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**THE BILL ON IMMIGRATION CONTROL HAS ONE ARTICLE THAT IMPLIES AN EQUAL PENAL WEIGHT FOR ILLICIT ENTRY AND ILLICIT OVERSTAYING**

▲ P2

**1,200 LOCALS INOCULATED AT ‘SMOOTH’ VACCINATION ROLLOUT: DR. LO**

▲ P3

**MACAU’S GROSS GAMING REVENUE FOR THE FIRST 21 DAYS OF FEBRUARY IS EXPECTED TO BE AROUND MOP5.8 BILLION, OR MOP276 MILLION PER DAY: JP MORGAN**

▲ P5

AP PHOTO



**Hong Kong** leader Carrie Lam and other government officials received COVID-19 vaccines yesterday as the city begins its inoculation program. Lam and city’s health minister Sophia Chan were among the first people to receive their vaccines, after about a million doses of the vaccine by Chinese biopharmaceutical company Sinovac Biotech arrived in the Chinese territory last week.

AP PHOTO



**India** Cases of COVID-19 are increasing in some parts of the country after months of a steady nationwide decline, prompting authorities to impose lockdowns and other virus restrictions. Infections have been plummeting in India since September, but experts have been warning that the reasons behind India’s success aren’t really understood, and that the country of nearly 1.4 billion people can’t afford to let its guard down.

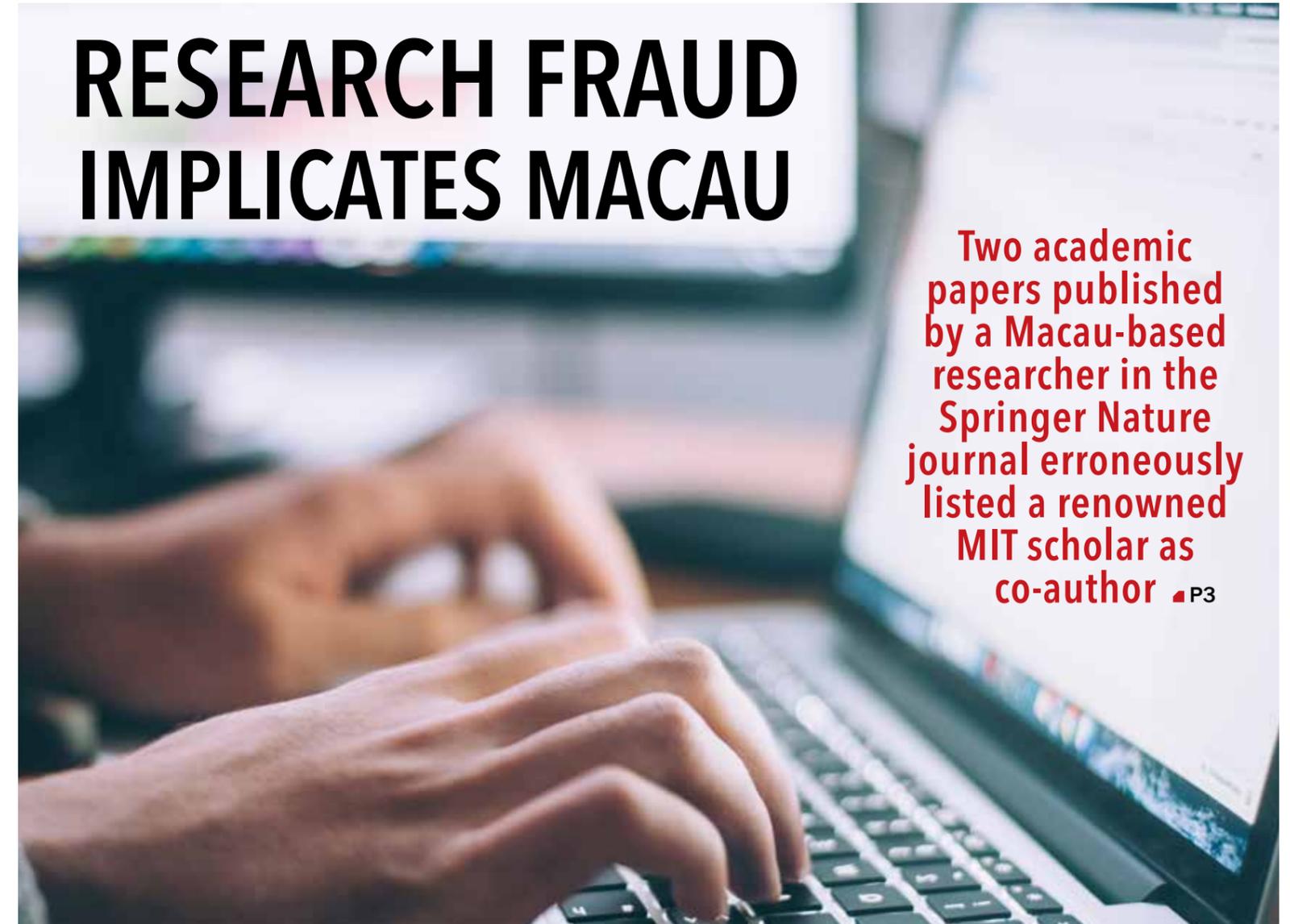
**Indonesia** Thousands of residents are being evacuated on the outskirts of Indonesia’s capital amid flooding after the Citarum River embankment broke, officials said yesterday. Bekasi district in Indonesia’s West Java province have experienced flooding since Saturday because of heavy rain. Rescuers from the National Search and Rescue Agency have been deployed.

