



SECOND CANDIDATE FROM 'POWER OF CITIZENS' WAS CHARGED WITH AGGRAVATED DISOBEDIENCE FOR FAILING TO COMPLY WITH RULES DURING THE 2017 AL ELECTIONS P3

CHINA WARNS AGAINST ONLINE BETTING DURING CNY P5

INVESTIGATION OF DEAD CATS FOUND IN AN ALLEY FOLLOWING NOTIFICATIONS FROM SEVERAL ANIMAL PROTECTION GROUPS UNDERWAY P6

China-Guyana Under pressure from mainland China, Guyana's government has cancelled permission for Taiwan to open a trade and investment office in the South American country. The cancellation came Thursday after Foreign Minister Hugh Todd met with the ambassador of China, which insists that Taiwan is legally a part of its territory and not an independent nation.



China has given broader approval for the domestic-made Sinovac coronavirus vaccine, expanding those who can receive it beyond the high-risk and priority groups already allowed under an emergency clearance. Regulators gave conditional approval for Sinovac Biotech Ltd's shot, CoronaVac, on Friday, clearing the way for general use. The National Medical Products Administration

South Korea's top trade official is dropping her bid to become the next director-general of the World Trade Organization, making it likely the job will go to former Nigerian finance minister Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala. She would become the first woman to lead the organization. South Korea's Ministry of Trade, Industry and Energy said in a statement that its minister for trade, Yoo Myung-hee, will soon tell the WTO she is withdrawing her candidacy.



Indian authorities launched a search operation after part of a mountain glacier broke, sending a massive flood of water and debris slamming into two dams and damaging a number of homes. Vivek Pandey, a spokesman for paramilitary Indo Tibetan Border Polic, said at least 150 people were working at the two power plants and their fate was unknown, and that at least three people were killed.

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DELIVERY DONE

The Macau SAR welcomed the arrival of 100,000 Sinopharm jabs – government ready to start inoculation P3



ASSOCIATION SAYS MACAU LEGEND REPLACED PART OF STAFF'S YEARLY BONUS WITH F&B VOUCHERS P2

WAI LONG HOUSING PLANS INCLUDE 2,000 FEWER APARTMENTS P4

The Macau government has introduced new plans for the social housing project, which will contain approximately 2,000 fewer residential units than the 6,000 to 6,500 properties that were previously estimated.

MACAU LEGEND ALLEGEDLY SWAPPING PART OF WORKERS' BONUS WITH F&B VOUCHERS

HONEY TSANG

THE New Macau Gaming Staff Rights Association filed a complaint on February 5 with the Labour Affairs Bureau (DSAL), alleging that Macau Legend Development Ltd (Macau Legend) had unlawfully replaced part of the yearly bonus for its casino staff with vouchers for the group's hotels and restaurants.

The local activist alliance, which is dedicated to upholding the employment rights of Macau's casino staff, suspects that the move to pay the stipend in vouchers and not monetary funds may violate Macau's labor laws.

Over 90 casino staff have been affected by the firm's change of plan, the association stated.

Before the pandemic, casino workers used to receive bonuses twice a year — namely the summer and winter bonuses — each amounting to a month's salary.

The bonuses were handed out in the July-August period and before Chinese New Year, respectively.

According to an earlier announcement released by Macau Legend, the affected casino staff at the director or senior director levels will be awarded MOP40,000 in allowance. Part of this, which is equivalent to 75% of monthly salary, will be paid in money, and the remaining portion will be paid in vouchers.

According to a report released by Allinmedia and reposted on the association's social media page, association president Cloee Chao said that the affected employees, after being informed about the change, had no choice but to accept the hybrid allowance, as they assumed this was caused by the economic repercussions of Covid-19.

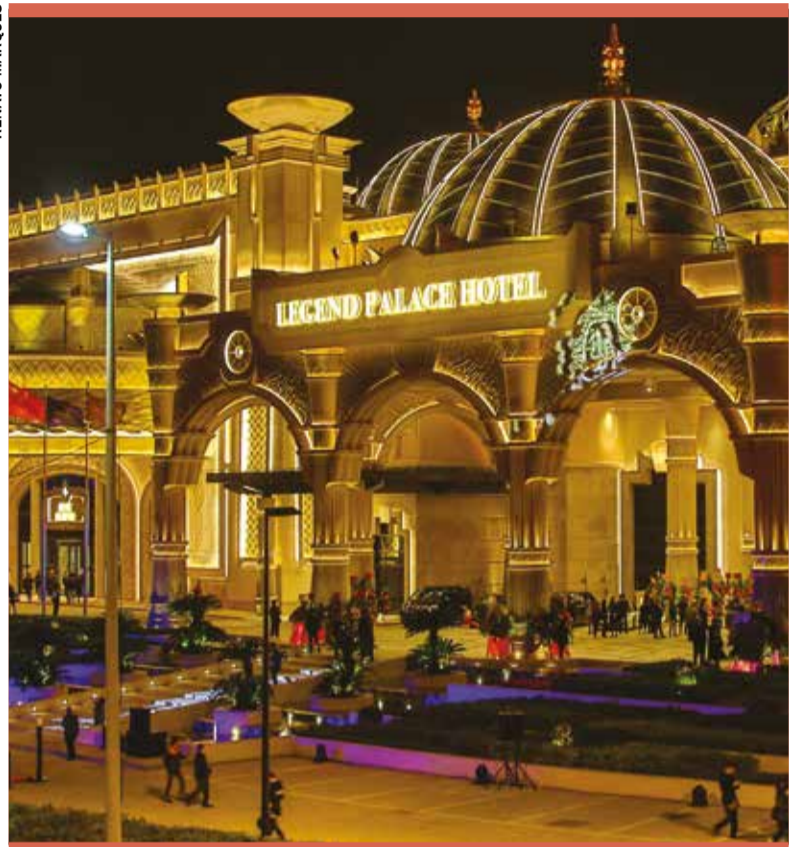
However, the alliance stated that the first allowance valued at MOP17,000 was given to staff on

February 5. To their surprise, the second allowance, which is worth over MOP20,000 and was originally scheduled to be delivered in July 2021, was also distributed on the same day in the form of cash vouchers.

According to their official websites, Macau Legend's businesses include Macau Fisherman's Wharf and three casinos, which are operated under a "service agreement" with Macau casino licensee SJM Holdings Ltd.

Macau's five gaming operators, which include SJM Holdings Ltd, Sands China, Galaxy Entertainment Group, Melco Resorts and MGM China Ltd, announced earlier that they would distribute the allowance for their eligible workers all in cash. Wynn Macau was the only one to buck the trend, saying that the firm would award 70% of the allowance in cash and the remaining 30% in cash vouchers.

RENATO MARQUES



GAMING

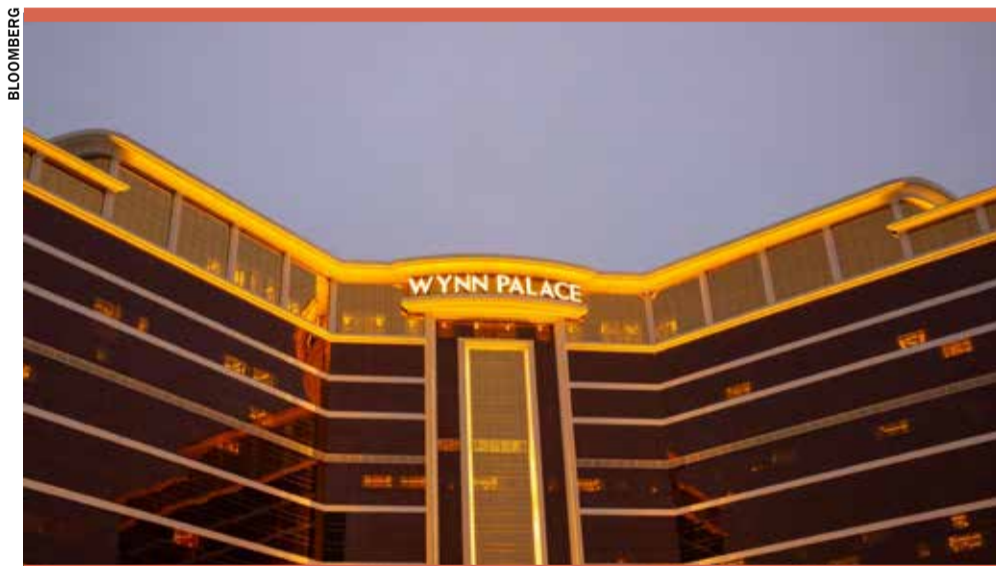
Wynn posts turnaround in Q4 2020, committed to expanding premium mass market

HONEY TSANG

WYNN Macau Ltd posted a turnaround in the fourth quarter (Q4) of 2020, with its adjusted property earnings before interest, taxation, depreciation and amortization (EBITDA) of USD39.4 million finally returning to positive values, according to the latest quarterly report published by the conglomerate.

