists and its war in Yemen. Members of the U.S. Congress have called on the Trump admi-

nistration to withdraw from the summit, and European Parliament members have issued similar calls to EU leaders.

It remains unclear whether U.S. President Donald Trump, preoccupied with challenging his election loss, will participate.

As it is, Prince Mohammed won't have to meet Turkey's Recep Tayyip Erdogan, whose government apparently had the Saudi consulate in Istanbul bugged to apply pressure over Khashoggi's slaying, or French President Emmanuel Macron, whose defense of caricatures of the Prophet Muhammad has sparked protests by Muslims.

"Hosting major events such as the G-20 not only affords the kingdom the image of a powerful, modern country and global economic power, but also draws international attention away from the reality of rights abuses that occur mere miles away," Lina Al-Hathloul, whose sister, Loujain, has been imprisoned along with several other Saudi women's rights advocates, wrote in a Washington Post column.

But David Rundell, a career U.S. diplomat with 15 years' experience in Saudi Arabia, said the kingdom's message should be that isolation will not achieve the desired result — and engagement can.

"Saudi Arabia needs encouragement for its economic reforms, but also for its human rights record," said Rundell at a Chatham House event. AP

this day in history

1995 DIANA ADMITS ADULTERY IN TV INTERVIEW

Diana, Princess of Wales, has spoken openly for the first time about her separation from the Prince of Wales in a frank interview for the BBC's Panorama programme.

During her hour-long conversation with BBC reporter Martin Bashir, she admitted to an adulterous affair with her riding instructor, James Hewitt.

She also described her hurt at her husband's relationship with long-term friend Camilla Parker-Bowles, but said she did not want to divorce.

The Princess spoke freely about her depression and bulimia, her children, the media and the future of the monarchy.

When Mr Bashir asked her about her relationship with Mr Hewitt, who had claimed to have had an affair with her, she admitted her relationship did go beyond a close friendship. "Were you unfaithful?" asked Mr Bashir.

"Yes," answered the Princess. "I was in love with him. But I was very let down."

In June last year, Prince Charles admitted he had also had an affair with Mrs Parker-Bowles in a similarly frank interview with the BBC's Jonathan Dimbleby.

The Princess spoke of her hurt over the affair, saying, "There were three of us in this marriage, so it was a bit crowded."

"Friends of my husband's were indicating that I was unstable, sick and should be put in a home of some sort to get better so I wouldn't be an embarrassment."

She also said she did not think she would ever be Queen. "I'd like to be a queen of people's hearts, in people's hearts, but I don't see myself being Queen of this country," she said. "I don't think many people will want me to be Queen."

The one-hour interview was watched by an estimated 15 million people, a record for the programme and one of the BBC's highest-ever audience figures.

The Princess's decision to go public has been highly controversial.

The BBC chairman, Marmaduke Hussey, is reported to be extremely unhappy that senior executives did not tell him about the programme in advance.

Lord Wakeham, chairman of the Press Complaints Commission, has also warned that the princess would only have herself to blame if she triggered a tabloid onslaught on her private life.

Buckingham Palace has confirmed Geoff Crawford, the Princess's press adviser, is to step down in the wake of her decision to speak to the BBC without informing him or the Queen.

Courtesy BBC News

IN CONTEXT

A month later, the Queen wrote to her son Charles, Prince of Wales, and to Princess Diana asking them to seek an early divorce.

Their marriage ended with the issue of a decree nisi on 28 August 1996.

As part of the divorce settlement Diana was stripped of her royal title - Her Royal Highness - and instead became known as Diana, Princess of Wales.

It is understood she was awarded a £17m lump sum and £350,000 a year to run her private office. Diana and Charles agreed to share custody of their sons.

On 31 August 1997 Diana died in a car crash with her companion Dodi Fayed in Paris.

A French investigation found the driver had drunk too much and was driving too fast, and criticised photographers chasing the car for their behaviour.

MACAU'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

YOUR STARS



ARIES

Mar. 21-Apr. 19

There are two paths ahead of you, and both look equally promising. Take the one that intimidates you the most - it will be the one to lead you on the most interesting and fulfilling journey.



TAURUS

Apr. 20-May. 20

A very shocking revelation won't be a surprise to you today, but it's not because you're jaded - it's because your intuitive powers are stronger than ever. You knew it all along, and are able to take the news in stride.



GEMINI

May. 21-Jun. 21

As quickly as you can, you need to get away from warring factions and go off alone. Knowing yourself as well as you do, you can find a great deal of safety and security on your own.



CANCER

Jun. 22-Jul. 22

You are responsible for deciding whether or not a disagreement goes on to the next level, so you should appreciate the power you have and not take it for granted. Snapping back at someone could cost you today.