**Libyan** authorities say they have raided a secret prison in a southeastern city used by human traffickers and freed at last 156 African migrants - including 15 women and five children. The raid in the city of Kufra took place after a migrant managed to escape a house-turned-prison last week and reported to authorities that he and other migrants were held and tortured by traffickers there, the Kufra security bureau said.

More on backpage

# RESEARCH FRAUD IMPLICATES MACAU

Two academic papers published by a Macau-based researcher in the Springer Nature journal erroneously listed a renowned MIT scholar as co-author ▲ P3



AP PHOTO



PROTESTS SWELL AFTER JUNTA RAISES SPECTER OF FORCE

# MYANMAR ON FIRE

▲ P8

IMMIGRATION BILL

# PROVISION EQUALIZES ILLICIT ENTRY AND ILLICIT OVERSTAYING

JULIE ZHU

**T**HE bill on immigration control contains one article that indicates an equal weight of criminality for illicit entry and illicit overstaying. The same article, due to its link to another article in the same bill, raised concerns among the members of the Third Standing Committee of the Legislative Assembly (AL).

Yesterday, the AL Third Standing Committee had another closed-door debate on the new bill introduced and sponsored by the Macau SAR government.

The lawmakers spent approximately two hours discussing the bill, the majority of which was focused on chapter five and chapter six, specifically articles 40 through 48. These articles mostly concern residence, illicit entry and illicit overstaying.

Chapter six, article 47, contains three clauses indiscriminately applicable to "illicit entry or illicit overstaying." According to this specific provision, those convicted of illicit entry or illicit overstaying will be deported in accordance with the first clause, will remain in custody, or will have their travel documents confiscated. In accordance with the second clause, they must regularly



Third Standing Committee Chairman Vong Hin Fai

present themselves to the police department, and will be banned from entry into Macau in accordance with the third clause.

"It seems that the motive to commit illicit entry is more mixed than for illicit overstaying," said Vong Hin Fai, Chairman of the Committee, who also pointed out that the legal advisors of the Legislative Assembly raised concerns regarding the motive.

"One [illicit entry] is that the [offender] is aware of not having a legal document but still smuggles into the city. The other [illicit overstaying] is not leaving the city after the legal staying period is due. The degree of the severity is different," Vong explained. "However, article 47 is equalizing illicit entry with illicit overstaying. Then both convictions are indiscriminately subjected to the three legal aftermaths."

The bill prescribes in chapter nine, article 68, that inciting or instigating others into committing illicit entry or illicit overstaying shall be punishable by a maximum of two years in prison.

Article 68 indicates that inciting or instigating illicit entry or illicit overstaying is a criminal act.

"However, according to currently in force laws, illicit entry or illicit overstaying do not constitute

criminal offenses," said Vong.

According to Vong, article 46 prescribes the definition of illicit entry and illicit overstaying, article 47 prescribes identical legal consequences for illicit entry and illicit overstaying, and article 68 prescribes the criminalization of inciting and instigating of illicit entry or illicit overstaying, stipulating further clarification and explanation from the government.