The EBITDA for Q4 2020 represented a sharp pick-up following the negative EBITDA of \$112.1 million reported in the preceding quarter.

In Q4 2020, Wynn Palace in Cotai was the most lucrative property for Wynn Macau, posting a positive EBITDA of \$28.7 million, up US\$106.3 million from the negative EBITDA of \$77.6 million in the third quarter



(Q3) of 2020. Despite the advancement, it was still a far cry from the positive US\$177.6 million reported in Q4 2019, which was predominantly hampered by Covid-19.

In terms of gaming revenue, Wynn Palace's VIP table

games win as a percentage of turnover was at 1.97% in Q4 2020 — below the group's early projections of 2.7%-3.0%. Meanwhile, the table games win percentage in mass market was 21.6%, compared to 25.2% in Q4 2019.

Wynn Macau, located in Macau Peninsula, was also back on a positive path. Its EBITDA made a u-turn from an EBITDA loss of \$34.5 million in Q3 2020 to \$10.7 million gains in EBITDA in Q4 2020. The property's VIP table games

win as a percentage of turnover was 3.10%, higher than the group's previous estimates of 2.7%-3.0%. The table games win percentage in mass market was 17.9%, compared to 20.3% in Q4 2019.

In the report, Matt Maddox, CEO of Wynn Resorts, Limited, the parent company of Wynn Macau, attributed the rebound to "the gradual and thoughtful easing of visitation restrictions."

"[It's] crystal clear that the growth drivers for Macau are really the sweet spot of our company, and that's the premium segment, premium mass in particular. So we've spent a lot of time reconfiguring our properties over the last six months to cater to that customer," Maddox said on an earnings call with analysts-

regarding the Q4 report on February 4.

The tactics used to tilt Macau's properties towards premium mass customers include turning restaurants and buffets into hotpot restaurants, and transforming some large villas, which were previously used for the junket business, into entertainment facilities, he added.

"That [premium] customer is going to lead Macau back and we are well-positioned to take a disproportionate share of that business," Maddox said.

According to the report, the Macau operation of Wynn Resorts was the most gainful. Its combined EBITDA gains of US\$39.4 million exceeded the \$21 million and \$16.7 million generated by the group's Las Vegas and Encore Boston Harbor operations, respectively.

Regarding operating income, Wynn Macau reported a loss of \$74.3 million in Q4 2020, displaying a significant improvement from the \$216 million loss reported in Q3 2020.

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EDITOR-IN-CHIEF (DIRECTOR) Paulo Coutinho paulocoutinho@macaudailytimes.com
ASSISTANT EDITOR Lynzy Valles SENIOR WRITER Honey Tsang
CONTRIBUTING EDITORS Leanda Lee, Severo Portela, Sheyla Zandonai

NEWSROOM AND CONTRIBUTORS Albano Martins, Annabel Jackson, Anthony Lam, Daniel Beitler, Emilie Tran, Irene Sam, Ivo Carneiro de Sousa, Jacky I.F. Cheong, Jenny Lao-Phillips, João Palla Martins, Joseph Cheung, Julie Zhu, Juliet Risdon, Linda Kennedy, Paulo Cordeiro de Sousa, Renato Marques, Richard Whitfield, Viviana Segui
DESIGNERS Eva Bucho, Miguel Bandeira | ASSOCIATE CONTRIBUTORS JML Property, MdME Lawyers, PokerStars, Ruan Du Toit Bester | NEWS AGENCIES Associated Press, Bloomberg, MacauHub, MacauNews, Xinhua
SECRETARY Yang Dongxiao amy@macaudailytimes.com

SEND NEWSWORTHY INFORMATION AND PRESS RELEASES TO: NEWSROOM@MACAUDAILYTIMES.COM WEBSITE: WWW.MACAUDAILYTIMES.COM.MO

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ADMINISTRATOR AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Kowie Geldenhuys kowie@macaudailytimes.com

OFFICE MANAGER Juliana Cheang juliana@macaudailytimes.com

ADDRESS Av. da Praia Grande, 599, Edif. Comercial Rodrigues, 12 Floor C, MACAU SAR

Telephones: +853 287 160 81/2 Fax: +853 287 160 84

Advertisement advertising@macaudailytimes.com

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Inoculation efforts for 100,000 Sinopharm jabs roll out

ANTHONY LAM

A vaccination ceremony is expected to take place tomorrow as the first 100,000 doses of the inactivated SARS-CoV-2 vaccine arrived in Macau last Saturday, director of the Health Bureau (SSM) Lei Chin Ion said on the sidelines of the arrival ceremony for the vaccines.

The government is prioritizing medical staff, especially those working in frontline positions, for the jab, aiming to vaccinate them all by Chinese New Year.

After this, frontline border checkpoint staff, police, fire fighters, paramedics, frozen food workers, casino staff, school staff, and people traveling overseas for urgent reasons will follow.

It is internationally agreed that all three of the most widely-used SARS-CoV-2 vaccines require two doses to build sufficient immunity against Covid-19. This means 50,000 recipients at most will receive the 100,000 vaccines.

To prepare for the vaccinations, the SSM launched a registration website last week to allow medical staff working at the SSM, Kiang Wu Hospital, University Hospital, and the Macau Federation of Trade Unions clinics and rehabilitation centers to make their bookings.

Although the registration process is still underway, Lei revealed that half of the SSM's medical staff have expressed an interest in getting vaccinated. He expects most vaccinations to occur in the two



days before Chinese New Year.

From the fourth day of Chinese New Year, all SSM health centers, as well as the Accident and Emergency Room at Conde São Januário Hospital and University Hospital, will provide vaccinations.

Considering the arrangement, journalists were interested to know whether Lei would be included in the first phase of vaccinations. As a doctor himself, Lei confirmed that he would be part of the first cohort of recipients.

He acknowledged that while an official getting the vaccine is a way of building public confidence in the vaccine, he stressed that frontline medical staff are the most vulnerable group and should always be prioritized.

Lei declined to disclose who would receive the first jab in Macau before he was asked if it was confidential. In response, he immediately said, "Okay, I'll take

the first jab."

The city will follow best practice and require all recipients to remain onsite for half an hour before leaving in case any complications arise.

The director stressed that, after the vaccine rollout, the SARS-CoV-2 nucleic acid test and Health Code requirements will maintain in place, because lifting them is not a common practice yet.

By the time the vaccination program commences, the government's insurance policies will also be ready. The government has pledged to insure all local and non-resident workers in case of any medical complications after receiving the vaccine. Details will be announced at the weekly press briefing today.

Macau has ordered three types of SARS-CoV-2 vaccines. Besides the vaccine that arrived last week, there is also the Pfizer-BioNTech and the AstraZeneca, which are expected to arrive next month and in June respectively.

The SSM has held two separate sessions to brief medical staff about how to administer the vaccine. About 150 staff members attended.

Medical staff at the sessions were introduced to technical guidelines and vaccination procedures, and the reporting mechanism for adverse effects.

Attendees also raised questions regarding points of caution in the vaccination guidelines and evaluation of efficacy.

Similar sessions will be held for staff serving at private medical facilities at later dates.

48TH COVID-19 CASE RECORDED IN CITY

A new case of Covid-19 has been confirmed in Macau, bringing the total reported since the beginning of the pandemic up to 48.

