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**THE MICHELIN GUIDE HONG KONG MACAO 2021 UNVEILED THE LIST OF THE NEWLY AWARDED RESTAURANTS AND EATERIES**

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**EX-LAWMAKER AND FORMER MACAO FOUNDATION PRESIDENT VICTOR NG PASSES AWAY**

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**LVS HAS APPOINTED ROBERT GOLDSTEIN AS CEO FOLLOWING THE DEATH OF SHELDON ADELSON, FOUNDER OF THE CASINO EMPIRE**

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**Indonesia**’s most active volcano erupted yesterday with a river of lava and searing gas clouds flowing 1,500 meters down its slopes. It was Mount Merapi’s biggest lava flow since authorities raised its danger level in November, said Hanik Humaida, the head of Yogyakarta’s Volcanology and Geological Hazard Mitigation Center.



**Japan** A draft investigation report into the 2011 Fukushima nuclear meltdown, adopted by Japanese nuclear regulators yesterday, says it has detected dangerously high levels of radioactive contamination at two of the three reactors. Data collected by investigators showed that the sealing plugs sitting atop the No. 2 and 3 reactor containment vessels were as fatally contaminated as nuclear fuel debris following the March 2011 tsunami and earthquake.

**North Korea** Google says it believes hackers backed by the North Korean government have been posing as computer security bloggers and using fake accounts on social media while attempting to steal information from researchers in the field. Google didn’t specify how successful the hackers were or what kind of information could have been compromised.



**India** has vaccinated 2 million health workers in less than two weeks and recorded 12,689 new coronavirus positive cases in the past 24 hours, a sharp decline from a peak level of nearly 100,000 in mid-September.

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# LABOR BUREAU SEES ABOVE 200 PAY-CUT NOTICES IN 2020

ANTHONY LAM

**T**HE Labour Affairs Bureau (DSAL) yesterday disclosed that last year, the authority received a total of 214 notices of salary deduction from 156 companies, concerning 2,450 workers.

Yesterday afternoon, the authority held a press conference to announce data from last year and reveal its plan for this year.

As the DSAL further disclosed, out of the 2,000 or so employees affected by the action, 1,102 were faced with a direct salary deduction, meaning that their regular pay was cut by a specified proportion.

The remaining employees either had their subsidies shrunk or suspended, or their payment structure changed. The DSAL officials at the press conference, however, did not provide further elaboration on what these two methods entailed.

The industries which saw the most cases of salary deduction, according to the government body, were the wholesale, retail and transport industries.

According to the Labour Relations Law, if an employer needs or has to implement a salary de-



duction due to legally-justifiable reasons, a consensus must be reached with the affected employee or employees, on top of an official notice being legally required to be sent to the DSAL. This explains the reason behind the figures disclosed by the government bureau.

On the other hand, last year quite a number of employees were required to take unpaid leave as a consequence of the Covid-19 pandemic. The DSAL has also released figures on this yesterday.

Not including the six gambling concessionaires, which have required most of their employees across many departments to furlough, the DSAL has received related notices from four companies, concerning 160 employees.

On workplace safety, the bureau revealed that in the first three quarters of last year, the city had about 392,000 workers, with about 3,100 of them having been faced with workplace accidents of varied scales.

Meanwhile, there were 7.8 accidents per 1,000 workers. Compared with the same period in 2019, it saw an improvement of about six fewer accidents.

The DSAL highlighted that with more or less the same number of workers, they were pleased with the drop in number of accidents per thousand workers. However, the city saw four workplace deaths in two separate incidents last year.

It is worth noting that for seven

months in 2020, the city saw suspended workplaces across industries. Although not fully within the DSAL's authority, public services have been suspended for at least two weeks as the government commenced its containment effort against Covid-19, and all casinos were required to close for 15 days.

In addition, many companies have adopted for varied periods of time the practice of working from home.

It is unclear if these work suspension and work-from-home practices have caused the workplace accident figures to fall.

The four deaths, the DSAL stressed, took place in construction sites. Officials hinted that concern regarding construction safety has relaxed. In fact, the DSAL have ruled one of the two fatal accidents as being caused by negligence in adhering to construction safety guidelines.

Therefore, the DSAL has issued a fine of MOP38,500 to the employer.

In 2021, the DSAL will continue applying electronic strategies in promoting workplace safety. Training will also be available on online platforms, as well as physically with the assistance of virtual and augmented reality technologies. The bureau will also adopt polyglot tactics in promoting employment-related laws and regulations.

# Wing Lei Palace, IFT restaurant join 2021 Michelin Guide

RENATO MARQUES

**T**HE Michelin Guide Hong Kong Macau 2021 unveiled the list of the newly awarded restaurants and eateries yesterday.

Wing Lei Palace was one of the highlights of this year, receiving its first Michelin star in the hands of veteran chef Tam Kwok Fung. The number of Michelin starred restaurants in Macau has grown to 18.

Including the new entrants and promotions, the Michelin Guide Hong Kong Macau 2021 distinguished a total of 50 one-star restaurants in Hong Kong and nine in Macau.

This year, and for the first time, the Michelin Guide gave a green star to two res-



Wing Lei Palace at Wynn Palace

taurants in Macau and Hong Kong, in recognition of their commitment to sustainable gastronomy. In Macau, the new sustainability award was granted to the Macao Institute for Tourism Studies

(IFTM) Educational Restaurant highlighting their efforts with sustainable practices such as growing some of their vegetables and herbs and having policies into force to achieve zero-waste.

The local training unit, established to support the development of the hospitality industry, was noted for employing practices such as converting food waste into fertilizer, growing their

own herbs and greens, and using a solar energy system. A paperless policy and the use of infrared sensor-driven electrical appliances as part of their commitment to reducing energy consumption were also noted as important factors in the decision to grant the green star award.

For 2021, the full Macau list retains the three previously attributed three-star restaurants (Jade Dragon, Robuchon au Dôme, and The Eight) and six two-star restaurants (Alain Ducasse at Morpheus, Feng Wei Ju, Golden Flower, Mizumi-Macau, Sichuan Moon, and Wing Lei). The number of one-star restaurants increased from eight to nine (Lai Heen, 8 1/2 Otto e Me-

zzo - Bombana, Pearl Dragon, The Golden Peacock, The Kitchen, Tim's Kitchen, Wing Lei Palace, Ying, and Zi Yat Heen).

One of the curiosities noticed at the announcement of this year's awardees was the fact that some of the restaurants included in the list, such as Sichuan Moon and The Golden Peacock, have been closed almost throughout 2020 due to Covid-19.

The Michelin Guide also awarded 25 restaurants with the Michelin Plate and nine Plate street food addresses that added to the seven Bib Gourmand restaurants previously announced in mid-January, raising the tally of establishments in Macau with Michelin awards to a total of 59.

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SOCIAL HOUSING

# Poor tile job troubles home owners for almost eight years

JULIE ZHU

**O**WNERS of residential properties at Edifício Ip Heng have filed a complaint to the Chief Executive against the local government in relation to their prolonged issues with falling tiles.

Over 10 individuals, all owners of houses at Edifício Ip Heng, delivered a letter yesterday to the Government Headquarters outlining their complaints.

According to two of the group's representatives, surnamed Tai and Dou, this winter alone has seen 1,089 incidents relating to falling tiles at 1,084 locations along corridors at Edifício Ip Heng.

Edifício Ip Heng consists of ten towers, all of which have been afflicted by falling tiles.

In March 2013, the individuals became home owners at Edifício Ip Heng. They have dealt with falling tiles and associated issues every winter since.

According to Tai and Dou, in the beginning when the properties were still covered by warranty, the housing authority "fixed



the problem impetuously every time, and the government never considered hiring a third-party to re-examine whether the corri-

dor design was safe." "Moreover, the Housing Bureau never proactively discussed with residents of Edifício Ip

Heng. It has always closed its eyes to the demands of the residents," the letter to the Chief Executive reads.