On January 13, the AL approved and passed the law with a quorum.

### RESIDENCE MAY BE REVOKED FOR 'PERSONA NON GRATA'

Article 43 of the immigration control bill prescribes that once a person is regarded a "persona non grata" in accordance with clause one of article 23 of the same law, the residency of the concerned individual can be revoked with a dispatch signed by the Chief Executive.

Clause one of article 23 contains five categories of "persona non grata." These include those prohibited entry by international treaties, those suspected of having a relationship with criminal organizations, especially triads, those suspected of international terrorism, those posing threats to Macau's internal security, and those restricted by an administrative measure or a court verdict.

"Clause one of article 23 covers many definitions, all of which are quite abstract and widely applicable," said Vong.

SYMPOSIUM ON 'ONE COUNTRY, TWO SYSTEMS'

# Top official signals changes to Hong Kong election rules



Xia Baolong, director of the Hong Kong and Macao Affairs Office

**C**HINA faces a "critical and urgent" task to overhaul Hong Kong's electoral system, Beijing's top official for the city said, in the latest sign that authorities were mulling major changes in the coming weeks.

Beijing needed to reform the city's electoral system "to ensure that Hong Kong's governance is firmly controlled by patriots," Xia Baolong, director of China's cabinet-level Hong Kong and Macao Affairs Office, said in a speech yesterday.

Speaking to the Chinese

Association of Hong Kong and Macau Studies, Xia said that to improve Hong Kong's electoral system, "relevant legal loopholes within the framework of the Constitution and the Basic Law" need to be closed - and that it was up to the central government to communicate those changes to the local administration.

The remarks follow a number of articles and comments in Chinese state media, and are the latest sign that China is contemplating further curbs to Hong Kong's al-

ready-limited democracy, where a committee of 1,200 business and political elites selects the city's leader and Beijing retains veto power.

China has taken various steps to stamp out dissent in the former British colony since sometimes-violent protests erupted in 2019, most notably by imposing a sweeping national security law last year.

Beijing also allowed the local government to disqualify lawmakers who were insufficiently patriotic. All opposition mem-

bers of the Legislative Council resigned en masse after Chief Executive Carrie Lam's administration used the new rule to kick out four lawmakers.

In comments to Lam in late January, Chinese President Xi Jinping said Hong Kong should be governed by "patriots" in order to ensure the city's stability following unprecedented unrest in 2019.

Lam, speaking at a press conference yesterday, said Hong Kong needed Beijing to enact electoral reform.

"The central government has its power over the political system in Hong Kong," she said, adding that the "election arrangement plays an important part of it." **MDT/BLOOMBERG**

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# Macau scholar implicated in academic fraud

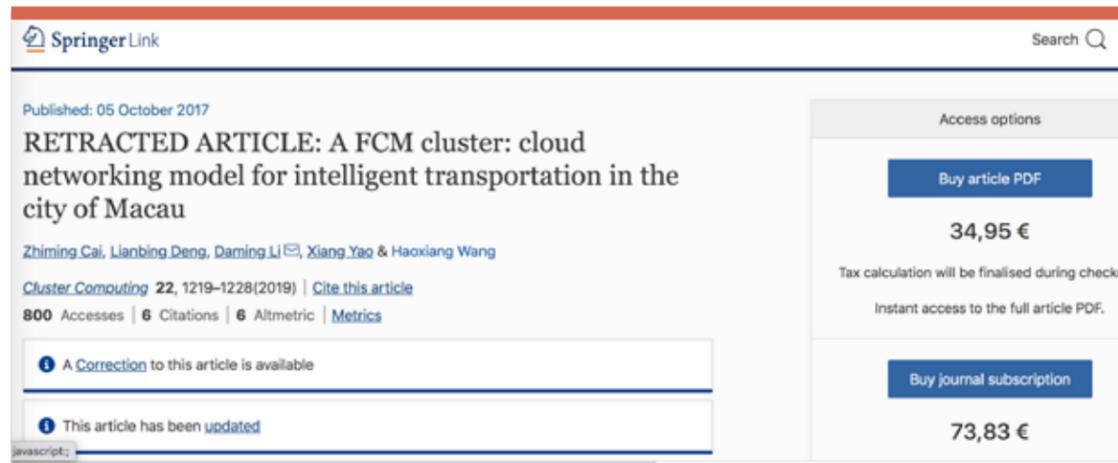
HONEY TSANG

At least two academic papers authored by a researcher affiliated with the City University of Macau and published in the journal Springer Nature, erroneously listed David Cox, a scholar serving at the prestigious Massachusetts Institute of Technology, as a co-author. Retraction Watch, an online platform that examines academic fraud, noted the matter in an earlier published report.