The newest patient is a 30-year-old man who is currently asymptomatic. He returned from Lisbon, Portugal on January 19 with his girlfriend. They made stopovers in Amsterdam and Tokyo and arrived in Macau on January 21.

Once they landed, they were put in closed-loop management under the supervision of health authorities and sent to the Grand Coloane Resort for centralized quarantine. Prior to that, they were tested for SARS-CoV-2 using nasal-pharyngeal swabs at Macau International Airport.

After receiving three consecutive negative Co-

vid-19 test results, on February 3, the patient's SARS-CoV-2 antibody test came back positive for the IgG antibody, meaning that he was infected some time ago.

He was transferred to the hospital isolation ward on February 4. His lung imaging showed no signs of pneumonia.

The next day, his nasopharyngeal swab test yielded a mildly positive result, which prompted the health authorities to identify him as a Covid-19 case. For now, the patient has not developed any symptoms.

His girlfriend, meanwhile, has been categorized as a close contact and was sent to the Public Health Clinical Center at Coloane Hill for close medical supervision. **AL**

2017 AL ELECTION

TSI confirms sentence of former candidate charged with aggravated disobedience

RENATO MARQUES

THE Court of Second Instance (TSI) has ruled in favor of maintaining the sentence handed down by the Court of First Instance (TJB) for the crime of aggravated disobedience by a former Legislative Assembly (AL) election candidate related to the 2017 election campaign.

During the campaign period for the 2017 elections, the second candidate from List 12 – Power of Citizens (Poder dos Cidadãos), Joa-

na Chong, failed to comply with the rules, which state that all campaign promotion materials must be removed before the voting day, including those posted on social media.

According to the ruling of the TJB, the candidate had failed to remove such material from her Facebook page, thus committing the crime of aggravated disobedience.

Sentenced to four months of imprisonment suspended for one year, the former candidate appealed the sentence by claiming that

she was on the mainland at the time, so she could not access social media to remove the campaign materials.

The TSI ruled against the allegations, noting that she was aware of the rules and consequences of failing to remove the campaign materials on time. The court added that, since the page had been created and maintained by members of her list group, any person in Macau could have removed the content on her behalf, even if she could not have

done it personally.

Addressing the suggestion that the TJB's sentence was disproportionate, the TSI also noted that, according to the law provisions, crimes regarding election campaigns are considered a "very serious social matter which justifies the high demands on the general prevention of crimes relates to the elections to the Legislative Assembly," the ruling states. The TSI further noted that the sentence handed down was considered to be adequate.



Joana Chong

WAI LONG

NEW SOCIAL HOUSING PLANS INCLUDE 2,000 FEWER RESIDENTIAL UNITS

JULIE ZHU

THE Macau government has introduced new plans for the social housing project at Av. Wai Long, which will contain approximately 2,000 fewer residential units than the 6,000 to 6,500 properties that were previously estimated.

On Friday, Secretary for Transport and Public Works Raimundo Arrais do Rosário introduced the two new plans to the legislators at the Legislative Assembly (AL).

The first plan proposes 11 towers running from east to west, which will provide 4,800 to 5,300 residential units. According to the second plan, the government will also build 4,000 residential units in a formation running from north to south.

Both of the new plans indicate the government's intention to reduce the supply of social housing at Av. Wai Long.

The government's original plan was to build 6,000 to 6,500 properties as part of the Av. Wai Long social housing project, which under a previous proposal would include 13 towers.

The original plan had already been evaluated for its impact on traffic, air circulation and the

MACAU PHOTO AGENCY



environment.

The government will still need to assess the impact of the two new plans and will need to adjust

the designs for the Wai Long social housing project if the original plan is abandoned.

Several lawmakers who parti-

cipated in the introduction session asked the Secretary questions regarding the project. The issues varied from infrastructure and

transportation to community service and the supply and demand of social housing.

Responding to the lawmakers, the Secretary repeatedly reiterated that, by proposing these new plans, the government intends to provide better living conditions for social housing residents.

"I want them to live a bit more comfortably. According to current statistics, there are 190,000 families, and there are already 210,000 social housing units. We [the government] recovered land of 70,000 [square meters]. Macau has the land to build social housing," Rosário said.

The government believes that the new plans will provide residents with better quality community service, as there will be fewer families in the area to serve.

According to Rosário, the government is not using the new plans as an excuse to delay the Wai Long social housing project.

"Why should I let 6,000 households be squeezed together?" Rosário asked.

In addition to providing better living quality, Rosário is also keen for local families to be able to move into social housing sooner.

The official remarked that the government has been spending large amounts of public money to launch government-subsidized houses. However, he disagrees with putting subsidized housing projects on the market when there are fewer than 10,000 units in supply.

CITY ADDS GAODONG TOWN TO THE LIST OF ZONES REQUIRING QUARANTINE

The Macau government has added Gaodong Town, in the Pudong New Area of Shanghai, to the list of places in mainland China that will require individuals to quarantine upon arrival. Currently, the quarantine measure also applies to several subdistricts in two districts of Shanghai, including Huangpu and Baoshan. Four cities in Heilongjiang, three cities in Hebei, various districts in Beijing and three cities in Jilin are also included on the quarantine list.

DEBIT, CREDIT CARDS RECORD SLIGHT GROWTH

The number of pataca and renminbi cards in the fourth quarter of 2020 advanced year-on-year by 4.8% (to 1,044,312) and 7.6% (to 358,178) respectively, according to data from the Monetary Authority of Macao. The number of Hong Kong dollar cards dropped year-on-year by 6.6% (to 91,342). The total number of debit cards issued by banks in Macau reached 1,789,030, a growth of 2.3% over the previous quarter and an increase of 10.1% from a year ago. Credit card credit limits granted by banks also reached MOP43.6 billion, up 2.6% from end-September 2020 and 9.9% from end-December 2019.

CRIME

BABY INJURED BY FATHER IN A DISPUTE WITH GRANDMOTHER

RENATO MARQUES

A five-month-old boy has been unintentionally injured by his father with a knife during an argument with the child's grandmother, the Judiciary Police (PJ) informed the media during the joint press conference of the police forces.

According to the PJ, the argument was sparked between the man and his 63-year-old mother over the quantity of formula the baby should drink.

During the argument, the man wielded a knife and unwittingly injured the baby, who suffered a 5-centimeter long cut along his temple, the report from the hospital noted.

According to the hospital, the wound had to be closed with a total of six stitches.

The case was referred to the PJ following the hospital's report, prompting an investigation.

The father is now being accused of aggravated assault against his son.

In a separate case, which occurred on the same day, the PJ reported the finding of a body in the sea near Coloane's fuel depot at Ka Ho.

The body was firstly spotted by the crew of an oil tanker that was sailing in the area. They alerted the authorities to the body, which was floating near the KH4 location buoy.

With the help of Customs Bureau staff, the body was moved onto dry land.

The PJ said that the deceased is an adult male who is 1.75 meters tall, with an estimated age of 35 to 45 years old.

The preliminary examination did not find any wounds or evidence indicating that the case was related to a crime.

As there were no documents on the body, the police have not been able to identify the deceased. The cause of death will be determined by forensic examination later on. The PJ will continue to follow up on the case.

RISE IN NUMBER OF NEW COMPANIES IN Q4 2020

HONEY TSANG

A total of 1,537 new companies were registered in Macau in the fourth quarter (Q4) of 2020, up by 101 year-on-year, according to the latest figures provided by the Statistics and Census Service (DSEC).

Among them, new wholesale and retail trade companies and business services companies totaled 595 and 401, respectively.

During Q4 2020, the total value of registered capital declined by 58.1% year-on-year to MOP142 million. Meanwhile, there were 182 firms in dissolution, and the value of registered capital of these companies amounted to around MOP80 million.

Macau contributed MOP76 million, or 53.4%, of the total capital of the newly-established firm

during this period. Capital from Hong Kong amounted to MOP34 million.

Capital from mainland China totaled MOP29 million, of which 48.9% came from the Greater Bay Area (GBA) cities.