The problems with tiles falling were never improved, according to the group.

The housing project is no longer covered by warranty. These property owners estimated a cost of 30 million patacas will be required to fix the problem.

"We request the Chief Executive to look squarely into the quality problems of Edifício Ip Heng, to dispatch personnel to investigate the situation, to solve the problems promptly, and to assess the real cause behind the tile falling situation. We hope that the government can cover the repair fees," the group said.

Edifício Ip Heng is not the only government-subsidized building to have falling debris over the past few years. Edifício do Lago has frequently had reports of similar incidents.

However, earlier this month, the housing authority responded to the property owners, stating that both Edifício Ip Heng and Edifício do Lago were no longer under warranty, the owners were responsible for repairing common areas.

Under the current law, construction defects of government-subsidized housing are covered by a warranty for two years after the title passed to owners.

Last December, the Legislative Assembly (AL) passed a law that extended the warranty to a period of ten years for the building structure and groundworks and five years for other facilities.

## Survey: Over 43,000 fallen tiles found in two economic housing buildings

HONEY TSANG

**T**HERE were approximately 43,411 tiles falling from the interiors of the two economic housing buildings, Edifício do Lago and Ip Heng Building in Seac Pai Van, according to a survey conducted by the União Geral das Associações dos Moradores de Macau (UGAMM).

The researcher from UGAMM stated that the total number of fallen tiles at Edifício do Lago is estimated at 8,003. Block 3 was found with 392 collapsed tiles, the least amount among all six blocks inside the estate. The greatest number of fallen tiles reported was 2,050 at Block 6.

The number of fallen tiles per block of the Ip Heng Building ranged from 1,059 to 5,685, with a total tally of 35,408.

"Those fallen tiles counted in the survey include



Lawmaker Pereira Coutinho yesterday visited Edifício do Lago

the ones that fell on their own and the other slabs considered at risk of tumbling off the walls, which were taken off by the management company," Jiang Xuchun, a representative of the UGAMM, said in an earlier media briefing.

The survey results revealed that all buildings of the two economic housing

buildings, except for Block 6 in Edifício Ip Heng which was used for show, reported cases of fallen tiles.

There were 139 floors in total in both buildings, each with over 100 shattered and collapsed tiles.

UGAMM stressed even if the property owners of these two buildings sought to file a lawsuit as a means

of tackling the issue, they would be intimidated by the complicated and lengthy litigation procedures.

Some owners already expressed worries that they may not be able to afford the renovation fees incurred as a result of the construction issues, while several residents of Edifício Ip Heng were concerned

that the falling tiles posed a physical danger to them.

The association urges the government to commence negotiations with the project builder to extend the warranty period for the two buildings or help property owners access renovation solutions which may include seeking technical advice on tile repair.

UGAMM also recommends the authorities add a new regulation into the Urban Construction Legal Regime to mandate the builders to address the constructional faults within the warranty period.

The Housing Bureau (IH) is said to be planning to convene a meeting for all property owners of the two buildings to discuss the problem.

In the survey, UGAMM also probed into social housing Edifício Iat Seng in Taipa, which was reported to have cracked floor tiles and malfunctioning fire-resistance doors that were damaged by a previous typhoon. It was told that the IH is now addressing the matter.

### LOU PAK SANG APPOINTED DIRECTOR OF DSEDJ

The Higher Education Bureau (DSES) will be merged into the Education and Youth Affairs Bureau (DSEJ) to become the Education and Youth Development Bureau (DSEDJ) from February 2021. Lou Pak Sang, the director of DSEJ will be appointed as director of the new DSEDJ.

### DSAT TO BUILD TWO ROADS AT ZONE P TO HELP EASE TRAFFIC

The Transport Bureau (DSAT) is set to build two public roads at New Area Zone P at Area Preta, in a bid to reduce the traffic pressure around the area. Lam Hin San, the director of the Transport Bureau said in a written response to a query raised by lawmaker Lam Lon Wai.

MUNICIPAL MARKET LAW

# INSTALLATION OF SURVEILLANCE CAMERAS HALTED

JULIE ZHU

**T**HE local government has decided to reconsider the number of CCTV surveillance cameras it will install at the city's municipal markets, according to the First Standing Committee of the Legislative Assembly (AL).

On Tuesday, the committee held another meeting to discuss the law concerning the affairs of municipal markets. Representatives of the government participated in the meeting.

The law, which was passed in November last year, consists of 26 articles in total. Yesterday's meeting specifically addressed article 14, which prescribes that the Municipal Affairs Bureau (IAM) has the power to install surveillance cameras inside municipal markets in order to enforce this law.

However, just prior to yesterday's meeting, some business operators at Iao Hon municipal market filed a complaint to the AL regarding IAM's recent installation of CCTV surveillance cameras at the market, and specifically in proximity to an apparel stall.

ALEX KNIGHT



Referring to the complainants, Ho Ion Sang, Chairman of the Second Standing Committee of AL, said that the stakeholders ques-

tioned the government's budget-planning.

"Some of the markets already have surveillance cameras installed, and they [the complainants] think that these existing cameras are already covering the spaces well," said Ho, citing some of the

stakeholders.

Some of the business operators at Iao Hon municipal market questioned whether it is necessary for the government to install surveillance cameras at every single stall.

The government has claimed

that the surveillance systems are intended to help the authorities to detect violations of the law, for instance by enabling the supervising body to determine the actual and reported operator of each business.

During the meeting with lawmakers, government representatives expressed their belief that the authority needs to "adjust the original plan" in regards to the surveillance cameras. The government pledged that the operation of the surveillance cameras will comply with the city's personal data protection law.

"The government has agreed with the committee on the number and location of the cameras, and the government will modify its plan," said Ho.

As to the aforementioned camera installation process at Iao Hon municipal market, and the installation process at the Mercado de S. Lourenço, IAM suspended the process before Tuesday's meeting with the First Standing Committee.

In addition to the aforementioned article, once the law goes through the final approval of each article and once it comes into effect, tenants of multiple stalls will only be allowed to rent one stall.

## Ex-lawmaker and former Macao Foundation president Victor Ng passes away

ANTHONY LAM

**V**ICTOR Ng, former lawmaker and president of the Macao Foundation, among other public positions, has passed away at the age of 90, the foundation confirmed.

He has held several distinguished positions before and after the change of sovereignty, having been the president of the Macao Importers and Exporters Association; an executive director of the World Trade Centre, Macau; member of the Economic Committee; and member of the Macau Special Administrative Region Preparatory Committee.

He has also held positions on the mainland, including within the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference and the Shunde People's Political Consultative Conference.

Speaking to the Times, incumbent lawmaker António Ng Kuok Cheong, who had been colleagues with Vic-



tor Ng in the legislative body, said that he was a "decent person."

In fact, the incumbent lawmaker has reiterated that Victor Ng (not related) had always been a "normal colleague," plain and simple.

Victor Ng started his career in the commercial sector before becoming successful as a distinguished businessperson,

so it is understandable that he stood in line with the business sector.

"He was on the pro-Beijing side," Ng recalled, hinting that he was not expected to push forward any reform.

Meanwhile, the Macao Foundation issued a statement yesterday to mourn the late ex-president.

In the statement, the foundation described

Victor Ng as "promoting the long-term development of Macau and leading the Macao Foundation into society."

The foundation recalled that the late Victor Ng was obsessed with popularizing science among youths. He actively participated in the establishment of the Macao Science Center, while being the first co-chair of the Macao Science Center Limited.

"The Macao Foundation hereby expresses its condolences to the family of the late Mr Victor Ng," the foundation wrote.