Cox is the IBM Director of the MIT-IBM Watson AI Lab, in Cambridge, Massachusetts, an industry-academic collaboration between IBM and MIT. His research focus has been on artificial intelligence.

Cox first noticed the two papers, which he was not associated with in any capacity, had listed his name, email and picture, on DBLP, a bibliography website that tracks articles run by computer scientists.

"I just discovered two papers (in a @SpringerNature journal) that



have my name on the author list, but which I definitely did not contribute to. The rest of the author list is Chinese people I have never heard of," Cox commented on his Twitter account in December 2020.

He also tweeted that "the whole thing is yucky" and he felt "kind of violated" as "it's one of those journals that has the pictures of the authors at the end, and there I am..."

This week, Cox told Wired ma-

gazine that it wasn't until he threatened legal action that Springer Nature, the publisher of Cluster Computing, removed his name from the two papers and issued a retraction. He was told that the journal had received an email confirming him as an author, although that came through a Hotmail address.

The two fraudulent articles were titled "A FCM cluster: cloud networking model for intelligent

transportation in the city of Macau" and "Mobile network intrusion detection for IoT system based on transfer learning algorithm" and were published by Springer Nature, an English-German academic publishing company, in October 2017 and January 2018, respectively.

Both of the concerned papers were authored by Daming Li, a researcher affiliated with the City University of Macau.

According to ScienceDirect, a website offering scientific and medical publications, Li received a doctorate from the City University of Macau in 2014. Currently, he is a Research Fellow with the Postdoctoral Research Center of China (Hengqin) Pilot Free Trade Zone and Information Centre of Hengqin New Area, and a Research Fellow with the City University of Macau.

The Times contacted Li yesterday via e-mail and asked about the matter, but didn't receive any response.

When asked by Retraction Watch about the rationale behind putting Cox's name on the papers, Li pointed the finger to another author, Xiang Yao, who was a junior researcher, saying that "Xiang Yao once said that he listened to David's good ideas, so Xiang added David's name."

"Xiang has been dismissed [by his University and Research Institutions] based on his words and deeds," Li added.

## COVID-19

# 1,200 inoculated at 'smooth' vaccination rollout: Dr. Alvis Lo

HONEY TSANG

SOME 1,200 local residents were inoculated with their first dose of a vaccine for Covid-19 as of yesterday afternoon, while another 2,600 locals registered to schedule their vaccination, Dr. Alvis Lo, medical director of the Conde de São Januário Hospital, confirmed in a media briefing yesterday by the Novel Coronavirus Response and Coordination Center.

Lo stated that the vaccination rollout, which began for the general public yesterday, played out smoothly at the city's 12 vaccination stations. "We only observed some common, and mild symptoms after vaccination, such as tiredness and pain at the injection site. No individuals developed severe after-effects yesterday after receiving their shots," Lo stated.

When asked by the media about the possibility of setting up more vaccination sites, considering some complaints lodged by locals who experienced relatively long waiting times at vaccination sites, Lo said that the existing 12 stations can handle at least 5,000 inoculations daily.

"The current capacity [the 12 stations offer] can handle the daily demand with ease.



But we will adjust the supply based on the demand. If there is a higher [daily] demand for vaccination, we will study opportunities to establish more inoculation sites," Lo elucidated.

He also stressed that a 30-minute wait after the vaccination is considered necessary to detect any unwanted medical side-effects.

The vaccine that 1,200 locals were injected with yesterday was the inactivated vaccine, developed by China's state-owned pharmaceutical company Sinopharm Group. The official anti-coronavirus website stated that it has a prevention efficacy of 80%.

The first batch of 100,000 doses of inactivated vaccines landed in Macau on February 6.