Analyzed by shareholders combination, 1,142 new companies were set up by Macau's shareholders and 146 were considered joint ventures between shareholders in Macau and other countries or regions.

For the year of 2020, the number of newly-registered firms amounted to 5,695, dropping by 445 year-on-year. The total value of registered capital contracted by 85.8% to MOP607 million. In total, 685 companies were in dissolution and the value of registered capital of these companies was MOP250 million.

GAMING

China warns against online betting during CNY

MAINLAND Chinese authorities have urged Chinese nationals involved in cross-border gambling activities to turn themselves in, according to a notice co-drafted by the Supreme People's Court, the Supreme People's Procuratorate and the Ministry of Public Security.

"The Ministry of Public Security attaches great importance to cross-border gambling and is prepared to crack [...] down [on it]. [It] will be on standby 24 hours a day, adopting a zero-tolerance attitude, and will always maintain a pressing attitude regarding the capital service platform, technical support platform, gambling personnel and fugitives," Liao Jinrong, director of the department of international cooperation of the Ministry of Public Security, said on Friday during a press conference in Beijing.

"At the same time, it will work closely with the immigration department and other departments to strictly implement various

immigration control measures, and strengthen law enforcement cooperation with relevant countries to effectively cut off overseas gambling groups from betting and gambling against Chinese citizens," the official added.

Liao also said that, according to statistics in the possession of mainland Chinese authorities, the Spring Festival holiday is when the targeting of mainland citizens by overseas gaming organizations is most rampant.

"It not only causes a large outflow of capital, but also gives rise to vicious crimes such as kidnapping [and] extortion," Liao said.

"All kinds of organizations and persons involved in cross-border gambling and in illegal and criminal activities are warned to immediately stop the illegal and criminal activities. [...] The public security authorities will severely crack down on it."

The notice drafted by Chinese authorities does not name any countries.

According to the notice, the mainland police authority is targeting gambling outside of China, particularly online gambling organizations based outside of the country's borders targeting mainland Chinese.

Providing technological support and capital support to these overseas online gambling organizations is considered by mainland authorities to be a violation of mainland Chinese laws.

In August 2020, China established a blacklist system for cross-border gambling tourist destinations.

China reported that some overseas cities have attracted Chinese tourists for their gambling businesses, disrupting China's outbound travel market and endangering Chinese citizens' lives and property.

The ministry and the relevant departments will impose travel restrictions on Chinese citizens heading to overseas cities and scenic spots on the blacklist.

In January, the Ministry of Culture and Tourism of China



announced that China would add more overseas destinations to the blacklist.

Previously, Ge Wanjin, director of the Macau Synthetic Social Studies Association, told local Chinese media that he believes that the blacklist targets southeast Asian countries but not Macau, and that the blacklist will not have a significant impact on Macau's economy.

The Ministry of Public Security's warning about cross-border gambling and online betting "may be seen, in a way, as a kind of a Chinese New Year bonus to Macau from the Chinese Communist Party," an industry source told the Times on Friday.

Mainland authorities, however,

have been advising people not to travel outside of their province during the upcoming holidays to contain the spread of Covid-19.

The CNY holiday will start on Thursday and last for around a week.

China's State Council has designated February 11 to 17 as the Chinese New Year holiday period for this year. The week-long break is typically a busy period for Macau's casinos and resorts and the local tourism industry.

Last year, visitor arrivals to Macau during the CNY holiday declined 78.3% year-on-year to 261,069 – this follows the outbreak of the novel coronavirus that was first reported in Wuhan. PC/JZ

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8 CANDIDATES AWARDED FASHION DESIGN SUBSIDY

A total of eight candidates have been selected as winners of the 8th Subsidy Programme for Fashion Design on Sample Making. According to the Cultural Affairs Bureau, it will provide each of the selected candidates with a grant of up to MOP170,000 for the production and promotion of their respective fashion design sample garments. A total of 27 applications were received for the 8th round of the subsidy program.

CTM ANNOUNCES FULL INDOOR AND PUBLIC 5G COVERAGE

CTM has announced that it will provide full indoor 5G coverage by March and full coverage in all public areas by June. President of Network Services, Declan Leong, told the press that the non-stand alone 5G network was completed last year, recalling that the company simultaneously enhanced indoor 5G coverage while building the stand-alone network. Currently, CTM has installed 300 base stations, and is eyeing the prospect of setting up more base stations to further develop the network.

3 CATS FOUND DEAD IN LAO HON STREET, INVESTIGATION HANDED TO POLICE

RENATO MARQUES

THREE dead cats have been found in an alley near Rua Dois do Bairro do Lao Hon in the northern district, the Municipal Affairs Bureau (IAM) said in a statement.

According to the IAM, an investigation into the incident was prompted by notifications from citizens and several animal protection groups.

The deceased cats were found on Saturday, February 6 in an alley. Their bodies were at different stages of decomposition, a preliminary investigation indicated. This suggests that the deaths have occurred at different times and potentially different locations, if the bodies were moved.

After a preliminary autopsy, the IAM said that the animals had no broken bones or injuries consistent from falling from height or physical violence. They suspected the animals had died from other causes such as poisoning or disease.

Since the cause of death was considered suspicious, the case



has been classified as a case of suspected cruelty to animals and sent to the police for further investigation.

The preliminary autopsy also revealed that the cats were all females. Two were kittens and one was an adult female cat that was pregnant.

According to the provisions

of the Animal Protection Law, anyone who intends to cause an animal suffering, uses cruelty, violence or tortures an animal, causing mutilation, loss of vital organs or death, shall be sentenced to a maximum of one year of imprisonment or to a monetary fine of equivalent to 120 days.

The IAM also warned members of the public not to dispose of the bodies of any animals following suspected animal cruelty or an unknown cause of death. In such an event, members of the public should immediately report the incident to the police or call the IAM hotline 2887 0120 for proper disposal. Animal protection group Anima also issued a statement on the case, noting that they were following the case closely to avoid "it resulting in another closed case."

The group was referring to a similar case less than a month ago, where the bodies of five cats which were suspected to have died after falling from height at the Ocean Gardens residential development in Taipa. The carcasses were found by the real estate management entity.

At that time, the IAM stated that further investigation of the case was not possible as the report to authorities came two weeks after the event, after the bodies had been removed and the location already cleaned.

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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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Chinese whistleblower doctor honored on death anniversary

EMILY WANG FUJIYAMA
& HUIZHONG WU, WUHAN

THE message was tucked into a bouquet of chrysanthemums left by a mourner at the back of Wuhan Central Hospital to honor a Chinese whistleblower doctor who died from the coronavirus a year ago. It was simply the number of a Bible verse: Matthew 5:10.

"Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven," the verse reads.

A year ago yesterday, Dr. Li Wenliang died from the virus first detected in this Chinese city. A small stream of people marked the anniversary with visits to the hospital Saturday, some leaving flowers.

The 34-year-old ophthalmologist was one of eight whistleblowers who local authorities punished early on for "spreading rumors" about a SARS-like virus in a social media group. His situation, eventually made public in media reports, made him a potent symbol for the perils of going against official messaging in China.

The Chinese public embraced Li, whose presence online had painted a picture of an ordinary person. His wife was pregnant and he was soon to be a father. He sent the "rumor" because he wanted to warn others.

The public also watched as he fell ill with the disease he was warning them about, eventually worsened, and died.

Li's death was initially reported by Chinese state media on the night of Feb. 6, 2020, but the outlets quickly withdrew their reporting. Some hours later, in the early morning of Feb. 7, Wuhan Central Hospital announced his death.

Chinese people grieved his death, online and offline. Mourners brought flowers to the hospital, while online some people were furious and demanded for freedom of speech — posts that were quickly censored.

Li's death seemed to raise a challenge to the central government, as public anger swelled.

"A healthy society should not have just one type of voice," Li had said in an interview with the Chinese business magazine Caixin last year.

Central government authorities conducted an investigation in Li's death, concluding that the officer who punished the doctor should be reprimanded. One police officer was given a demerit, while another was given an official warning, state media later reported.