Unexpectedly as a distinguished personage during the transition period, the late Ng was physically assaulted on the street one morning, months before the change of sovereignty as he finished a meeting and departed from the then Xinhua News Agency Office in Macau.

About a month before the attack, he was appointed by the then

Chief Executive-to-be, Edmund Ho, as a member of the independent committee for judge recommendation.

A veteran businessperson, the late Ng was born in Lechong Township, Shunde City, Guangdong Province, mainland China. He moved to Macau in 1960, where he started and shone in his career.

Speaking in 2002 to the Macao Trade and Investment Promotion Institute, Victor Ng highlighted that manufacturing had no more role in Macau. He also pointed out that the city should move its focus to logistics.

He did not only encourage logistics within the region, but also logistics between Macau and further destinations, such as the Americas and Europe.

In 1984, he was awarded by the Portuguese-Macau government with the Medal for Industrial and Commercial Excellence.

## XI HEARS WORK REPORT FROM HO IAT SENG

**P**RESIDENT Xi Jinping yesterday heard a work report via video link from Chief Executive Ho Iat Seng on the SAR government's work in 2020 and Macau's current situation.

Xi highlighted the work of Ho and the SAR government to tame the Covid-19 epidemic in Macau in a "fairly short period."

No new local infections have been reported in the city for more than 300 days, an "achievement highly appreciated by local society," according to Xi.

"While preventing and controlling the Covid-19 epidemic, effective measures have been taken to restore the economy and overcome the people's difficulties. These measures have achieved positive results and promoted social harmony in Macau," Xi told Ho.

"The central authorities fully acknowledge the work you and the Macau SAR government have done," Xi said.

He said the central authorities will continue to give full support to the SAR in coordinating epidemic response with economic and social development.

Meanwhile, Ho said he will continue to lead people in Macau to break "new ground for the practice of the 'one country, two systems' with Macau characteristics." **MDT /XINHUA**

# Young Entrepreneur benefits from Sands China's SME support strategy

**A**S a pioneer in starting local supplier support programmes in Macao, Sands China Ltd. has been investing back into the community by helping local small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and micro-enterprises thrive and grow.

Kuan U Trading, a young entrepreneurial frozen meats supplier, has successfully survived and enhanced their business under Sands China's Local Supplier Support Programme.

Kuan U Trading's founder Frankie Lao started his career in the frozen foods industry shortly after graduation. After becoming familiar with the industry, Lao set up Kuan U Trading in 2016. Serving small restaurants barely made ends meet for the startup.

Through media and friends, Lao heard about Sands China's Local SME Supplier Open Day and enrolled as a participant. Aiming at providing procurement opportunities for prospective local SME suppliers, Sands China's Local SME Supplier Open Day offers potential suppliers a chance to connect with Sands China procurement representatives and learn about procurement opportunities with various departments.

Lao introduced Kuan U Trading's products and services to Sands China, and his work paid off – Kuan U Trading became a Sands China supplier in 2018 and the collaboration has continued ever since.

Kuan U Trading then witnessed a turning point. In the early stage of his business, given a limited budget, Lao took care of all processes such as loading goods, receiving calls, placing orders, and delivery.

"Since the company began cooperating with Sands China, orders have grown steadily, which has brought a stable source of income to the company, and has gradually increased the number of employees. So far, we have eight employees," said Lao.

Meanwhile, working with a large-scale enterprise like Sands China also increased the young entrepreneur's managerial skills, which has created more business opportunities.

Kuan U Trading has been able to open a frozen meat store, expanding possibilities further into the retail market.

According to Lao, to keep in pace with clients' business requirements, he increased his investment into equipment, purchasing a refrigerator truck and a warehouse. Kuan U Trading also



began working with a new partner – a fish farming enterprise in Zhanjiang, Guangdong province – whose products will be processed, packaged, and shipped to Macao.

Sands China recognizes the advantages of working with Kuan U Trading, who is able to provide the right products with reasonable prices. Beyond that, Kuan U Trading responds to customer requirements quickly. According to Sands China's procurement and supply chain senior manager Rachel Zheng and senior supervisor Alex

Mok: "To speed up the cooking process, our chefs proposed some simple changes, such as a cut in

**" Since the company began cooperating with Sands China, orders have grown steadily, which has brought a stable source of income to the company**

FRANKIE LAO

the middle of frozen chicken wings. Kuan U Trading then reacted quickly to make the change."

During the Covid-19 outbreak, Sands China and local SMEs worked hand in hand. Sands China's procurement and supply chain department took the initiative to contact SME suppliers and provided appropriate assistance if they were encountering difficulties.

Last August, for example, the company held the successful Sands Shopping Carnival. Visitation surpassed 100,000 at the three-day carnival at The Venetian Macao's Cotai Expo. It provided a free business platform for

local SMEs and Sands retailers amid the pandemic, while creating a new weekend destination for local residents and tourists, in support of the Macao SAR government's Consume for the Economy initiative.

Sands China suggests that young entrepreneurs should pay the most attention to product quality and product safety when sourcing food, followed by setting appropriate market prices. Young entrepreneurs may not be familiar with the operations and needs of integrated resort operators at first, so Sands China recommends they get in touch and learn about what clients need. It's also ideal if enterprises obtain ISO and other international-standard certifications or M-Mark certification through the Macao Product Quality Certification Program. Sands China additionally encourages SMEs to keep abreast of the latest market trends in various professional fields, and welcomes them to take advantage of the most direct way of connecting with Sands China's procurement team – enrolling in the Sands Procurement Academy.\*

Sands China's long-standing effort to support local suppliers is in line with the Macao government's initiative to "buy local." And the partnership between Sands China and SMEs is a pioneering initiative that has helped spearhead industry efforts toward supporting local SMEs. It creates a mutually supportive environment in which SMEs gain business and experience. Meanwhile it allows Sands China to benefit from having local expertise, timely customer service and flexible delivery.

\*For details, visit <https://www.sandschina.com/the-company/purchase-list.html>



GAMING

# CCIC: CASINO EBITDA TO REBOUND TO 2019 FIGURES BY Q4 2021

HONEY TSANG

A China-based investment bank China International Capital Corp (CICC) forecast the earnings before interest, taxation, depreciation and amortization (EBITDA) for Macau's casino industry is likely to rebound to 2019 figures in the fourth quarter (Q4) of 2021, according to a report released yesterday by GGRAsia.

CICC is anticipating EBITDA of the local casino industry to turn around from a negative value in 2020 to a positive USD4.45 billion for 2021, and USD9.66 billion for 2022.

The encouraging prospects for the industry, CICC explained, are partially driven by the forthcoming enlarged capacity within the sector that will be ramped up by some new and soon-to-be-launched hospitality projects in Cotai.

The particular resort projec-

MACAU PHOTO AGENCY



ts that CICC stated would lead to an expansion in capacity include Sands China's The Londoner Macau, which is scheduled to open its first phase on February 8; SJM's Grand Lisboa Palace, a new res-

ort in Cotai to be open in the first quarter this year; and the Phase 3 expansion project of the Galaxy Entertainment Group, which features a string of facilities such as an event facility - the Galaxy In-

ternational Convention Center (GICC) which will be launched in the second half or the third quarter of 2021.

Another project expected to be launched by 2021 is the Nüwa hotel, a hotel under the City of Dreams currently under renovation, with its reopening date yet to be confirmed.

CICC's promising projection is predicated on "permanent cost savings by gaming operators" following the coronavirus outbreak, as well as a projected rebound in the mass-market segment, which may result in a "gross gaming revenue (GGR) split gravitating to mass gaming driving higher EBITDA margin," GGRAsia stated, citing a report recently published by CICC.

## PROSPECTS FOR OVERALL GGR

CICC forecast the total number of hotel rooms to be up by 2,800 this year, or 7.5% on top

of the current 37,293 rooms — which may act as a drawcard to entice more visitors to stay overnight, and eventually provide a fillip to the mass-market sector.