The SAR government earlier announced that around 100,000 doses of another type of vaccine, the mRNA-based vaccine developed by German drug manufacturer BioNTech and proxied by Fosun Pharma — with over 90% efficacy — will arrive in Macau in late February.

"The vaccination for the second vaccine [the mRNA-based vaccine] will be slated to commence in March, as scheduled. The details regarding its rollout will be announced in due course," Lo said in response to the media's query over the inoculation timeframe for this type of vaccine.

He stressed that the more people in a community to get vaccinated, the faster and more efficiently the community can reach herd immuni-

ty. He added that it is difficult to determine an optimal vaccination rate for the community since there is insufficient data.

When asked whether vaccination could replace Covid-19 testing for traveling into mainland cities, Lo said that it is not yet on the table and no guidelines regarding the matter have been formulated so far.

However, he offered reassurance that the SAR government would explore the possibility and feasibility of swapping a Covid-19 test result with proof of vaccination, and research into simi-

lar policies implemented by other countries and regions will be conducted.

As of yesterday, Macau has registered a total of 48 confirmed Covid-19 cases. The 47th case is still hospitalized, following the 43-year-old female's positive test on February 19.

The 48th confirmed case, a 30-year-old male, was discharged from the hospital on February 20 after testing negative two times on February 17 and 19. He is now observing a 14-day quarantine following his recovery at the Public Health Clinical Center at Alto de Coloane.

The details of the 27th round of mask supply for locals and non-Macau residents were also spelled out in the press conference. A total of 30 masks, with a value of MOP24, will be available for purchase by eligible individuals from February 26 to March 27.

On February 9, Chief Executive Ho Iat Seng and other key authorities received their first dose of the inactivated vaccine. The debut vaccinations for prioritized groups also started on February 9, while the first vaccinations for all Macau ID holders commenced yesterday.

**AD**

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# WOMAN ACCUSES GAMBLING PARTNERS OF ABUSE OF TRUST, CLAIMS HKD275,000 DAMAGE

RENATO MARQUES

A woman from the mainland is accusing two of her gaming partners of abusing her trust and appropriating HKD275,000 that belonged to her, the Judiciary Police (PJ) spokesperson reported yesterday.

The case occurred on February 18, two days after the woman and a friend had arrived in Macau with the purpose of gambling in a casino in Cotai.

On that day, the victim met the two men, also from the mainland, and they started to play together in the casino.

In the early hours of February 18, the group decided to establish a partnership joining efforts in putting money together to play in the casino.

Under the agreement, the woman put in HKD90,000 while the other two men contributed a combined amount of HKD110,000. According to their agreement, all the earnings would be split into equal shares, with 50% for the woman and 50% for the two men.

During the playing time, the main suspect was in charge of managing the gaming chips.

At around 3 a.m., the victim felt tired and decided to take a rest



in her hotel room while the men continued playing in the casino.

During that period, the suspect made a lucky bet and won a total of HKD300,000.

The victim was aware of the previous earnings when she re-

turned to the gaming floor around one hour later. In another bet at around 6 a.m., the suspect won once again, this time a sum of HKD70,000.

At that time, the victim asked to be paid her share of the winning

bets (HKD150,000 + HKD35,000) but the suspect refused to pay her, claiming that in the bet in which he won HKD70,000, he was playing with his share of the money and not with the combined amount.

They then went to a room to discuss the matter but they did not reach an agreement and the suspect left the room and went to the casino to continue to play.

Because the victim had lost contact with him at that point, she felt deceived and asked the police for help.

In her complaint, the victim said she had lost a total of HKD275,000, including the HKD185,000 she said she was entitled to from the winning bets and the HKD90,000 that she provided as starting money.

At 10:45 p.m. on the same day, the suspect presented himself voluntarily to the PJ, confessing to having taken and used the victim's money to play.

In his possession at the time, he had only HKD230,500 which he said belongs to the three people involved.

The PJ said they believe that there is enough evidence to forward the case to the Public Prosecutions Office (MP) to accuse the man of abuse of trust, punishable according to Article 199 of Macau's Penal Code, which establishes a penalty of up to five years of imprisonment or a fine up to the equivalent to 600 days for the crime.