At the conclusion of the investigation, authorities published a



Q&A, in which they noted: "Li was a Communist Party member, not a so-called 'person who was against the system.'" It said those who labeled him that way were "enemy forces."

Since then, the epidemic has largely been controlled within China's borders, and the narrative has shifted to one of triumph. China just released a film — "Days and Nights in Wuhan" — that celebrates China's official line that the measures it took, including the unprecedented lockdown it imposed on the city, bought precious time for the world to prepare for the pandemic.

That victorious narrative has been underscored more by the devastation the pandemic has wreaked in many other countries. However, many have questioned China's response to the virus and its level of transparency during the initial weeks.

It wasn't until last month that China finally allowed a WHO team into the country to investigate the pandemic.

Wuhan for the most part has returned to normal, with shopping malls and streets crowded, and there is little visible evidence of the suffering the city went through. Still, a few of its residents mourn quietly.

Li's death is still a sensitive topic, and his family has refrained from giving media interviews. While his Weibo profile has been left up, there has been no largescale public memorial.

The person who left the flowers and Bible verse Saturday declined to be interviewed, saying it was inconvenient.

Another couple who laid down a bouquet at the front of the hospital were told by plainclothes security to bring their flowers to the back of the building, where there was a garden.

A small collection of bouquets, some with messages tucked deep in the flowers, had been laid there by Saturday evening.

"Thank you Dr. Li Wenliang," read one. AP

ADVERTORIAL

Create A Better
TOMORROW TODAY
今天開創明天



MGM Promotes Diversity and Inclusion Amid Chinese New Year Celebrations

Creating a more welcoming world for people with disabilities is a mission close to our hearts at MGM. Throughout the jubilant festival, we continue to promote social inclusion through partnerships with dedicated community organizations, including Fuhong Society of Macau, Macau Association for The Mentally Handicapped and Macau Special Olympics (MSO).

Fuhong Artists to Design CNY Gifts



MGM is collaborating with Fuhong to embrace the artistic talent of their gifted autistic artists Leong Ieng Wai and Ip Chi Kin — through the integration of their artwork to the design of its festive campaign and gifts. The collaboration aims to showcase the extraordinary talent of artists with disabilities to the public, and more importantly to sprinkle the purposeful message of social inclusion.

The two artists created "Prosperous Golden Lion 0.38" and "Jubilant Golden Lion in the House" for MGM's CNY pudding gift box packaging, red packets, red banners and more. Under the theme of "Golden Lion", the symbol of MGM, both artworks capture the fascinating livelihood of lions with each of their own distinctive artistic style. MGM started collaborating with Leong since 2016, where he was first invited to design corporate souvenir notepads; thereafter, MGM selected a drawing of his depicting the exterior of MGM COTAI and enlarged it into a mural displayed at the executive office. On the other hand, this marks Ip's very first collaboration with a large enterprise.

Charity Sale with Fuhong for MGM Team Members

In addition to the collaboration on CNY gifts, MGM held a charity sale of "0.38 Travel Around World Heritage Macau Pass" with Fuhong recently. The pass was designed by Leong, featuring his paintings of the city's tourist attractions, and packed in a red packet with a Year of the Ox card designed by Ip. The "Spring Blessing Lunar New Year Charity Sale Roadshow" in the back-of-house area also featured a wide variety of handicraft products made by Fuhong members. All proceeds were donated to Fuhong to help people with disabilities to integrate into the society.



A Meaningful Gift for CNY and Valentine's Day

Extending the CNY blessing while promoting social inclusion, MGM continues to partner with Fuhong and Casa de Peliseo Sam Meng Chi of Macau Association for The Mentally Handicapped, to prepare Fortune Bags for hotel guests who stay in MGM MACAU or MGM COTAI during the first three days of CNY.

Bringing Festive Joy to Schools by MSO Lion Dance Team



With the aim of advocating social inclusion, as well as introducing lion dance and the inheritance of Lingnan culture to the younger generation, MGM partnered with MSO to organize a series of school performances for the MSO Lion Dance Team.

Highlighting the theme of CNY this time, the program has left its footprints at Escola Luso-Chinesa de Coloane and will continue to bring joy and blessings of the CNY to students of Escola Santa Maria Mazzarello in late February. Formed by MSO in 2017 with the support of MGM, it is the first lion dance troupe of people with intellectual disabilities. These performances enable the Team to share their passion for lion dance to the public and promote social inclusion with their exhilarating performances.

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US, China top diplomats discuss key issues, show differences

THE top American and Chinese diplomats spoke Saturday in the first major exchange between the countries since President Joe Biden took office and touched on several critical issues that have strained their ties.

China's top diplomat Yang Jiechi and U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken discussed in a phone call tension points in the bilateral relationship between the two, notably the situation in Xinjiang, home to the Uighur minority whose treatment is heavily criticized in the West, as well as Hong Kong and Taiwan.

The two statements reaffirmed the different positions of the countries, which have clashed on issues from trade to Beijing's crackdown in Hong Kong to increased U.S. support for self-ruled democratic Taiwan. U.S.-China relations have fallen to new lows in the past few years, accelerated in part by former President Donald Trump starting a trade war with Beijing and blaming it for the coronavirus pandemic that has killed more than 2 million people globally.



Blinken said the U.S. would work with allies to hold China "accountable for its efforts to threaten stability in the Indo-Pacific, including across the Taiwan Strait."

He said that the United States will continue to stand up for human rights and democratic values, including in Xinjiang, Tibet, and Hong Kong, according to the State Department statement.

Yang said that at present, "the Sino-U.S. relationship is at a crucial juncture."

"The Chinese government's policy towards the U.S. has always maintained a high degree of stability and continuity," he was quoted as saying by the state-run Xinhua News Agency.

He urged Washington "to

correct the mistakes made over a period of time and work with China to uphold the spirit of non-conflict, non-confrontation, mutual respect, and win-win cooperation and focus on cooperation, manage differences as well as promote the healthy and stable development of China-U.S. relations."

The Chinese side maintained that Xinjiang, Hong Kong and Tibet were strictly internal affairs and they won't tolerate any foreign interference, Xinhua reported.

Yang called the Taiwan issue as the "most sensitive, most important and core issue between the U.S. and China."

Under Trump, the U.S. increased weapons sales to and

official exchanges with the self-ruled island, which China claims as part of its own territory to be reunited by force if necessary.

In 2020, China's People Liberation Army sent fighter jets towards the island on an almost daily basis, stepping up a targeted campaign of harassment.

Yang had struck a positive tone when he spoke earlier this week to the influential U.S. National Committee on United States-China Relations.

Acknowledging differences between the two, he said, "it is crucial to properly control them and not allow them to interfere with the overall development of bilateral relations."

Blinken specifically called on China to condemn the military coup in Myanmar. Yang, in response, emphasized that the international community should create a good external environment for the proper settlement of the Myanmar issue.

China has invested billions of dollars in Myanmar mines, oil and gas pipelines and other infrastructure and is its biggest trading partner. AP

this day in history

1962 EIGHT DIE IN PARIS RIOT



At least eight people have been killed during a demonstration in Paris against the recent wave of bomb attacks in the French capital.

One of the dead was a 15-year-old boy.

About 240 people were injured - more than half of them police officers.

The protest, which was banned under the State of Emergency currently in force in Paris, was organised by France's main communist-led union.

It is one of the groups spearheading the fight against the right-wing Secret Army Organisation (OAS) which wants Algeria in north Africa to remain a French colony.

During the three-and-a-half hour disturbances the police were outnumbered two to one by the 20,000-strong protesters.

The officers were at first reportedly relatively restrained but they lashed out as they came under attack from demonstrators.

In one incident a police van was ambushed and a policeman fired five shots into the crowd.

Several people were said to have received gunshot wounds but no shooting fatalities have been reported.

It is believed those who died during the disturbances were trampled underfoot in the crush.

However, while the police were busy trying to quell the anti-OAS rally some of the group's agents planted more bombs in the city.

One device went off outside the offices of Tass, the Russian news agency - the first time a foreign media organisation has been targeted.

The bombing campaign is believed to be a response to French President Charles de Gaulle's declaration that it is up to Algerians to decide the fate of their country.