LEO

Jul. 23-Aug. 22

Examine each thought that pops into your head and figure out where it's coming from. File it away in its appropriate place - and you'll be able to move through the rest of the day easily.



VIRGO

Aug. 23-Sep. 22

Doing your work well and not making waves is a great strategy for getting ahead in your career or getting better grades, but when you keep your head down all the time, you are liable not to get noticed!



LIBRA

Sep. 23-Oct. 22

You should know by now that only an intellectual connection can create a solid foundation for a real relationship, whether it's a romance, a friendship, or a business partnership.



SCORPIO

Oct. 23-Nov. 21

Don't waste time working on a solution, as you know who you should talk to and what you should say. Trust your gut today - it knows what it's talking about!



SAGITTARIUS

Nov. 22-Dec. 21

Your attitude will be mismatched with your company today - the people around you will be on a completely different wavelength than you are. Luckily, that won't bother you one tiny bit!



CAPRICORN

Dec. 22-Jan. 19

Complicated ideas will be swirling around your mind today - it can't be helped. The universe is sending you a rapid influx of mental energy, and your brain is going to need big ideas to keep it occupied.



AQUARIUS

Jan. 20-Feb. 18

And if you don't belong to a gym, guess what? The sooner you join one, the better. If you put off getting in better shape much longer, you will inevitably feel pangs of regret.

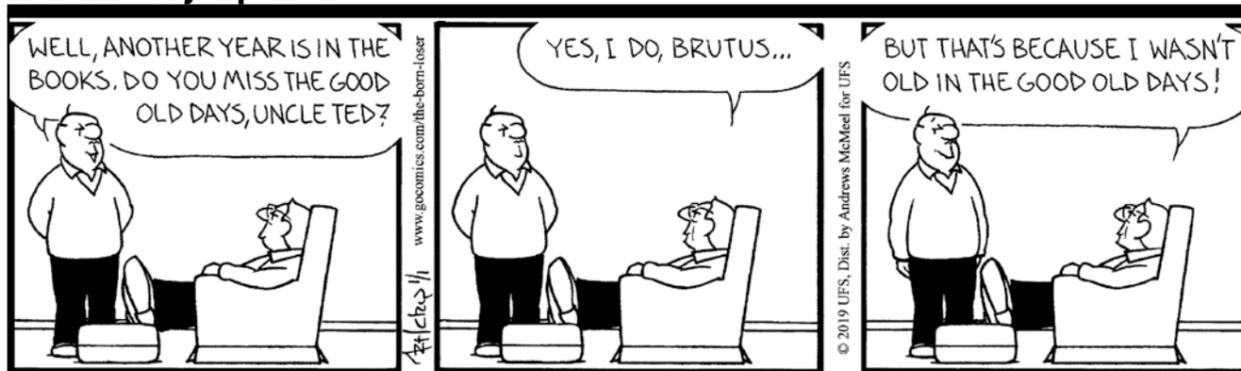


PISCES

Feb. 19-Mar. 20

There is a lot of potential for hot romance right now, but you should go against expectations and just let things cool off a bit. Put this cutie on the back burner and just keep them simmering for a while.

The Born Loser by Chip Sansom



SUDOKU

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

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

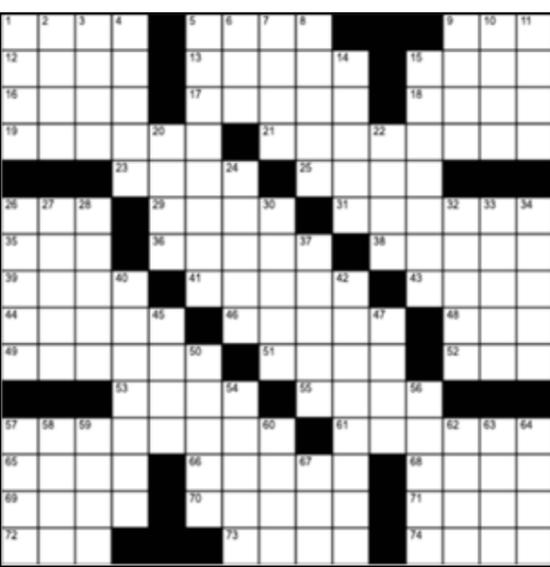
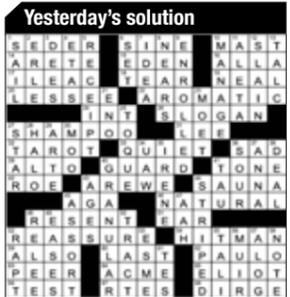
WEATHER