The financial institution also projects that Macau's annual GGR for 2021 may surge by 168% from last year, predominantly driven by a gradual rebound in the mass segment — which CICC expects will have a year-on-year increase of 228% and account for up to 80% of the overall GGR in Macau in 2021.

On the other hand, the VIP segment would also see a 55% increase in 2021 compared to last year.

The up-to-date figures provided by the Statistics and Census Service already revealed an upward trend in the length of stay by visitors. In December 2020, the average length of stay of visitors increased by 0.3 days year-on-year to 1.5 days.

Macau welcomed 659,407 visitor arrivals in December 2020, up 3.6% month-to-month. Around 390,300 of them were overnight visitors, whilst the remaining 269,107 were same-day visitors.

## LAS VEGAS SANDS HANDS REINS TO ROBERT GOLDSTEIN AFTER SHELDON ADELSON'S DEATH

LAS Vegas Sands Corp. named Acting Chief Executive Officer Robert Goldstein as permanent CEO following the death of Sheldon Adelson, founder of the casino empire.

Goldstein, 65, will assume the role of chairman as well, Las Vegas-based Sands confirmed yesterday. The company also promoted two longtime executives: Patrick Dumont, previously executive vice president and finance chief, was named president and chief operating officer. Randy Hyzak was promoted to succeed him as CFO.

The appointments were triggered by the death of Adelson, 87, earlier this month from complications of cancer. Adelson earlier took leave from his posts atop the company for treatment.

The company remains firmly in the hands of its founding family, with Miriam Adelson, Sheldon's widow, controlling the bulk of the family's 57% stake in the company. Dumont, who has been with the company since 2010, is her son-in-law. Goldstein joined the company in 1995, while Hyzak came aboard in 2016 as chief accounting officer.

Gaming experts previously told the Times that the executive team at Sands are "extremely well equipped" to continue Adelson's

BLOOMBERG



legacy and lead future growth and expansion of the company that Adelson built.

JP Morgan Securities also holds confidence that Adelson's absence is unlikely to have an impact on the direction or operations of Sands China as it has been managed by a "local management team."

Like other casino operators, Sands has been hobbled by the global coronavirus pandemic. It's expected to report a 63% drop in revenue for the fourth quarter when results are announced today after markets close.

The company's resorts around the world closed for several weeks last year due to the corona-

virus, and - even with customers starting to come back - business at casinos in Las Vegas, Singapore and Macau remain well below pre-pandemic levels.

Sands also contemplated selling its Las Vegas resorts last year, if the company could get the \$6 billion price it was looking for. But no buyers have emerged.

In another shift, Goldstein has been talking to potential partners about a role for Sands in sports betting, either by licensing its brands or building its own online platform. Adelson had been a staunch opponent of online betting on moral grounds, believing it fostered problem gambling.

MDT/BLOOMBERG

## CRIME

### POLICE WARNS PUBLIC ABOUT SCAMS ON WHATSAPP

JULIE ZHU

THE Judiciary Police (PJ) has issued a warning to the public in relation to WhatsApp scams after a surge in the number of crimes reported since the start of 2021.

At yesterday's joint police press conference, PJ said that as of January 26, the bureau had received 26 reports of WhatsApp users who had been tricked into identity theft by handing over a verification code through the app, suffering a collective loss of 54,548 patacas.

By contrast, Macau recorded eight WhatsApp identity theft cases resulting in the loss of 27,230 patacas throughout the whole of 2019. During 2020, there were 31 cases, with no financial losses at all.

Criminals usually try to steal the WhatsApp account of a potential target by impersonating the victim's friend and asking them to share a verification code with them. Once the scammers receive the code, they use it to log in the victim's WhatsApp account and steal the victim's identity.

Afterwards, scammers contact the victim's WhatsApp friends and make false promises, often about opportunities

to invest money.

PJ also alerted the public to scams carried out by "internet contacts." Individuals who ordinarily fall victim to such internet scams believe themselves to be talking to friends or loved ones.

The scammers usually attempt to convince their victims to download an app to invest money.

PJ shared details with the media of a recent case involving a local woman in her 60s who claimed to have lost approximately four million patacas.

All money in this case was transferred through bank transactions to a Hong Kong bank account. A bank clerk tried to dissuade the woman from wiring the money out of prudence, but the woman insisted on making the transfers.

To prevent members of the public from falling victim to fraud, PJ has notified local banks to dissuade customers from making suspicious transactions.

In 2019, the police authority logged 40 cases involving a total loss of approximately 22 million patacas. In 2020, these figures climbed to 96 cases and 28 million patacas.

# Gov't asks Indonesia to treat detained sailors fairly

**C**HINA'S government called on Indonesia yesterday to treat a group of detained Chinese sailors fairly but gave no indication what their oil tanker was doing when it was found at sea transferring fuel from an Iranian ship.

The Iranian-flagged MT Horse and Panamanian-flagged MT Freya were seized Sunday and are suspected of illegally transferring fuel at sea, shutting off their identification systems and other offenses. Indonesian authorities said 36 Iranian and 25 Chinese crew members were detained.

Iran has sold oil on the black market since then-President Donald Trump imposed sanctions in 2018 and threatened to penalize countries that bought Iranian crude. Iranian oil tankers turn off tracking equipment to conceal their destinations.

Indonesian authorities confirmed to the Chinese



Panamanian-flagged MT Freya (left) and Iranian-flagged MT Horse tankers are seen anchored together in Pontianak waters off Borneo island, Indonesia

Embassy the crew members are "in good condition," said foreign ministry spokesperson Zhao Lijian.

The embassy asked Indonesian authorities "to investigate the case impartially according to the law, and to ensure the health, safety and legitimate rights and interests of the crew," Zhao said.

He gave no details about

the Chinese ship's owner or destination.

On Wednesday, both tankers were anchored off Batam Island in the Riau Islands south of Singapore, the Indonesian government said.

In August, U.S. officials said the Trump administration seized 1.1 million barrels of gasoline from four

tankers bound from Iran to Venezuela.

In 2018, ships were captured in satellite photos transferring oil to North Korean ships off the Chinese coast in a possible effort to evade U.N. sanctions on North Korea. The Chinese government said it would investigate but has yet to announce results.

## MILITARY FLIGHTS WARN AGAINST INTERFERENCE IN TAIWAN

**T**HE Chinese government said yesterday that actions like its warplanes flying near Taiwan last weekend are a warning against both foreign interference in Taiwan and any independence moves by the island.

Asked about the flights, Zhu Fenglian, a spokesperson for China's Taiwan Affairs Office, said China's military drills are to show the nation's resolution to protect its national sovereignty and territorial integrity.

"They are a stern warning against external interference and provocation from separatist forces advocating for Taiwan independence," she said at a regular briefing, giving the Chinese government's first official comment on the recent flights.

China sent eight bombers and four fighter jets into Taiwan's air defense identification zone on Saturday, according to

Taiwan's Defense Ministry. Taiwan scrambled fighters to monitor the activity.

The U.S. State Department later issued a statement urging China "to cease its military, diplomatic, and economic pressure against Taiwan" following China's sizeable show of force.

China then sent 16 military aircraft into the same area on Sunday, Taiwan said.

Taiwan is a self-governing island about 160 kilometers off China's east coast. The Chinese government regards it as a renegade province that should be united with mainland China.

Zhu said that China would not renounce the use of force to guard against separatist moves and foreign interference.

"We...reserve the option to use all necessary measures," she said. "Our position has been consistent and will not change." AP

AD



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Commerce secretary-nominee Rhode Island Gov. Gina Raimondo testifies remotely during her nomination hearing before the Senate

USA

# Biden's Commerce pick, Raimondo, voices tough line on China

KEVIN FREKING & MIKE SCHNEIDER, WASHINGTON

**P**RESIDENT Joe Biden's pick to oversee the Commerce Department took a tough line on China in her confirmation hearing yesterday, though she stopped short of singling out which Chinese companies should remain on a list that limits their access to advanced U.S. technology.