General de Gaulle has proposed a referendum on the issue.

The OAS was set up last year and is led by former French army general Raoul Salan.

Many of its agents are believed to be former army personnel who served in Algeria.

Last year members of the group were believed to be behind an attempt to assassinate General de Gaulle.

Courtesy BBC News

PALESTINE

LEADER'S PATH TO ELECTIONS IS FRAUGHT WITH PERIL

JOSEPH KRAUSS

PRESIDENT Mahmoud Abbas' call for elections has thrown his political future into peril, forcing him to negotiate competing demands to engage with a friendlier U.S. administration, mend the rift with his militant Hamas rivals and keep his unruly Fatah movement from breaking apart.

The presidential decree issued last month, calling for what would be the first Palestinian elections in 15 years, stemmed from negotiations launched with Hamas last year aimed at shoring up ranks in the face of unprecedented crises.

The Trump administration had cut off all aid and proposed a Mideast plan that overwhelmingly favored Israel and would have allowed it to annex parts of the occupied West Bank. A U.S.-brokered normalization agreement between Israel and the United Arab Emirates last summer

put annexation on hold but left the Palestinians increasingly isolated in the region.

So Abbas embarked on talks with Hamas, the Islamic militant group that seized Gaza from his forces in 2007. Those discussions culminated in the presidential decree calling for legislative elections on May 22 and presidential elections on July 31.

It's far from clear the elections will actually be held. Doing so will require an agreement between Abbas's secular Fatah movement and Hamas, which have been bitterly divided for more than a decade despite multiple attempts at reconciliation. The two sides plan to meet in Cairo this week.

The outcome of the talks will largely depend on the 85-year-old Abbas. He has spent decades nonviolently seeking a Palestinian state in the West Bank, Gaza and east Jerusalem, territories seized by Israel in the 1967 war. Instead,

he has come to rule an increasingly autocratic and unpopular Palestinian Authority confined to parts of the occupied West Bank.

Reconciling with Hamas and holding elections could shore up his legitimacy and meet longstanding Western demands for accountability. But even a limited victory by Hamas, which is considered a terrorist group by Israel and Western countries, could result in international isolation and the loss of vital aid — as it did after Hamas won the last parliamentary elections in 2006.

In a briefing with Palestinian journalists, EU representative Sven Kühn von Burgsdorff welcomed the call for elections but declined repeated requests to explain how the EU would respond to a Hamas victory.

"Do you put the cart before the horse?" he said. "Why don't we start with the horse?"

President Joe Biden has

restored aid the to the Palestinians and vowed to adopt a more even-handed approach, but the Mideast conflict is likely to take a distant backseat to more pressing crises like the coronavirus pandemic, and the U.S. is unlikely to engage with any Palestinian government that includes Hamas. Even a government of independents supported by Hamas could pose problems for Western donors.

Elections could also precipitate the breakup of Abbas' Fatah party. He has not groomed a successor, and could face a leadership challenge from Marwan Barghouti, a popular Fatah leader who is serving five life sentences in an Israeli prison for his role in the 2000 intifada, or uprising.

"For Barghouti, running for president is his only way out of prison, or at least this is what he thinks," said Ali Jarbawi, a political science professor at Birzeit University in the West Bank. AP

IN CONTEXT

A one-hour strike was called the following day in protest at police behaviour during the demonstration.

In March 1962 General de Gaulle reached agreement with Algerian nationalists to give Algeria independence.

The OAS made several more unsuccessful attempts to kill General de Gaulle.

General Salan was captured and jailed in April 1962 and the OAS collapsed.

In 1963 a former general in the French army, Antoine Argoud, stood trial for the assassination attempt on President de Gaulle and was sentenced to life imprisonment.

However, he was released, along with other former OAS members, during a general amnesty in May 1968.

MACAU'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

YOUR STARS



ARIES

Mar. 21-Apr. 19

Do not let your mate annoy you; patience will be the key. Do you really want to start something with someone you can't reason with? Your position may be in question if you haven't been pulling your weight.



TAURUS

Apr. 20-May. 20

A need to express yourself may come out in creative ways. Do something that will be stimulating and creative. Try to bend but by no means should you give in completely.



GEMINI

May. 21-Jun. 21

Real estate investments could be prosperous. You will be on the rampage today. A little rest will do wonders. The advice you get today may be based on false information.



CANCER

Jun. 22-Jul. 22

Be sure to use your charm and diplomacy when dealing with potential new clients. Don't reveal any personal details. You could have a change of heart if an old flame waltzes back into your life.



LEO

Jul. 23-Aug. 22

Someone important may be watching you from afar. Be sure to take care of any minor ailments. Do not let the reactions of others get you going. Secret affairs can only lead to devastating circumstances.



VIRGO

Aug. 23-Sep. 22

Don't confide in anyone for the time being. Make arrangements to spend quality time together. You can get into self awareness groups or look into physical enhancement programs.



LIBRA

Sep. 23-Oct. 22

Make changes regarding your status in society. Don't argue with family. Secret enemies will be eager to spread rumors about you.



SCORPIO

Oct. 23-Nov. 21

You won't get the reaction you want from your mate today. Your ability to organize and get everyone together will enhance your popularity and bring interest from potential mates.



SAGITTARIUS

Nov. 22-Dec. 21

If you go shopping, only take what you can afford to part with. To avoid any minor health problems, don't get too stressed. You should be getting into self-improvement projects.



CAPRICORN

Dec. 22-Jan. 19

Your efforts will be rewarded handsomely. You may want to take a look at the personal papers of elders in your family. You can make the most headway if you put in some overtime.



AQUARIUS

Jan. 20-Feb. 18

Try to deal with the problems of those less fortunate; however, don't allow them to make unreasonable demands. Don't forget that your budget is limited right now.



PISCES

Feb. 19-Mar. 20

Avoid being overly opinionated, or arguments will ensue. Be cautious not to get involved in office chatter that will cause problems for others. Loss or theft may occur if you are careless with your belongings.

The Born Loser by Chip Sansom



SUDOKU

EASY

Sudoku grid for EASY difficulty

EASY+

Sudoku grid for EASY+ difficulty

MEDIUM

Sudoku grid for MEDIUM difficulty

HARD

Sudoku grid for HARD difficulty

WEATHER

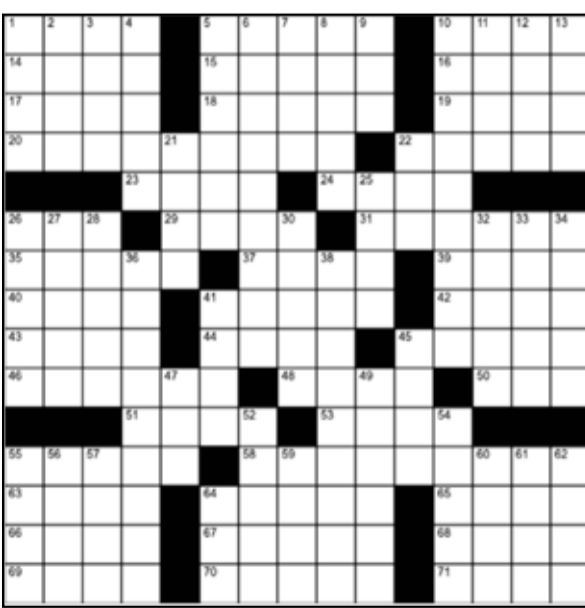
Weather forecast table with columns for MIN, MAX, and CONDITION for various cities in China and the World.