	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- Collective word for intellectual pursuits; 5- Meager; 9- Driver's aid; 12- Actor Connelly; 13- The Hilton, e.g.; 15- Hide; 16- Editor Wintour; 17- Mimicry; 18- Composer Schiffrin; 19- Organized massacre; 21- Wrong; 23- Old Italian money; 25- Member of the Conservative Party; 26- PC linkup; 29- Actress Singer; 31- Female demon in Semitic myth; 35- Conductor ____-Pekka Salonen; 36- View; 38- Fight, disturbance; 39- Indigo; 41- Leg joints; 43- A wedding cake may have three of these; 44- Danger; 46- Senator Specter; 48- Not to mention; 49- Calamitous; 51- Actress Hatcher; 52- Bad start?; 53- Gag reflex?; 55- Actor Auberjonois; 57- Likeness of a person; 61- Kathmandu resident; 65- Gen. Robert ____; 66- Milo of "Barbarella"; 68- Richard of "A Summer Place"; 69- Lawyer Dershowitz; 70- Swung around; 71- Actor Estrada; 72- Pitch; 73- "____ quam videri" (North Carolina's motto); 74- Pouches;

DOWN: 1- Quickly, quickly; 2- "All The Way To ____", song by REM; 3- Strong taste; 4- Growl angrily; 5- Trifoliate plant; 6- Cut (off); 7- Single, individual unit; 8- Worth; 9- Durable wood; 10- Fashion mag; 11- School founded by Henry VI; 14- Disinfectant brand; 15- Short drama; 20- Lubricates; 22- Barbershop request; 24- Sports stadium; 26- Bounded; 27- "Lou Grant" star; 28- Currency unit in Nigeria; 30- Sluggish; 32- Greek epic poem; 33- Itty-bitty; 34- Range rovers; 37- Conger catcher; 40- Become less dark; 42- Sing for; 45- One with no capacity for veracity; 47- Mudville complement; 50- Pandemonium; 54- Brides walk down it; 56- Sporting blades; 57- Heating fuel; 58- Spicy stew; 59- Back; 60- In this way; 62- Pearl Mosque city; 63- Not of the cloth; 64- Signs; 67- Some M.I.T. grads;



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



FOR SALE

2 bedroom Villa de Mer, Macau
HK\$9,400,000 841 ft² 2 1 1

FOR RENT

Houston Court, Coloane Village
\$10,500/mth 980 ft² 1 1 1

Rain Dance Property
"We dance until it's SOLD!"

Renovated Duplex, Macau with Amazing View
HK\$4,200,000 817 ft² 2 2 2

PROPERTY LIST

- [Taipa] *Wa Bao* 2 2 2
1,071 ft² \$7,995,000 (ref: 18115568)
- [Taipa] *Taipa Village (2 units)* 4 2 2
1,404 ft² \$8,380,000 (ref: 19096006)
- [Taipa] *Villa da Taipa* 3 2 2
1,450 ft² \$13,000/mth (ref: 20101002)
- [Taipa] *Great View Apartment* 4 2 2
2,060 ft² \$28,000/mth (ref: 20031001)

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HONEY TSANG

IT was October 29. The doorbell woke me up at 8 a.m. I felt groggy as I tottered to the door. It was hours after dawn, but the room was still pitch-black, kept dark by the thickly-woven curtains I drew closed every night.

I answered the door, picking up a meal box that had been left on a side table next to my doorstep. It was Chinese buns with sausages — but not the oversalted ones I had eaten too many times over the last two weeks. I was relieved.

It was the 13th day of my quarantine in Macau. I had decamped from Hong Kong to this city two weeks earlier.

Before the pandemic, I was in my late 20s, ensconced in Hong Kong with a well-paid job, and a chirpy family with four dogs and a chivalrous partner who made jaunts from Macau to Hong Kong to see me every weekend. I had never thought of leaving my hometown.

But when the pandemic was on the rise in mid-March, the Hong Kong government imposed a mandatory 14-day quarantine for some arrivals, including those from Macau. I hadn't seen my boyfriend since.

At first, I naively believed the border closure was just temporary. But resurging waves of infections and the long overdue Hong Kong Health Code — a scheme proposed in May to safely restore people flow within the Greater Bay Area — shattered my remaining hopes for normalcy.

When faced with prospects that were so fraught and uncertain, I took it upon myself to regain "control." After some hemming and hawing, I quit my job, came to Macau and found myself hunkering down in the Treasure Hotel, a quarantine facility perched on a desolate hill opposite Macau International Airport in Taipa.