# TNR accused of arson in building fire

RENATO MARQUES

A non-resident worker (TNR) from the UK is being accused of deliberately lighting a fire in a building entrance in the early hours of February 19, the Judiciary Police (PJ) spokesperson revealed yesterday during the regular jointed police forces press conference.

The man in his 30s from the UK, who is working in Macau as a receptionist, is the only suspect in the case, which occurred in a building located at Rua do Campo.

The case was raised as suspicious after the Fire Services attended the fire emergency and notified the PJ that they believed the fire had been deliberately lit.

After investigation, the PJ determined that the suspect had entered the building and stayed there for some time in the early morning of February 19. Tracking the movements



of the man through surveillance cameras, the PJ said that he looked to be under the influence of alcohol and had entered the same building multiple times through both the Block 1 and Block 3 entrances.

The surveillance camera footage also shows the man pulling mail and flyers from the building's post boxes and throwing them to the floor.

The fire is believed to have been started with a cigarette lighter subse-

quently found in that location and burned mostly the mail, papers, and flyers and well as some decorative items that had been placed at the building gate for the Chinese New Year, also causing damage to the entry gate.

Being able to identify the suspect, the PJ detained him a few hours later at his home in an apartment building nearby.

The man admitted to the PJ that he had consumed a lot of alcohol on that night and said he did not remember any of actions of which he is now being accused.

Nonetheless, the PJ believes they have gathered enough evidence against him and have forwarded the case to the Public Prosecutions Office (MP) for the man to be charged with arson. According to article 264 of the Macau Penal Code, such a demeanor by negligence can incur a sentence of up to five years' imprisonment.

# MAN ARRESTED FOR FILMING AND PHOTOGRAPHING COLLEAGUE IN TOILET

A man has been detained and accused of the crime of intrusion of privacy for photographing and recording a work colleague while she was in the toilet, the Public Security Police Force (PSP) revealed yesterday. The man, a permanent resident of Macau, works as a maintenance worker in a hotel unit in Taipa, the same place where the woman, also a local resident, is employed in a different department.

The case occurred on February 20 around 4:30 p.m. when the woman, after entering the toilet, spotted a hand holding a mobile phone device which was pointed at her.

She immediately shouted and tried to chase the man, calling for the hotel security for

help to detain him.

To the police, the man admitted to having taken photos and videos of the woman secretly, claiming to be a long-time admirer of her.

He also said that recently he has been feeling obsessed with her and that when he saw her entering the toilet that day, he felt compelled to "spy" on her.

The man also told the PSP that he had deleted all the photos and videos from his phone immediately after being spotted by the woman.

He was sent to the Public Prosecutions Office yesterday to be accused under Article 186 of the Penal Code which establishes penalties of up to two years of imprisonment or a fine equivalent to 240 days for the crime. **RM**

AGARWOOD DIFFUSER FOR CARS

# MUST team wins international design award

JULIE ZHU

**T**HE product “smart car agarwood diffuser,” designed by Assistant Professor Zhang Mengting from the Faculty of Humanities and Arts of the Macau University of Science and Technology, won the 2020 Good Design Award and the silver award of the A-Design category.

In 2020, the organizing committee of Good Design received a total of 4,769 participating works from more than 20 countries and regions around the world.

After multiple rounds of review by 97 international jury members, the MUST team finally won the honor. This also marks the first time that Macau has received the title in over 64 years since the inception of the award, according to the

records on the Good Design website.

In 2020, the grand committee of A-Design received 2,094 works from 108 countries and regions.

After multiple rounds of review by 218 judges, the MUST team won the A-Design Silver Award.

In order to discover the modern value of agarwood, explore new mobile usage scenarios, and enable more consumers to obtain the wood, the designer combined user-centered design, bio-alcoholization technology, and intelligent temperature control technology to create a smart car agarwood aromatherapy device, allowing users to break through the limitations of time and space and enjoy a more efficient, full, lasting, stable and rich Agarwood experience while driving.