If confirmed, as expected, Rhode Island Gov. Gina Raimondo, a former venture capitalist, would be responsible for promoting opportunities for economic growth domestically and overseas.

Raimondo focused her testimony before a Senate panel on the need to help those sectors of the economy and the workers hit hardest by the coronavirus pandemic.

"COVID has shined a light on the inequities in our economy," Raimondo said. "The president has been very clear, we're going to build back better and more equitably, and I strongly support that."

She would inherit a department that took actions during the Trump administration that heightened tensions with China, namely through tariffs and the

blacklisting of companies by placing them on the U.S. government's so-called Entity List. U.S. companies need to get a license to sell sophisticated technology to companies on the list.

"China's actions have been anti-competitive, hurtful to American workers and businesses, coercive, and, as you point out, they're culpable for atrocious human rights abuses," Raimondo said in response to a question from Sen. Ted Cruz, R-Texas. "So whether it's the entities list, or tariffs, or countervailing duties, I intend to use all those tools to the fullest extent possible to level the playing field for the American worker."

When Cruz pressed Raimondo on whether certain companies would remain on the Entity List, Raimondo said she would consult with lawmakers, industry and allies and "make an assessment as to what's best for American national and economic security."

Raimondo similarly demurred on a question about the tariffs the Trump administration had placed on imported steel and aluminum in the name of national security. Those tariffs have raised costs for metal-using industries. She told Sen. Roy Blunt, R-Mo., that she would listen to him and manufacturers in his state

and "take their needs into account."

Sen. Jacky Rosen, D-Nev., also voiced concerns about tariffs the Trump administration enacted on solar panels, which Rosen said cost the country tens of thousands of solar jobs. Again, Raimondo said she would work with her and she didn't take a direct stand. "I understand it's time-sensitive and challenging and a lot of jobs are at stake," Raimondo assured her.

Raimondo was elected governor in 2014 and won reelection in 2018. She's expected to handily win a confirmation vote, but it's unclear when that vote will occur. Nominations pertaining to national security generally take precedent. The vote may also have to wait on former President Donald Trump's impeachment trial, which will dominate the Senate's attention starting the week of Feb. 8.

Sen. Roger Wicker, R-Miss., who chairs the commerce committee, wrapped up the hearing on an encouraging note, telling Raimondo, "I do not believe you will be serving as governor of the state of Rhode Island for very much longer."

Raimondo, 49, is the first woman elected governor of Rhode Island. She is a Rhodes Scholar and a graduate of Yale Law School who re-

calls her father losing his job at a Bulova watch factory in Providence to show she can connect with those worried about jobs in the U.S. being moved to other countries.

Much of her hearing was focused on regional issues, with lawmakers from coastal states focused on protecting valuable fishing industries and lawmakers for rural states calling for enhanced access to broadband. She confirmed her interest in working with them on those issues and emphasized the need to tackle climate change. She noted as governor that she oversaw construction of the nation's first offshore wind farm.

"Like President Biden, I know the climate crisis poses an existential threat to our economic security, and we must meet this challenge by creating millions of good, union jobs that power a more sustainable economy," Raimondo said.

The Commerce Department comprises a dozen bureaus and agencies, including the National Weather Service, the U.S. Census Bureau and the Minority Business Development Agency. If confirmed, Raimondo would oversee the work of more than 40,000 employees.

Some lawmakers have voiced concerns about the Trump administration's work on the census. Raimondo promised to give the Census Bureau more time to crunch the numbers for the 2020 census if needed. She also promised to take politics out of the process of producing the numbers used for apportioning congressional seats among the states and the distribution of \$1.5 billion in federal spending each year. Critics say the Trump administration had politicized the once-a-decade head count of every U.S. resident by trying to add a citizenship question to the 2020 census questionnaire, attempting to exclude people in the U.S. illegally from the apportionment figures and speeding up the schedule for the count and data processing.

"I believe we need to take the politics out of the census and we need to rely on the experts," Raimondo said. "The experts and the statisticians at the Census Bureau are top notch. If confirmed, I intend to rely on them. If they advise more time is necessary, I'm going to rely on their expertise." AP

## this day in history

### 1990 ROMANIANS CALL FOR GOVERNMENT CHANGE



Tens of thousands of pro-democracy demonstrators have taken to the streets of the Romanian capital, Bucharest to protest against the interim government of Ion Iliescu.

It was the biggest demonstration in the capital, since the revolution just over a month ago which led to the fall and execution of the former communist dictator Nicolae Ceausescu.

The protesters converged on Victory Square, where Mr Iliescu's National Salvation Front party has its headquarters.

They called for the resignation of Mr Iliescu and the removal of all former communists from the party.

The demonstrators claim the interim president is denying opposition parties the chance to stand on equal terms with the ruling party in the free elections planned for May.

Mr Iliescu himself appeared on a balcony overlooking the square and promised to carry on talking with the opposition parties.

Ion Ratiu, leader of the opposition National Peasants' Party, told the BBC: "We are at long last emerging from a dictatorship that's lasted virtually 45 years and we had hoped we could advance toward democracy and this is precisely why the young people shed their blood."

"Yet these demonstrations today make it look to me as if there is going to be a new attempt at taking over power from the people."

He is holding more talks with Mr Iliescu later this week, but said the opposition's limited access to the media meant there was little hope of a fair election.

The revolution began in mid-December with a protest in the town of Timisoara against the deportation of Hungarian priest, Laszlo Tokes, who had denounced Ceausescu in a sermon.

What began as a small protest, quickly grew into a massive anti-government riot. Many demonstrators were shot when troops were brought in to restore order.

But the demonstrations continued and Ceausescu and his wife were captured trying to flee the country, tried and executed on Christmas day.

Courtesy BBC News

## IN CONTEXT

Ion Iliescu remained in power until 1996. But rather than pushing through democratic reforms as he had promised, he blocked moves to prosecute those behind the shootings in the December revolution. There has been much speculation since the overthrow of Ceausescu that it was not so much a revolution as a coup, plotted by Iliescu and his supporters. It was Iliescu who ordered Ceausescu's trial and subsequent execution. He was finally ousted from power by a centre-right government in 1996 - but three governments later and prolonged political feuding led to the re-emergence of Iliescu's opposition party. He was returned to power in 2000 at the head of the party of Social Democracy, promising faster reforms to get Romania into the European Union.

MACAU'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

**YOUR STARS**



**ARIES**

**Mar. 21-Apr. 19**

You may find yourself mixed up in a triangle of sorts. Your lover may feel rejected. You are in a high energy; get it all done, mood and you'll have little patience with those who are slacking off.



**TAURUS**

**Apr. 20-May. 20**

You should get out and enjoy social events where you are likely to meet new potential mates; however, don't over spend. Your relationship appears to be stressed out and depleted.



**GEMINI**

**May. 21-Jun. 21**

Don't believe everything you hear. Finish projects that have been hanging over your head. You need to lie back and enjoy a little rest. You will be relentless when it comes to getting yourself back into shape.



**CANCER**

**Jun. 22-Jul. 22**

Try to be reasonable. Educational pursuits can bring interesting, helpful people. You may have been too agreeable to someone who just wanted to use you.



**LEO**

**Jul. 23-Aug. 22**

Don't overindulge in anyway. You can't live your life for others. Try to visit a country that excites you. Good friends will give you honest answers. Your dynamic approach will win favors as well as a helping hand.



**VIRGO**

**Aug. 23-Sep. 22**

Your philanthropic contributions will bring you praise. Discrimination will be in order. Control your temper when dealing with your emotional partner.