Holing up in a hotel room for 14 days seems like a bummer, but I paradoxically preferred it to where I had left, especially considering the fact that I came from Hong Kong, which had a caseload ex-

AUTHOR'S PHOTOS



QUARANTINE DIARY

A BLESSING IN DISGUISE

ceeding 5,300 in October — over 110 times the 46 cases in Macau.

THE FIRST WEEK AS A MENTAL DETOX

In the first week, I quickly settled into quarantine. There is something to be said for living alone — I had large amounts extra time to do many little things in solitude. I read, did yoga, and binged on music and movies. It was as if I had gone on a retreat, unwinding despite the hotel's feeble Wi-Fi, meager supplies, and lack of a fri-

dge, coffee and tea.

During my stay, I was isolated from human connection in all forms. The only interaction I had was with the hotel staff who periodically came around at 10 a.m. and 8 p.m. to monitor my temperature and ensure I was in fine fettle.

I was well taken of as well. Meals, though salty, came three times a day. The garbage I left outside was collected regularly. Officials from the Health Bureau called sometimes to tend to me. In this tiny, virus-free space, I literally had nothing to be concerned about.

This peace of mind was something I had not experienced for months in Hong Kong. Back there, I was frazzled by protecting myself from the locally transmitted cases that were reported every so often. The resurgence of the virus translated to a deprived social life, as the Hong Kong government banned gatherings of over four people. Worst of all, businesses had gone under. Some employees were furloughed, some dismissed — all were wrestling with the economic downturn and the highest unemployment rate in almost 16 years, at 6.4% from July to September.

I felt a great sense of ease when I first arrived in Macau, a city that has had no new Covid-19 cases

since June, a place that has vaulted to fame for its stringent measures, efficient at eradicating the pandemic.

I was one of those put under this city's exacting measures against Covid-19. The day before my departure, I was hastily securing proof of my negative Covid-19 test result as the Macau government had mandated that all Hong Kong residents entering the city must do a nucleic acid test (NAT) within 24 hours of arrival, truncated drastically from the previous requirement of 72 hours.

Upon my arrival, I was barred from any contact with locals with the help of the local police, who brought me to the Conde S. Januário Hospital for another Covid-19 test, and to the hotel to commence my quarantine.

In the hotel, I was prohibited from leaving the room. There were security guards sitting on each floor to ensure no one shirked the rules. All used towels were required to be kept inside the room. Furthermore, a third Covid-19 test was conducted in room on the 12th day for reassurance. The protocols and red tape were strict, but this scrupulous attention to detail was exactly what helped catapult Macau into becoming a Covid-free city.

THE SECOND WEEK AS A MENTAL CHALLENGE

If the first week was anything to go by, I thought I would while away the rest of my quarantine with ease. But I realized I was wrong. The activities I had thought were fun were no longer enough to distract me from boredom in the second week. The longer I was there, the more bewildered and antsy I became.

My composure was lost in some moments. I spent minutes taking in the view through the window as I was desperate to be discharged. I did chores — yes, chores — to keep myself occupied in my hotel room. I moped and I ran in turn, trying to invigorate myself on sedentary days.

The 12th day was the worst, as I waited for the results of my third test — the final factor deciding whether I would be able to roam freely in Macau. I vacillated between imaging the best outcome and fearing the worst. Never had I experienced pandemic stress so tangibly until this moment.

Without the virus, I wouldn't have had to be apart from my partner for such long stretches, nor undergo a quarantine that was unexpectedly trying on my mental health.

But in the absence of Covid-19, I may well not have found the time I had in quarantine to rethink my personal values and long-term goals. I may not hold "togetherness" with family, friends and loved ones as dear as I do now. In hindsight, quarantine has been a blessing in disguise.

On my last day of quarantine, I had Chinese buns for breakfast and watched the news on TV about how Covid-19 has had the world by the scruff. I waited until 5 p.m., the only time outsiders were allowed to enter and replenishments could be dropped off. It was the first time I had seen my boyfriend in almost a year.

He stood in the hotel's carpark, I stood high on the chair near the window to get a better view. We waved, excited, but baffled by the unusual encounter. He sent me an unbelievably large portion of dinner that could have lasted for days, but did not last that night. I laughed. I cried.

The repercussions of the pandemic are likely to creep into 2021 and beyond, as the prospect of a vaccine being developed and widely distributed next year seems distant. Unquestionably, Covid-19 has been an enormous dampener. But it has forced us to see things through a new lens, so that we can reset our goals and priorities in life, adapt, and perhaps even thrive again.

After my quarantine, I plan to start a new life with my partner in Macau and re-pursue my profession in Macau, a path I once forwent in Hong Kong.

To me, the pandemic is also an enabler.