## TAXI DRIVER ARRESTED THREE MONTHS AFTER DEFRAUDING PASSENGER

A taxi driver who defrauded a passenger he transported from the Border Gate Plaza to the Rua de Malaca on November 22 has finally been caught by the police, the PSP said yesterday. The case, dating from almost three months ago, occurred when the passenger handed the driver a HKD1,000 banknote to pay for the ride upon arrival at the destination and, while pretending to search for money to give the right change, the driver took off and left the passenger with change of only HKD55. After reviewing footage from surveillance cameras, the PSP finally managed to identify the suspect and detain him on February 20 this year. The man admitted the crime, claiming he did it out of greed.

## SOCIAL HOUSING SUBSIDY APPLICATION STARTS MARCH 1

Applications for the new phase of the temporary subsidy for households awaiting social housing will be accepted from March 1. The application period will last until March 31. The government has extended the temporary subsidy for waiting families for one year. Beneficiary family groups will receive a maximum of 12 subsidies. The monthly subsidy is 1,650 patacas for families consisting of one to two members and 2,500 patacas for families consisting of three or more people. Existing beneficiary family groups must update their monthly income certification documents, and will continue to receive subsidies after they are deemed eligible for the benefits.

## LAWMAKER DEMANDS REGULATION ON LOCKSMITH SERVICES

Lawmaker Ng Kuok Cheong has argued that the local government should regulate the locksmith services industry. “I think that the Macau SAR should indeed establish regulations and guidance for locksmith services in order to protect the safety of the property of households while first ensuring a free economy,” Ng wrote. Ng’s opinion is based on the fact that such regulations already exist all over the world. Overall, the lawmaker proposes some relatively easy practices, such as logging in every locksmith service for a temporary period to keep a record of every service, and engaging personal data protection officers to watch log records.

GAMING

## GGR PICKED UP IN THE LATER HALF OF FEBRUARY: JP MORGAN

HONEY TSANG

**M**ACAU’S gross gaming revenue (GGR) for the first 21 days of February is expected to be around MOP5.8 billion, or MOP276 million per day, the latest statement by JP Morgan, published yesterday, revealed.

“This implies the last week’s run-rate has risen to MOP466 million/day, more than doubled from prior weeks (MOP200 million in the past two weeks), as it captures a peak of the CNY [Chinese New Year] holidays (i.e., latter half of Spring Festival + tail-end demand post CNY),” JP Morgan stated.

The growth has exceeded the expectations of the institution’s analysts. The bank ascribed a higher gaming demand in the latter period of February partly to

“strong VIP luck and high mass hold.”

The increased demand, analysts said, “should make up for weaker-than-expected GGR during the first half of February,” and meant they will keep the February GGR prognosis at MOP7.5-7.6 billion, equivalent to MOP270 million/day.

JP Morgan’s forecast on GGR during the first three weeks of February came days after the Financial Services Bureau (DSF) announced that gaming tax had totaled MOP29.8 billion in 2020, down 73.6% year-on-year.

Based on the latest statistics provided by the Gaming Inspection and Coordination Bureau (DICJ), the city’s GGR was MOP8.02 billion in January 2021, up 2.6% month-to-month.

## ZHENG ANTING URGES MOVING ABANDONED VEHICLES TO GUANGDONG

JULIE ZHU

**L**AWMAKER Zheng Anting has recommended that the local government move the city’s abandoned and unclaimed vehicles to Guangdong province so that the city can be rid of community sanitation threats and fire safety risks.

“Macau produces approximately 5,000 abandoned vehicles per year on average. The handling of abandoned cars is still not resolved. Some vacant lots have been occupied for a prolonged time by abandoned vehicles. In some private properties, abandoned cars pile up, damaging the image of the city. Moreover, the abandoned vehicles pose threats to sanitation and fire safety of the concerned communities,” said Zheng.

Zheng argued that there is a decreasing demand for secondhand cars and smaller demands lead to the more abandoned cars unable to be exported.

“Many public opinions in the community hope that the government can expedite collaboration with Guangdong province to speed up the cross-region handling process of abandoned vehicles,” Zheng wrote.

“Where is the government at in terms of abandoned vehicle cross-region handling procedu-



res? When can Macau completely remove abandoned vehicles to Guangdong province?” Zheng asked.

The lawmaker stated that Macau’s car owners replace their vehicles at “a high frequency” and both the public vacant lots and private abandoned car garages are nearly fully occupied.

“In the short term, what are the measures the government will take to temporarily ease the problem in which vacant lots are fully packed with abandoned cars?”