**LIBRA**

**Sep. 23-Oct. 22**

Your childlike quality may get you into big trouble today if you neglect your responsibilities. You may be overreacting to personal problems. A new you could help your attitude.



**SCORPIO**

**Oct. 23-Nov. 21**

Assist a relative or good friend by setting of a budget for them. If it can make you extra cash, it will be even better. Family outings will make you feel secure and happy.



**SAGITTARIUS**

**Nov. 22-Dec. 21**

You will have to make some changes regarding your direction if you wish to keep on top of your career expectations. Romance is likely if you participate in unusual forms of entertainment.



**CAPRICORN**

**Dec. 22-Jan. 19**

They'll be flattered by the attention, which will encourage them to keep on going with this lifestyle renovation. Don't be afraid to let someone know you're proud of them.



**AQUARIUS**

**Jan. 20-Feb. 18**

Try not to lose your cool, and make your point known. Don't make large purchases or investments. Your attitudes are changing rapidly.



**PISCES**

**Feb. 19-Mar. 20**

You can put in some overtime and make extra cash. Resistance leading to conflict will only make it twice as hard to turn the situation around.

**The Born Loser by Chip Sansom**



**SUDOKU**

**EASY**

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

**EASY+**

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

**MEDIUM**

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

**HARD**

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

**WEATHER**

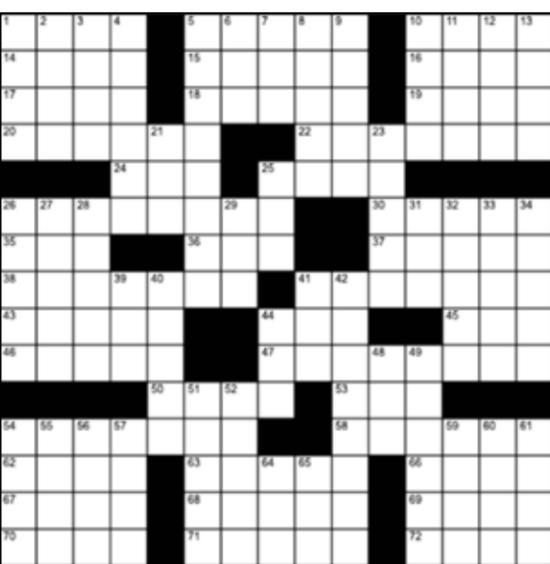
	MIN	MAX	CONDITION
<b>CHINA</b>			
Beijing	-19	-6	clear
Harbin	-28	-20	cloudy
Tianjin	-16	-8	clear
Urumqi	-24	-16	clear
Xi'an	-10	-3	overcast
Lhasa	-3	12	clear
Chengdu	0	3	overcast
Chongqing	5	8	drizzle
Kunming	7	19	overcast
Nanjing	-8	-4	cloudy
Shanghai	-6	3	overcast
Wuhan	-4	2	clear
Hangzhou	-4	4	overcast
Taipei	9	15	drizzle
Guangzhou	7	15	overcast
Hong Kong	13	18	cloudy
<b>WORLD</b>			
Moscow	-5	-4	flurry
Frankfurt	-1	4	sleet
Paris	0	3	sleet
London	0	5	sleet
New York	0	7	overcast

**CROSSWORDS**

**ACROSS** 1- Rich soil; 5- Uses a sieve; 10- "La Vie en Rose" singer; 14- "Rule Britannia" composer; 15- Without \_\_\_ in the world; 16- Hankering; 17- Intro to physics; 18- Song part; 19- Hard to find; 20- Heavenly body; 22- Endless; 24- Unwell; 25- Attention-getting sound; 26- Basic level; 30- Speed; 35- U.K. record label; 36- Cmdr Data's was named Spot; 37- Golf clubs; 38- Divine; 41- Chief prize; 43- City on the Rhone; 44- Many, many moons; 45- Suffix with Capri; 46- Mall frequenters; 47- Ocean traveler; 50- River to the Caspian Sea; 53- Plastered; 54- Deceive; 58- Portland's place; 62- Advantage; 63- Soviet labor camp; 66- Editor Wintour; 67- Permits; 68- 1985 Kate Nelligan film; 69- Spahn teammate; 70- Soviet news service; 71- Impassive; 72- Europe's highest volcano;

**DOWN** 1- Light source; 2- Hurler Hershisser; 3- Organization to promote theater; 4- Bully; 5- Deer attraction; 6- Very cold; 7- At a great distance; 8- Attempts; 9- Shakers et al.; 10- Run smoothly; 11- OPEC member; 12- Mogul capital until 1658; 13- Sense; 21- Building add-on; 23- Body of values; 25- Domestic animal; 26- Sired; 27- Luigi's love; 28- Move sideways; 29- Dundee denial; 31- Vessel built by Noah; 32- Deep sleep; 33- Govt. security; 34- Banana oil, for one; 39- Author Deighton; 40- Point in question; 41- Coffee, slangily; 42- Involving Plato's cave, e.g.?.; 44- Alien's subj.; 48- Evergreen tree; 49- Comfortable; 51- Fads; 52- Mature; 54- Dissolve; 55- Notion; 56- Cpls.' superiors; 57- To a smaller extent; 59- Little biter; 60- Getting \_\_\_ years; 61- "Peter Pan" dog; 64- Summer sign; 65- Singer DiFranco;

**Yesterday's solution**



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



AD

**FOR SALE**

Macau, NAPE Apartment with Uninterrupted Views  
**HK\$13,888,000** 1,862 ft<sup>2</sup> 4 3

**FOR RENT**

Nova Park, Taipa Spacious Apartment with Balcony  
**\$14,500/mth** 1,148 ft<sup>2</sup> 2 2

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

Apartment in the Historical Centre  
**HK\$3,900,000** 840 ft<sup>2</sup> 2 1

**PROPERTY LIST**

- [Macau] Duplex apartment 2 1 1  
 1,100 ft<sup>2</sup> \$4,940,000 (ref: 20116003)
- [Macau] One Central Stylish 2 2 2  
 1,349 ft<sup>2</sup> \$14,839,000 (ref: 19096004)
- [Taipa] Manhattan spacious 3 2 2  
 1,720 ft<sup>2</sup> \$19,300/mth (ref: n/a)
- [Cotai] One Oasis high ceiling 3 2 2  
 2,100 ft<sup>2</sup> \$30,000/mth (ref: 20111002)

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MACAU'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

# STARBUCKS' RECOVERY, SOLID IN CHINA, STILL SLOW IN THE US

DEE-ANN DURBIN

**STARBUCKS'** recovery slowed at the end of last year as U.S. coronavirus cases mounted, but the coffee titan says it's confident its U.S. business will fully recover by March.

"I am optimistic, because this year holds tremendous promise for healing," Starbucks CEO Kevin Johnson said in a conference call with analysts yesterday.

The Seattle-based company said its global sales at stores opened at least a year fell 5% in the October-December period. That was an improvement from the prior quarter, but it was still a bigger decline than the 4% drop Wall Street was expecting, according to analysts polled by FactSet.

Starbucks also fell short of revenue forecasts. The company reported sales of \$6.75 billion in its fiscal first quarter, below the \$6.9 billion that analysts forecast.

Not counting one-time items, Starbucks said it earned 61 cents per share in the October-December period. That was ahead of Wall Street's forecast of 55 cents.

Shares in Starbucks Corp. slipped about 1% in after-hours trading.

Starbucks said its business in China, its second-largest market after the U.S., has largely recovered, with same-store sales up 5% in the first quarter. Starbucks said it's seeing fewer customers in China,



but they're spending more when they visit.

The company opened almost 160 stores in China during the first quarter, for a total of more than 4,800.

But in the U.S., same-store sales were down 5% for the quarter despite the holiday drinks that usually draw customers.