HONEY TSANG



MARK KENNEDY, MDT/AP

THREE-QUARTERS through "The Climb" comes a scene we've all come to expect in a romantic comedy: A wedding is interrupted by the best man who rushes into a church during a marriage ceremony and screams "I object!"

He turns to the shocked bride and groom kneeling at the altar and — summoning all his courage — declares to one: "You deserve to be with someone who loves you for who you are."

Pretty typical stuff. Only in this case, he's talking to the groom.

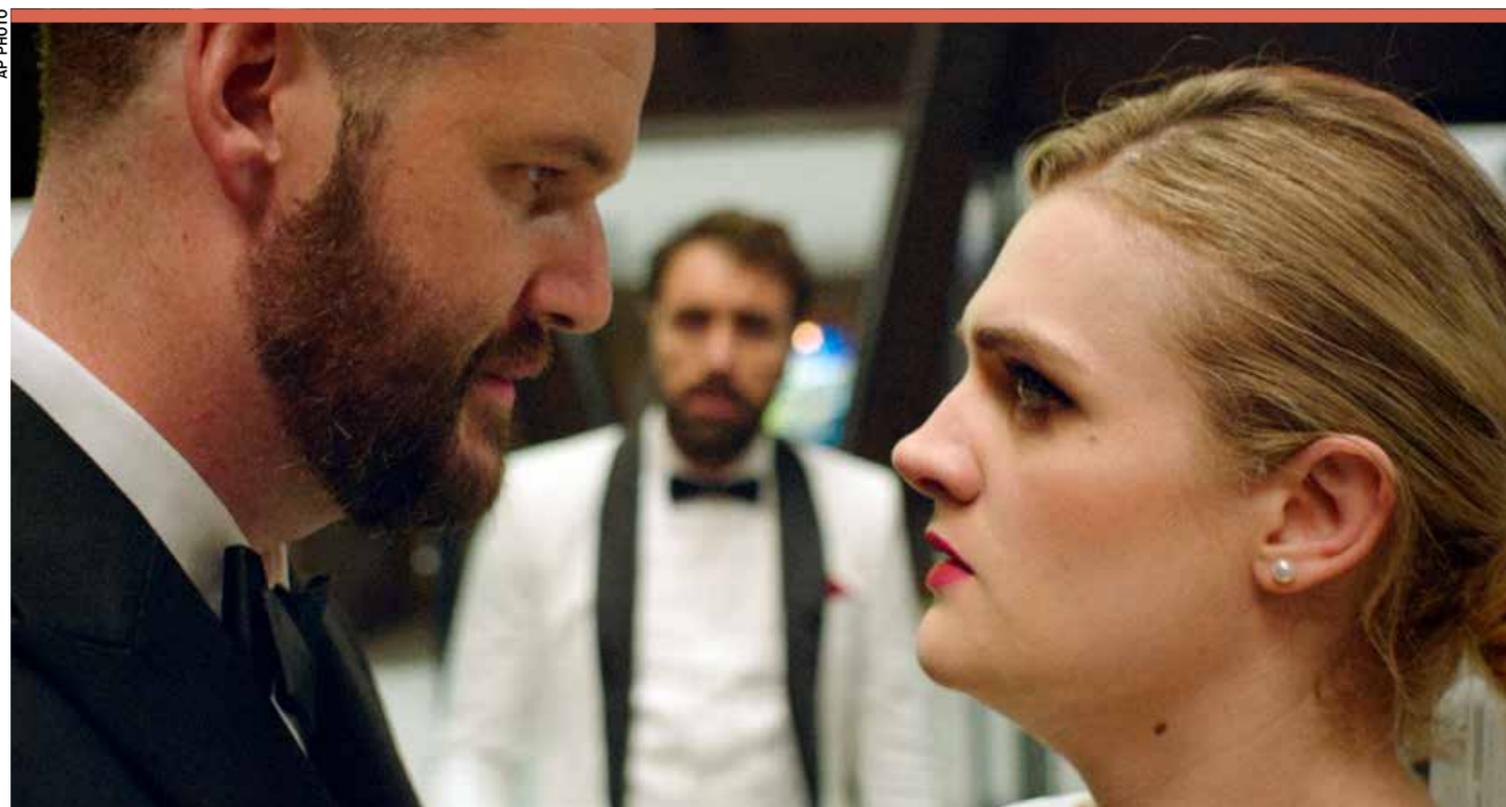
Utterly original and utterly excellent, the modern bromance "The Climb" is a thrilling ride, an unconventional and idiosyncratic American film that acts like a old-school arty European one.

It's the beautifully crafted creation of Michael Angelo Covino and Kyle Marvin, real-life best friends who star as best friends. They've written a touching and funny screenplay about modern masculinity with Covino directing, employing long single takes worthy of Sam Mendes.