CROSSWORDS

ACROSS 1- Don of talk radio; 5- The devil; 10- Baylor's city; 14- Tirade; 15- Fiber obtained from a banana plant; 16- Genesis shepherd; 17- Operatic solo; 18- Territory ruled by a duke; 19- Comic Foxx; 20- Send to another place by force; 22- Sporting blades; 23- Work the soil; 24- Droops; 26- Hit on the head; 29- Beatty Oscar film; 31- Ground squirrel; 35- Copycats; 37- Hawkeye's home; 39- Gutter location; 40- Withered; 41- Matriculate; 42- Pulitzer-winning biographer Leon; 43- Very, in Versailles; 44- "The Morning Watch" author; 45- Love deeply; 46- Simpler; 48- Diamond stats; 50- TV's "Science Guy"; 51- Ready to eat; 53- Tolkien tree creatures; 55- Gives a 9.8, say; 58- Narrow-minded person; 63- ___ impasse; 64- Inuit dwelling; 65- On the ocean; 66- Gator's kin; 67- Mail frequenters; 68- Anklebones; 69- Like pie?; 70- It's a plus; 71- Bibliography abbr.;

DOWN 1- Dies ___; 2- German economist and socialist; 3- Military group; 4- Maze word; 5- Bicycle seat; 6- In the process of being built; 7- Diplomat's forte; 8- Flu symptoms; 9- Negative vote; 10- Rapid rate; 11- Busy as ___; 12- Sign over; 13- Auto pioneer; 21- Melodies; 22- Id's counterpart; 25- I've Got ___ in Kalamazoo; 26- Moisten while cooking; 27- Musical drama; 28- Israel's Shimon; 30- More tender; 32- Wore; 33- Each partner; 34- Noted Civil War biography; 36- Position of a medical student; 38- Forlorn; 41- Acquire through work; 45- Hammett hound; 47- Aurora's counterpart; 49- ___ cases (generally); 52- Borders; 54- Ohio, e.g.; 55- Speed contest; 56- Gillette brand; 57- New Mexico art colony; 59- Corrida cries; 60- The wolf ___ the door; 61- Actress Ward; 62- Follow; 64- Call ___ day;

Friday's solution



Crossword puzzles provided by BestCrosswords.com

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

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



FOR SALE: Simplex Apartment w/ Outdoor Terraces HK\$16,900,000 4,080 ft² 2 3

FOR RENT: Manhattan Apartment, Taipa \$18,500/mth 1,626 ft² 3 2

Rain Dance Property "We dance until it's SOLD!" Apartment in the Historical Centre HK\$3,900,000 840 ft² 2 1

PROPERTY LIST: [Taipa] Taipa Village (2 units) 4 2 \$8,380,000; [Taipa] Manhattan 3 2 \$12,980,000; [Coloane] Hellene Gardens 2 3 \$19,800/mth; [Taipa] Split Level Commercial space 2,000 ft² \$42,000/mth

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www.jmlproperty.com

Avenida da Praia Grande No.599, Edf. Comercial Rodrigues, 12 andar C, Macau
澳門南灣大馬路599號羅德禮商業大廈12樓C座



Juliet Risdon
+853 6680 9804
juliet@jmlproperty.com



Elda Lemos
+853 6226 8566
elda@jmlproperty.com



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Property of the Week



Simplex Apartment With Outdoor Terraces, Taipa
HK\$16,900,000 4,080 ft² 2 3



A fabulous and spacious apartment measuring more than 4,000 square feet in a quieter upscale area in Taipa.

Originally designed in a 4 bedroom + plus maid quarters layout, the updated open plan configuration creates different living areas whilst at the same time bringing the space together.

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



Apartment in Historical Centre

\$3,900,000

840 ft²

2 1



Property Hotlist



Hellene Gardens
Coloane Top Floor Flat

\$7,900,000

1,663 ft²

3 2 1



Manhattan E Unit, Taipa

\$18,500/mth

1,626 ft²

3 2



Houston Court, Coloane Village

\$10,500/mth

824 ft²

1 1



More Listings

For Sale

[Taipa] Superb Studio 1 1 650 ft² **\$3,780,000** (ref: 20076001)

[Taipa] Taipa Village big apartment 4 2 1,404 ft² **\$8,380,000** (ref: 19096006)

[Macau] Seaview Garden 3 2 1,420 ft² **\$10,900,000** (ref: 20016004)

[Taipa] Manhattan lux 3 2 1,720 ft² **\$12,980,000** (ref: 19096006)

[Cotai] One Grantai 4 2 2,556 ft² **\$25,600,000** (ref: 19096001)

For Rent

[Taipa] Villa da Taipa 3 2 1,450 ft² **\$11,000/mth** (ref: 20101002)

[Taipa] Macau Riviera 2 2 866 ft² **\$15,000/mth** (ref: 20111001)

[Coloane] Hellene Gardens 2 3 2 2,530 ft² **\$19,800/mth** (ref: 20121002)

[Taipa] Split Level Commercial space 2,000 ft² **\$42,000/mth** (ref: 20121004)

[Macau] Retail Shop, Barra area 1,968 ft² **\$48,000/mth** (ref: n/a)

Recent Movements

Sold

Car Park Space in Greenville, Taipa

Rented

Studio Apartment in Taipa with Spacious Balcony

SOLD



JML Events



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The tennis crowd: players thrive with fans back in Australia

NOVAK Djokovic was about to respond to a question about Australian Open crowds when he paused, thought for a moment, and then asked an official if fans were still allowed into Melbourne Park for the year's first major.

That was still the plan on the eve of the tournament: up to 30,000 daily — about 50% of capacity.

But it's been such a crazy 12 months since Djokovic won his eighth Australian Open title, right up to this week's 24-hour shut down of matches during the tuneup tournaments because of a coronavirus scare, that it was only prudent to check.

"Is crowd still allowed? I don't know, things are changing day-to-day," he said, asking the moderator at his news conference yesterday. Getting the nod, he continued. "It's great that at least you have, even if it's a small percentage of the people attending the match, it's still something. It



AP PHOTO

still feels that you're not — I don't want to say alone on the court, but when you play in front of an empty big stadium, it just feels very strange."

There was no certainty until last month that the Australian Open would even be staged. The-

re was no certainty until recent weeks of how many fans would be allowed in. All those decisions rest with the state government and health officials, and can change quickly.

It could be a relatively slow start for the crowds on Monday, when

Djokovic opens against Jeremy Chardy. Paying spectators will have to get familiar to the three-zone system in place to divide up Melbourne Park's three main arenas. It's all designed to assist with social distancing.

Meanwhile, sports events around the world were canceled, postponed or played in venues without fans. The major tennis championships were no exception. Wimbledon was canceled in 2020, there were no fans permitted at the U.S. Open and very few allowed at Roland Garros.

Players have become familiar with the so-called bio-secure bubbles at other tournaments, and had to endure a more stringent 14-day hotel quarantine after arriving in Australia on 17 charter jets.

The reward for the quarantine is freedom, relatively speaking, to go out in public to restaurants, cafes and shops. Face masks are mandatory indoors. Australia's closed international borders and relatively low number of COVID-19 cases means life goes on

fairly normally in many parts of the country.

Serena Williams has been playing in Melbourne at this time of year since 1998, has won seven titles of her 23 career major titles here and said it's a city where she likes to go out.

No. 2 Simona Halep, who had difficulty adapting to the conditions in Australia until a run to the final in 2018, plans to go shopping and enjoy life outside of the bubble.

The three-week delay to start the Australian Open this year will mean a slightly different atmosphere — the summer holidays are over, for a start — but that's unlikely to upset organizers or players.

With so few international visitors, the Australian players will get the biggest boost from the crowds, but so will others who feel like they're adopted by the locals.

Maria Sakkari got a lot of support from the large Greek community in Melbourne during one of the tuneup tournaments.

"I have my Greeks here, which feels great," Sakkari said. "That's the first thing I'm looking forward to when I come to Australia, so it was great.

"I don't have a professional tournament back home, so ... every time I come back to Australia, it feels like I'm at home." AP

AD

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OPINION

World Views

Robert A. George, Bloomberg



MARJORIE TAYLOR GREENE IS TRUMP'S TRUE HEIR

It's clear that Representative Marjorie Taylor Greene doesn't care too much what her congressional colleagues think of her: The day after she was stripped of her committee assignments in response to her long trail of vile QAnon-related rhetoric, she was boasting in person and on Twitter about how the sanction just means she will have more free time.

Just as dangerous, however, is that she doesn't seem to care too much what her party thinks of her.