Starbucks said visits to stores declined throughout the quarter because of rising coronavirus cases and local shutdown mandates. Sixty percent of stores had limited seating available in October; by December, that had fallen to 40%, Starbucks said.

Drive-thru was a bright spot. Starbucks said drive-thru orders made up more than half of U.S. net sales in the first quarter, up 10% from pre-pandemic trends.

Chief Operating Officer Roz Brewer said Starbucks is trying to capitalize on that shift, with plans to open drive-thru only locations and speed service at drive-thru windows.

Customer patterns have still not returned to normal, but in some ways that has benefitted the company. Starbucks has become a destination, not a stop during a commute, and customers are spending more on food and frothy drinks instead of plain coffees. It saw U.S. customer traffic fall 21% in the first quarter, for example, but those who came spent more, with the average ticket up 19%.

Johnson said at some point the company expects its customers to return their work and school rou-

tines, but they still might spend more on the items they have grown used to buying during the pandemic.

"I think customers have gotten used to more premium beverages and more food attached," Johnson said.

Starbucks said it's confident U.S. same-store sales will rise between 5% and 10% in its fiscal second quarter as the pandemic's impact continues to fade.

The company announced the departure of Brewer, a former Walmart executive who joined Starbucks in 2017. Brewer will become CEO of Walgreens Boots Alliance Inc. on March 15, the company announced, making her the only Black woman leading a Fortune 500 company. AP

# UK data watchdog says millions have stopped using WhatsApp

ANTHONY AARONS & STEPHANIE BODONI

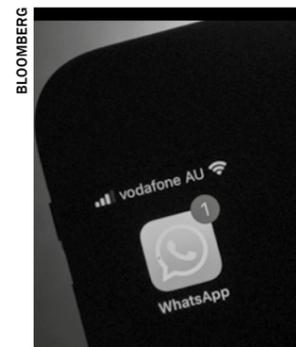
**T**HE U.K.'s top data-protection regulator told lawmakers that millions of people have stopped using WhatsApp in favor of alternative messaging services such as Telegram and Signal.

Elizabeth Denham said that changing terms of service have led consumers to vote with their virtual feet away from the Facebook Inc. business.

WhatsApp delayed the introduction of a new privacy policy announced earlier this month after confusion and user backlash forced the messaging service to better explain what data it collects and how it shares that information with its parent company.

"Users expect companies to maintain their trust and not to suddenly change the contract that they have with the users," Denham told Parliament's Digital, Culture, Media and Sport Sub-committee on Online Harms and Disinformation yesterday. When asked how many people had switched, she replied "millions."

She said, however, that the new changes won't apply to U.K. users under a 2017 deal her office reached with WhatsApp.



The company agreed not to share user information and contact details until it showed it could comply with the European Union's General Data Protection Regulation.

The latest update "includes new options people will have to message a business on WhatsApp, and provides further transparency about how we collect and use data," a WhatsApp spokesperson said in an email. "This update does not expand our ability to share data with Facebook in the U.K. or anywhere in the world."

But Denham said she would follow-up with WhatsApp and Facebook on the privacy changes and regulatory issues brought on by Brexit and report back to the committee.

Denham went on to say that she doesn't use WhatsApp herself, favoring "Signal for my personal communications." BLOOMBERG

## CORPORATE BITS

### Sands holds civil protection seminar for employees



Sands China team members recently learned about civil protection in Macau at a seminar at The Parisian Theatre as part of the company's ongoing effort to build professionalism and elevate the awareness of disaster

prevention and emergency response capabilities among team members.

Cheong Chi Fai, sub-commissioner of the Civil Protection Operations Centre of the Unitary Police Service, conducted the seminar,

which helped team members better understand civil protection work and disaster prevention knowledge.

"As part of our company's professionalism training initiatives, this type of knowledge is critical during community emergencies like typhoons, as it can help save lives and protect property," said Wilfred Wong, president of Sands China, as cited in a statement.

Nearly 270 team members attended, including some interns from Sands China's Career Experience Opportunities Programme. Sands Cares Ambassadors also attended the training as part of Macau's Community Emergency Volunteer Scheme.

### MGM employees pay visit to 'Roots in China' exhibition



MGM led more than 100 local team members to visit the permanent "Roots in China" exhibition at the newly opened "Loving the

Country, Loving Macau Education Base for Young People," the gaming operator said in a statement.

In view of arranging more

tours for team members of different levels from various departments, MGM hopes that the tour would help team members, particularly the younger generation, gain a deeper understanding of China and Macau's developments and cultivate a stronger sense of cultural identity.

Located in the Handover Gifts Museum of Macao, the "Loving the Country, Loving Macau Education Base for Young People" was opened in mid-December as a major venue for patriotic education. The guides of the base provided insights on more than 300 valuable historical photos and multi-media exhibits to team members.

FOOTBALL

# Best and worst of Ibrahimović as Milan loses at Inter

DANIELLA MATAR, MILAN

INTER MILAN 2, AC MILAN 1

**T**HE best and worst of Zlatan Ibrahimović was on show yesterday [Macau time] as he scored and later was sent off in AC Milan's 2-1 loss at city rival Inter Milan in the quarterfinals of the Italian Cup.

Ibrahimović clashed with former teammate Romelu Lukaku at the end of the first half, and he was ejected for a second booking in the 58th minute.

"It (the confrontation) certainly influenced the match, the first booking caused the sending off," Milan coach Stefano Pioli said. "They're big enough and ugly enough, I don't know what they said to each other, it can happen, we need to move past it and think of the next match."

Lukaku converted a penalty for the equalizer and Christian Eriksen scored the winner deep in stoppage time.

AP PHOTO



AC Milan's Zlatan Ibrahimovic (center left) and Inter Milan's Romelu Lukaku argue during an Italian Cup match

"I haven't spoken with Romelu yet, but I was a player so I know that during a match things can get heated. Situations can flare up but it's only right that things then settle," Inter coach Antonio Conte said.

"I liked seeing Romelu so focused, he is improving from a character point of view. He plays an important role for us and if sometimes he gets angry, then we can only gain from it."

Inter will play Juventus or Spal in the semifinals. They meet on Wednesday.

The two Milan clubs are also fighting it out in the league, with

the Rossoneri leading second-place Inter by two points.

Milan broke the deadlock in the 31st minute when Ibrahimović controlled the ball on the edge of the area before placing an angled drive between the legs of Inter defender Aleksandar Kolarov. It went in off the base of the far post.

There was a huge argument — and head-to-head clash — between Ibrahimović and Lukaku on the stroke of halftime and both players were booked. The spat between the former Manchester United teammates continued after the halftime whistle and a visibly furious Lukaku had to be pulled back. Italian television said Milan representatives had denied any allegations of racism in Ibrahimović's remarks to Lukaku, who is Black.

The yellow card was to prove costly for Ibrahimović as he was shown another after the break for a tackle on Kolarov and sent off, leaving his side down to 10 men.

And Inter was level 13 minutes later. Leão brought down Nicolò Barella and, after viewing the incident again on the pitch-side monitor, the referee pointed to the spot. Lukaku slammed the penalty into the top left corner.

The match had a lengthy delay as referee Paolo Valeri received treatment for a thigh injury and was eventually replaced by the fourth official.

Milan goalkeeper Ciprian Truianu pulled off a number of saves but it wasn't enough. Just as the match appeared to be heading into extra time, Eriksen curled a free kick into the top left corner in the seventh minute of stoppage time. **AP**

AD



## HOLIDAY RENTAL HOUSES

Lugar das Letras  Casa de Gouvães 

The houses are set in the heart of the World Heritage Site of the Douro Valley and its famous winery landscape where the world's Ports are produced. Both restored relics overlooking the Rio Douro, these eight rooms houses have been blessed with gorgeous wooden floors, plush queen beds and marble baths; the best have dazzling river views.