"The Climb" charts the complex relationship between Mike (Covino) and Kyle (Marvin) over multiple years and through seven vignettes. They are in many ways opposite, but still bound together. Kyle is the sweeter one, accommodating and often passive. Mike is the abrupt, too honest, loud and often selfish one.

"I don't have many friends who know me," Mike tells his friend at one point. Kyle responds: "I'm the only one who likes you and I don't know why."

Whenever Kyle falls in love with a woman, Mike has the irritating habit of inserting himself between the couple. And yet he gets forgiven, often pulled back into Kyle's orbit by people —



Kyle Marvin (left) Michael Angelo Covino (center) and Gayle Rankin in the "I object!" scene from "The Climb"

DRIVE IN

Bromance 'The Climb' a triumph of quirky filmmaking

usually women — who recognize how important the friendship is for the pair.

The filmmakers have embraced a naturalistic style, which enjoys dry and awkward exchanges and dark, sudden violent humor, like the Coen brothers or Martin McDonagh. During each chapter, viewers must figure out what has transpired since the last one ended, a repudiation of passive film watching.

There are surreal touches throughout, including completely inappropriate music during some tense scenes and an out-of-left-field use of Shawn Mullins'

"Lullaby." There also are musical interludes, including four cemetery workers bursting into song and a slow motion montage of a duo ski dancing.

Covino and Marvin are clearly seeped in French cinema and make a lovely nod to it when Mike goes into a small movie theater to catch a French film retrospective and, a little later, the camera swivels and the cinema becomes a church.

In one tour de force of filmmaking, the camera squirms through a crowded house on Thanksgiving and then prowls the outside of the house in a sweep, with each figure insi-

de stepping up to deliver a line or two in what seems like one continuous take. (Take that, "1917.")

The script is also a marvel, with fragments of dialogue and actions repeating over the years — like motorists fighting or Mike playing with a hat in the mirror. Silence is also baked in, sometimes with wordless scenes of people outside smoking.

The acting is tremendous, with Marvin almost puppyish and sweet while Covino is sharp and brutally honest — his way of being kind. Gayle Rankin plays a love interest for Kyle and she is excellently tart, prickly,

and judgy. Talia Balsam makes her small but key maternal role shine bright.

"The Climb" starts during a bike ride in the south of France and ends years later with both men still gently bickering on bikes, a signal that little might change in a lifetime but some things — like friendships — deepen.

It's just fantastic. Sorry, fantastic.

"The Climb," a Sony Pictures Classics release, is rated R for "language, sexual content, some nudity and brief drug use." Running time: 98 minutes. ★★★★★

Macau Racing Tips

By Davy Chiu



THE CLYDEBANK 1510 METRES SAND 2020-11-20|Fri|20:35

HOSTWIN PROSPERITS from Y.C Fung's yard is racing well. His last outing 30 Oct in the 1510 metres sand race has been very impressive and he came from middle of nowhere and grabbed a second. He in my view could get a bit closer to the speed in his last start. He should get his chance this time, the barrier draw of 10 is not ideal, but with a strong jockey of J.B Hamel he should resolve by settle him closer. His track work was very good under jockey Hamel; that piece of strong work in the morning indicated that he is ready for the challenge this Friday evening. This is his race he should give a good account of himself. His main threat could come from another good sand performer **Association Eight** which allotted a lighter weight of 121 lbs. Give **Hostwin Prosperits** a good place chance also put these into your quinella and quinella place bets.

Race 4 | Horse no.3 Hostwin Properits Place Bet with Horse no. 8 Association Eight Quinella & Quinella Place bets



OPINION

World Views

Adam Minter, MDT/Bloomberg



AS TRAVEL BUBBLES BEGIN, DON'T EXPECT A MIRACLE

This Sunday, the post-Covid travel era will begin at airports in Hong Kong and Singapore. Two hundred passengers, prescreened for the virus, will board flights in each city bound for the other. Upon arrival, they'll be tested again. If they're negative, they can then roam free — without having to undergo the two-week quarantines required of other travelers.

It's the world's first-known Covid travel bubble, and the devastated global tourism industry has pinned its hopes on a successful rollout. Unfortunately, even if the experiment works, it won't herald the return of anything like the freewheeling air culture of pre-pandemic life. Instead, it'll probably signal a newly expensive and rarefied era of travel — one that's very unlikely to support an industry that depends on cheap flights.