Once upon a time, losing a committee assignment would have been the end of a congressional career. A "zombie" member without a seat on a committee would be severely handicapped. Such seats are crucial to a member's ability to, as the old saying goes, "bring home the bacon." Unable to do that, any House member — especially a freshman — would be vulnerable to challenges in both the primary and general election.

None of this applies anymore. Instead, Greene is channeling her favorite Obi-Wan Kenobi persona: "If you strike me down, I shall become more powerful than you can possibly imagine."

In the 48 hours leading up to her floor vote, Greene racked up \$325,000 in contributions. Indeed, she has been (and presumably still is) actively fundraising off the firestorm she created. And she isn't alone. Senator Josh Hawley — the face of the Republican Party's challenge to President Joe Biden's certification and the target of bipartisan wrath following the assault on the Capitol — has also done quite well for himself, raking in nearly \$1 million since Jan. 6, his best month since his 2018 election.

Sound familiar? It should: It's straight out of the Donald Trump playbook.

In 2016, Trump upended the Republican Party nominating process, using the power of his celebrity to go around gatekeepers at the national and state levels. By 2020, his control of the party was so absolute that none dared cross him — not members of party committees, not elected officials. That 45 Senate Republicans seem unwilling to hold an impeachment trial for Trump's suggests that that his control remains strong.

This new reality is great for individual politicians. But how does it work for the parties, the traditional vehicles that politicians rode to higher office? Obviously, it's too soon to make major predictions for 2022. But there's evidence from last year that Republicans might have cause to worry about voters associating Greene with the party.

The constant references to Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez and the other "socialists" seemingly damaged the Democratic Party last fall, possibly leading to significant losses in the House and hurting the party's chances in the Senate. Joe Manchin certainly thought so, even if AOC did not.

Democrats are counting on turning the tables in 2022. They plan to remind voters of every Republican who voted to keep Greene on her committees. Greene may well be the right's AOC — except potentially more dangerous because, without a committee assignment, she has little reason to be responsible. Unconstrained from having to do "boring" committee work, she now can both spend more time in her district and cultivate a growing national base.

Last week, knowing that emotion sells, AOC shared on Instagram Live the terror she felt on Jan. 6. In much the same way that any Instagram influencer would, such events bond her to her supporters in a far stronger way than traditional political outreach. Expect Greene, no slouch on social media herself, to follow suit.

The bottom line is that in today's culture a politician's brand and influence is more important than her (or his) place in the party structure. The challenge for the parties — one they ignore at their peril — is how to avoid paying the penalty for creative (and occasionally reckless) political free agents whose only loyalty is to personal ambition.

CHINA RIGHTS ACTIVIST MISSING AFTER BEING STOPPED AT AIRPORT

THE BUZZ

Authorities have given no word on the status of Chinese legal rights activist Guo Feixiong after he was blocked from leaving the country last week to join his family in the United States.

Guo had messaged friends that he would go on hunger strike unless allowed to leave the country to be with his wife who is undergoing treatment for cancer.

"I have been informed that I cannot leave the country because I am under suspicion of endangering state security and

other such charges. I will now go on indefinite hunger strike and call on the people of China and governments and people around the world to offer assistance," Guo said in a text sent to friends and passed on to journalists.

Guo helped government critics and had been imprisoned for more than 10 years under China's loosely defined state security laws. The ruling Communist Party frequently uses travel bans to punish those who challenge it, often as a prelude to prosecution and lengthy prison terms.

MYANMAR

INTERNET ACCESS RESTORED AS COUP PROTESTS GROW

As enthusiastic crowds of tens of thousands marched through the streets of Myanmar's biggest city yesterday to protest last week's coup, their spirits were lifted by the return of internet services that had been blocked a day earlier.

Separate protests that began in various parts of Yangon converged at Sule Pagoda, situated in the center of a roundabout in the city's downtown area. Protesters chanted "Long live Mother Suu" and "Down with military dictatorship."

Authorities had cut access to the internet as the protests grew Saturday, fanning fears of a complete information blackout. Yesterday afternoon, however, internet users in Yangon reported that data access on their mobile phones had suddenly been restored.

The demonstrators are seeking to roll back last Monday's seizure of power by the military and demanding the release from detention of the country's ousted leader, Aung San Suu Kyi, and other top figures from her National League for Democracy party.

The military has accused Suu Kyi and her party of failing to act on its complaints that last November's election was marred by fraud, though the election commission said it had found no evidence to support the claims.

The growing protests are a sharp reminder of the long and bloody struggle for democracy in a country that the military ruled directly for more than five decades before loosening of its grip in 2012. Suu Kyi's government, which won a landslide election in 2015, was the first led by civilians in decades, though it faced a number of curbs to its power under a military-drafted constitution.

During Myanmar's years of isolation under military rule, the golden-domed Sule Pagoda served as a rallying point for political protests calling for democracy, most notably in during a massive 1988 uprising and again during a 2007 revolt led by



Buddhist monks.

The military used to deadly force to end both of those uprisings, with estimates of hundreds if not thousands killed in 1988. While riot police have been sent to watch the protests this past week, soldiers have been absent and there have been no reports of clashes.

Showing little fear, protest crowds have grown bigger and bolder since Monday's coup, while remaining non-violent in support of a call by Suu Kyi's party and its allies for civil disobedience.

In one of yesterday's gatherings, at least 2,000 labor union and student activists and members of the public gathered at a major intersection near Yangon University. They marched along a main road, snarling traffic. Drivers honked their horns in support.

Police in riot gear blocked the main entrance to the university. Two water cannon trucks were parked nearby.

The protesters held placards calling for freedom for Suu Kyi and President Win Myint, who were put under house arrest and charged with minor offenses, seen by many as providing a legal veneer for their detention.

Reports on social media and by some Myanmar news services said demonstrations were taking place in other parts of the country as well, with a particularly large crowd in the central city of Mandalay.

Saturday had seen the size of street protests grow from

the hundreds to the thousands, but is also saw the authorities cut most access to the internet. Holes in the military's firewall allowed some news to trickle out, but also fanned fears of a complete information blackout.

Social media platforms such as Facebook and Twitter were earlier ordered blocked, but had remained partially accessible. Social media platforms have been major sources of independent news as well as organizing tools for protests.

Netblocks, a London-based service that tracks internet disruptions and shutdowns, confirmed that there had been a partial restoration of internet connectivity on Sunday, but noted that it might be temporary and social media remained blocked.

The communication blockade was a stark reminder of the progress Myanmar is in danger of losing. During Myanmar's decades of military rule, the country was internationally isolated and communication with the outside world strictly controlled.

The elected lawmakers of Suu Kyi's party met in an online meeting Friday to declare themselves as the sole legitimate representatives of the people and asked for international recognition as the country's government.

U.N. Secretary-General Antonio Guterres pledged the United Nations will do everything it can to unite the international community and create conditions to reverse the coup. AP

Pakistan's Federal Investigation Agency arrested two men on suspicion of links to an international child pornography ring following a tip from Italy through Interpol, authorities said. This was the first time Interpol provided information to Pakistan about the presence of a criminal operation involving child pornography in the country.



Iran's supreme leader yesterday urged the United States to lift all sanctions if it wants Iran to live up to commitments under its nuclear deal with world powers, his first comments on the matter since U.S. President Joe Biden took office. Former President Donald Trump unilaterally withdrew the U.S. in 2018 from the atomic deal, which saw Iran agree to limit its enrichment of uranium in exchange for the lifting of economic sanctions. Biden has said he will seek to revive the deal.



Egypt's President Abdel Fattah el-Sissi has given his support to a transitional government that would lead neighboring Libya through elections late this year. In rare televised comments, el-Sissi said the appointment of the interim government, which includes a three-member Presidential Council and a prime minister, was "a step in the right direction."

Czech Republic could be on the way to become the next European Union member to seek a COVID-19 vaccine outside the bloc's common procurement program, after its prime minister visited Hungary to consult with authorities on their experiences with Russian and Chinese vaccines. Andrej Babis met with Hungarian prime minister Viktor Orban in Budapest where the two leaders discussed Hungary's purchase of the Russian Sputnik V and Chinese Sinopharm vaccines.