But it is the welcome that makes this place stand out from the crowd.



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**VERANDAH**  
**OPENING SOON**  
**AT DD3 UPPER FLOOR**

OPINION

Our Desk

Lynzy Valles



SOCIAL TURMOIL IT IS

"Macau seems to be changing a lot."

This is what I would normally hear following all the economic consequences brought forth by the pandemic.

Employment matters remain one of the major consequences of the pandemic due to the ongoing economic crisis, followed by small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) continuing to call for another round of stimulus – which they would surely continue to call for after another support round.

I reckon thousands of employers have done what it takes to reduce the pandemic's impact on their employees – but for some, it does not suffice.

SMEs could barely operate at many times throughout last year, particularly very small businesses.

Reports have concluded that the SAR is one of the regions that has been greatly affected by the pandemic as it heavily relies on the tourism sector – which everyone is aware of.

However, this is not the time that we should see the government passing and approving laws that could further worsen the chances of people (migrant workers in particular) acquiring jobs.

Recently, two lawmakers have been calling on the government to ease the provisions of the recently amended employment bill for non-resident workers.

Although they are a little too late on such a call – since the bill was passed last year in the middle of the pandemic while borders were closed and while foreign entry was banned – such call only goes to show that this is one of the issues that are currently pending, yet no way out.

Official data shows that foreign worker tally continues to be on a downward trajectory as the city concluded the year with a total of 177,663 non-resident workers, down 9.6%, or 18,875 fewer year-on-year. The blame, of course, was attributed to the pandemic.

The domestic helper sector was largely not affected by this crisis. However, the law had made it harder for employers to employ helpers they needed in their household.

I know one employer who is already considering hiring a domestic worker from the mainland as it is the only way possible to take care of her two toddlers and baby. However, the main thing that is stopping them is not even the salary (as is what they would normally say) – but the fact that they want their children to grow up learning English as a second language.

I think the approval of the law amid the pandemic will always remain a question – at least for me. The employment law for non-resident workers that affect the domestic workers and non-skilled that was approved in October adds another burden to the many burdens that households are already facing.

Once laid off, these workers stay in the city due to the absence of flights.

The Philippine Consulate itself has concluded 15 repatriation flights, with still about 600 of its citizens waiting for another repatriation flight.

However, since the new UK strain has already reached the Philippines, authorities have imposed stricter regulations on its entry measures.

While the local government is already well aware of this situation, the enforcement of the amendment has further created "social turmoil," as lawmaker Pereira Coutinho would describe.

The consequences are great. The changes are big – but I am just not quite sure if these are the changes we are all looking for.

Particularly, I doubt whether these are circumstances we would further want to see this year: increasing number of migrants who are stranded, household employers being left with no option to hire a household helper, and seeing non-government associations continuing their donation drive just to assist the stranded former workers.

China is ramping up efforts to neutralize the coronavirus as new outbreaks test its already stringent pandemic strategy, with another weapon added to an arsenal of border curbs, mass testing and hard lockdowns: anal swabs.

While there is no nationwide policy on use of the technique, some residents in China's northern regions - where the flare-up now amounts to more than 1,700 cases - have been subjected to the anal swabs with little warning. It involves the insertion of a saline-soaked cotton swab about two-to-three centimeters into the anus, with the sample then tested for active traces of

the virus.

More than 1,000 schoolchildren and teachers in Beijing were given anal, throat and nose swabs last week, along with a separate antibody test, after one asymptomatic virus case was detected on campus, according to local officials.

Some people arriving into Beijing are being asked to undertake anal swabs themselves.

The use of the new detection technique is based on research that traces of the virus found in the anus can last longer than in the respiratory tract, experts say.

AP PHOTO



JANE FONDA TO RECEIVE GOLDEN GLOBES' CECIL B. DEMILLE AWARD

JANE Fonda cemented herself into Hollywood allure as a chameleonlike actor and social activist, and now the Golden Globes will honor her illustrious career with its highest honor.

Fonda will receive the Cecil B. DeMille Award during the 78th annual awards ceremony on Feb. 28, the Hollywood Foreign Press Association announced this week. A member of one of America's most distinguished acting families, Fonda has captivated and inspired fans along with critics in such films as "Klute" and "Coming Home."

Fonda, the daughter of Oscar winner Henry Fonda and sister of Peter Fonda, made an impact off-screen by creating organizations to support women's equality and prevent teen pregnancy and improve adolescent health. She released a workout video in 1982 and was active on behalf of liberal political causes.

In a statement, HFPA President Ali Sar applauded the Golden Globe winner's decorated career and her "unrelenting activism."

"Her undeniable talent has gained her the highest level of recognition," Sar

said of Fonda. "While her professional life has taken many turns, her unwavering commitment to evoking change has remained."

The DeMille Award is given annually to an "individual who has made an incredible impact on the world of entertainment."

Past recipients include Tom Hanks, Jeff Bridges, Oprah Winfrey, Morgan Freeman, Meryl Streep, Barbra Streisand, Sidney Poitier and Lucille Ball.

Nominations for the upcoming Globes show are scheduled to be announced Feb. 3.

Fonda, 83, has been nominated for five Academy Awards and won two for the thriller "Klute" and the compassionate anti-war drama "Coming Home." She had other prominent films including "The China Syndrome," "The Electric Horseman" with Robert Redford, and "9 to 5" with Lily Tomlin and Dolly Parton. She stars in the Netflix television series "Grace & Frankie."

Fonda gained notoriety in the the 1970s when she traveled to North Vietnam during the height of the anti-Vietnam War protests and posed for photos next to an anti-aircraft gun. She

fell under hefty criticism for her decision — one she repeatedly apologized for — to pose in the photo that gave her the nickname "Hanoi Jane."

In 2014, Fonda was given a lifetime achievement award by the American Film Institute. She launched IndieCollect's Jane Fonda Fund for Women Directors, an organization aimed to support the restoration of films helmed by women from around the world.

Fonda was arrested at the U.S. Capitol while peacefully protesting climate change in 2019, an action dubbed Fire Drill Fridays.

For her 80th birthday, Fonda raised \$1 million for each her nonprofits, the Georgia Campaign for Adolescent Power & Potential and the Women's Media Center. She also serves on the board of directors and made \$1 million donation to Donor Direct Action, an organization that supports front-line women's organizations to promote women's equality.

Fonda's book, "What Can I Do? My Path from Climate Despair to Action," released last year, details her personal journey with Fire Drill Fridays. AP

AP PHOTO



Russia and the United States traded documents yesterday to extend their last remaining nuclear arms control treaty days before it is due to expire, the Kremlin said. A Kremlin readout of a phone call between U.S. President Joe Biden and Russian President Vladimir Putin said the two leaders voiced satisfaction with the exchange of diplomatic notes about extending the New START treaty.

AP PHOTO



The United States says all soldiers from Eritrea should leave Ethiopia's embattled Tigray region "immediately." A State Department spokesperson in an email to The Associated Press yesterday cited "credible reports of looting, sexual violence, assaults in refugee camps and other human rights abuses." The statement reflects new pressure by the Biden administration on the government of Ethiopia, Africa's second-most populous country.

AP PHOTO



Netherlands Police took to the streets of Dutch towns and cities in force yesterday in an attempt to prevent violent rioting that shook the country for three successive nights after a nationwide curfew was introduced to curb the spread of the coronavirus. By late night, the increased police presence appeared to have paid off, with no major rioting or clashes between youths and police reported.

French drug maker Sanofi says it will help manufacture 125 million doses of the coronavirus vaccine developed by rivals Pfizer and BioNTech, while its own vaccine candidate faces delays. Germany-based BioNTech will initially produce the vaccines at Sanofi facilities in Frankfurt, starting in the summer.