It's no accident that this experiment is happening in Asia-Pacific. For two decades, air travel has expanded more rapidly there than anywhere else. In 2010, 15.9 million people visited Thailand; in 2019, 39.8 million visited, more than two-thirds of them from Asia. Few of those travelers arrived in a first-class cabin. Instead, their Thai beach holidays were mostly enabled by the explosive growth of low-cost airlines. That had an immense effect on tourist flows: From 2011 to 2018, weekly flights between China and Thailand rose from 200 to 1,300, while the proportion of those taken on a budget airline soared from 4% to 44%.

All those bargains came to a halt this year thanks to Covid.

From the earliest days of the pandemic, "travel bubbles" were proposed as one solution to this devastation. But setting them up turned out to be far more difficult than expected. In Asia, where countries have been far more successful in controlling the pandemic, there's an understandable reluctance to open up. Yet even in places where interest is strong, the practical difficulties of agreeing to seemingly simple matters — such as testing standards — have held things up.

Despite such impediments, Hong Kong and Singapore have managed to come to what looks like a workable agreement. The deep economic connections between the two cities — 13,654 flights went between them in 2019 — certainly helped. Demand appears to be strong as well. During the inaugural week, in which there will be only one daily "bubble flight," seats are already sold out.

It won't be cheap, however. Even economy-class seats are going for more than \$800, far more than an equivalent ticket pre-pandemic. And that won't be the only premium attached to a bubble flight. Covid screening alone could cost as much as \$600 round trip. In addition, travelers who test positive are expected to foot the bill for their treatment and quarantine in their destination city.

For all that, a travel bubble is no guarantee against infection. Last week, a Caribbean cruise ship set sail for the first time since the industry was shut down in March. Despite extensive precautions, including multiple tests for everyone on board, seven passengers and two crew members tested positive just days after the ship left port. The trip was quickly aborted and the company has canceled the rest of its cruises for 2020.

The Singapore-Hong Kong bubble might survive such an outbreak, but there's not much room for error. According to the agreement reached between the two cities, if either destination — both home to millions — records a seven-day average of five or more unlinked Covid cases, the bubble will be suspended.

Despite the risks, there are clearly plenty of people willing to take their chances to get back in the air. But the extra costs, financial and otherwise, suggest that bubbles simply aren't the answer to the travel industry's woes — in Asia or anywhere else. As with so many aspects of life impacted by Covid, only a vaccine is going to get things back to normal.

[Abridged]

BIDEN APPROACHES 80 MILLION VOTES IN HISTORIC VICTORY

THE BUZZ

President-elect Joe Biden's winning tally is approaching a record 80 million votes as Democratic bastions continue to count ballots and the 2020 election cracks turnout records.

Biden has already set a record for the highest number of votes for a winning presidential candidate, and President Donald Trump has also notched a high-water mark of the most votes for a losing candidate. With more than 155 million votes counted and California and New York still counting, turnout stands at 65% of all eligible voters, the highest since 1908, according to data from The Associated Press and the U.S. Elections Project.

The rising Biden tally and his popular vote lead — nearly 6 million votes — come as Trump has escalated his false insistence that he actually won the election, and his campaign and supporters intensify their uphill legal fight to stop or delay results from being certified, potentially nullify the votes of Americans.

Biden currently has an Electoral College lead of 290-232. But that does not include electors from Georgia, where Biden leads Trump by 0.3 percentage points as officials conduct a hand tally.

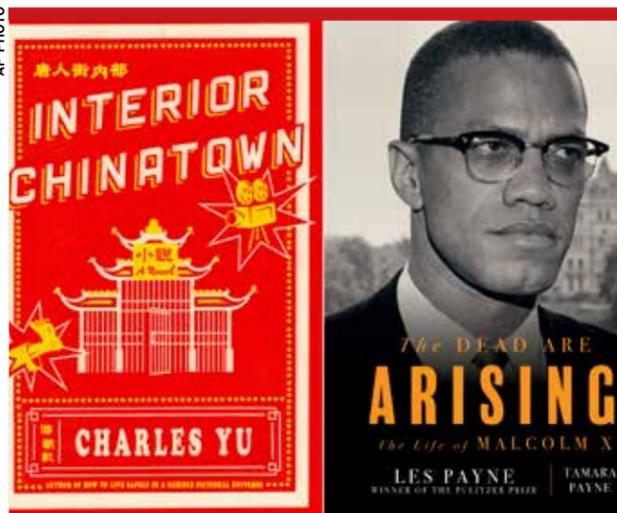
CHARLES YU NOVEL, MALCOLM X BIO WIN NATIONAL BOOK AWARDS

CHARLES Yu's "Interior Chinatown," a satirical, cinematic novel written in the form of a screenplay, has won the National Book Award for fiction.

Tamara Payne and her father the late Les Payne's Malcolm X biography, "The Dead Are Arising," was cited for nonfiction and Kacen Callender's "King and the Dragonflies" for young people's literature. The poetry prize went to Don Mee Choi's "DMZ Colony" and the winner for best translated work was Yu Miri's "Tokyo Ueno Station," translated from Japanese by Morgan Giles.

Honorary medals were given yesterday [Macau time] to mystery novelist Walter Mosley and to the late CEO of Simon & Schuster, Carolyn Reidy, who died in May at age 71. The children's author and current US Youth Ambassador for young adult literature Jason Reynolds served as emcee, and along with Bob Woodward and Walter Isaacson was among the Simon & Schuster writers who appeared in a taped tribute to Reidy.

Because of the pandemic, one of publishing's most high-profile gatherings was streamed online, with presenters and winners speaking everywhere from New York to Japan. The traditional dinner ceremony is the nonprofit National Book Foundation's most important source of income and is usually held at Cipriani Wall Street, where publishers and other officials pay thousands of dollars for tables or individual seats. The foundation instead has been asking for donations of \$50 or more. As of yesterday, just over \$490,000 had been pled-



This combination photo shows book cover images for Charles Yu's "Interior Chinatown," and "The Dead Are Arising: The Life of Malcolm X," by Tamara Payne and Les Payne

ged from 851 donors.

"It's hard in a pandemic. We were scared we wouldn't be able to do this show," said foundation executive director Lisa Lucas, speaking online from the children's room of the Los Angeles Public Library. Executive director since 2016, she will depart at the end of the year to become publisher for the Penguin Random House imprints Pantheon and Schocken. Her successor has not been announced.

Along with the pandemic and the presidential election, diversity has been an ongoing theme in the book world this year

Along with the pandemic and the presidential election, diversity has been an ongoing theme in the book world this year and remained so last night in New York, from Lucas urging publishers to work at transforming a historically white industry to the winners themselves.

Yu's novel is a sendup of Chinese stereotypes and of the immigrants' conflict between wanting to assimilate and as-

serting their true selves. "DMZ Colony" combines poetry, prose and images in its exploration of the history between the United States and South Korea. Mosley, the first Black man to win the medal for Distinguished Contribution to American Letters, spoke of his debt to such literary heroes as Ishmael Reed, John Edgar Wideman and Ralph Ellison.

The award for "The Dead Are Arising" is the second time in a decade a Malcolm X biography has received a high honor for nonfiction and the second time the honor was, at least in part, posthumous. The scholar Manning Marable died right before the 2011

publication of "Malcolm X," which went on to win a Pulitzer Prize and receive a National Book Award nomination. Les Payne, a Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist, died in 2018.

"This is such a bitter-sweet moment," Tamara Payne said upon accepting the award Wednesday night. "I really wish my father was here for this."

Few references were made to the recent election, though politics did help inspire Yu. MDT/AP

Afghanistan An accelerated U.S. troop withdrawal, announced by Washington this week, has rattled both allies and adversaries. There are fears of worsening violence and regional chaos, which some say could embolden the local Islamic State affiliate to regroup and perhaps even try to build another "caliphate." Under an earlier deal between the U.S. and the Taliban that outlined a gradual pullout, the remaining U.S. forces were to leave Afghanistan by April. The Pentagon now says some 2,500 troops will leave by January, just days before President-elect Joe Biden's inauguration.



Iran's paramilitary Revolutionary Guard said it launched a heavy warship yesterday capable of carrying helicopters, drones and missile launchers amid ongoing tensions with the U.S. Photographs of the ship, named after slain Guard naval commander Abdollah Roudaki, showed it carrying truck-launched surface-to-surface missiles and anti-aircraft missiles. It also carried four small fast boats, the kind the Guard routinely uses in the Persian Gulf. Sailors manned deck-mounted machine guns.

US After nearly two years and a pair of deadly crashes, the U.S. Federal Aviation Administration has cleared Boeing's 737 Max for flight. The nation's air safety agency announced the move, saying it was done after a "comprehensive and methodical" 20-month review process. Regulators around the world grounded the Max in March 2019, after the crash of an Ethiopian Airlines jet. That happened less than five months after another Max flown by Indonesia's Lion Air plunged into the Java Sea.

Australia A shocking military report into war crimes has found evidence that elite Australian troops unlawfully killed 39 Afghan prisoners, farmers and civilians. Australian Defence Force Chief Gen. Angus Campbell said yesterday the shameful record included alleged instances in which new patrol members would shoot a prisoner in order to achieve their first kill in a practice known as "bleeding." He said the soldiers would then plant weapons and radios to support false claims the prisoners were enemies killed in action.