In 2010, the Macau government initiated a study regarding cooperation with Guangdong province in transporting abandoned vehicles to Mainland China.



AP PHOTO



ANALYSIS

# RETHINKING THE US-CHINA FIGHT: DOES CHINA REALLY THREATEN AMERICAN POWER ABROAD?

ANDREW LATHAM,  
MACALESTER COLLEGE

**P**RESIDENT Joe Biden is so far maintaining his predecessor's tough China policy, which aims to curb China's international power both economically and politically.

In the U.S. and Europe, China is widely recognized as a rising star that threatens Western power.

But my research on the country suggests China may no longer see itself that way.

## CHINA'S RISE

In the three decades I've studied and taught Chinese foreign policy, I have witnessed three discrete eras in China's approach to international relations.

After the death of the Communist Chinese leader Mao Zedong in 1976, Mao's successors, Deng Xiaoping and Jiang Zemin, introduced economic reforms that launched China on a path of phenomenal economic growth. The country rose from 11th to second place in the global GDP rankings between 1990 and 2020.

The prevailing view in Western capitals in the 1990s was that China's economic transformations would inevitably culminate in an affluent, peaceful and

democratic country.

To ensure this outcome, the major economic powers were prepared to embrace China as a full member of their club of open-market societies, admitting it into international institutions like the World Trade Organization and integrating it into global markets. The West was keen to bring it into this network of international political institutions constructed after World War II to promote cooperation and peaceful conflict resolution.

And China was happy to join the club, at least when it came to trade and investment. Chinese leader Deng Xiaoping's foreign relations strategy in the 1990s was to "hide capabilities and bide time," adopting a policy of "tao guang yang hui" – keeping a low profile.

In the early 2000s, President Hu Jintao took a few modest steps toward greater Chinese assertiveness on the world stage, building up China's navy and initiating a series of port projects in Pakistan and beyond. For the most part, however, Hu still espoused a policy of "peaceful rise."

## CHINA'S DREAM

That changed when China's current leader, Xi Jinping, assu-

med power in 2012.

Xi projected nationalism and power. His China would no longer bide its time. Xi proclaimed the "China Dream," envisioning the country as a major power with increasing influence not just in Asia but worldwide.

Under Xi, China took a much more aggressive stance toward the world, flexing its military muscle in the South China Sea and elsewhere, and coupling diplomacy with heavy investment in infrastructure development across Latin America and Africa.

Over time, many Western foreign policy leaders, among them Barack Obama, came to see China as bent on upending, not sustaining, the economic order they had created and enthusiastically welcomed China into.

In 2015, the U.S. undertook a "strategic pivot" toward Asia and away from the Middle East, the focus of Washington's attention since 9/11.

In an effort to contain – or at least constrain – China, the U.S. strengthened alliances with Australia, Japan, South Korea and the Philippines, formed a coalition of countries in China's neighborhood, and increased defense cooperation with India, Australia and Japan.

## AMERICAN ANXIETIES

In October 2017, at the National Congress of the Chinese Communist Party, Xi confirmed Western fears. He publicly declared his goal of moving China to the "center stage" of world affairs.

Xi said China did not seek global domination but warned that no one "should expect China to swallow anything that undermines its interests." He also hinted that China's rise would create a world order with "Chinese characteristics."

In December 2017 an updated U.S. national security strategy officially declared China's rise a threat, citing intellectual property theft and the development of advanced weapons capable of nullifying America's military advantage.

## CHINA AGAINST THE WORLD

But the China dream isn't guaranteed to come true. As President Xi told Communist Party members at a gathering in January 2019, the country faces serious challenges

Beijing faces a U.S.-led coalition that is committed to resisting China's economic, military and diplomatic power plays in Asia. China also has rising debt, stagnating GDP growth rate and

declining productivity.

Then there are China's troubling demographics: The population is both shrinking and getting old.

China's population declined in 2018 for the first time since the deadly famines induced by Mao's "Great Leap Forward" in the 1960s. The Chinese Academy of Science predicts that if fertility continues to drop from its current rate of 1.6 children per woman to a projected 1.3, China's population would be reduced by about 50% by the end of this century.

China ended in 2015 its policy of limiting families to one child, but its population still skews old, leaving fewer workers to support increasing numbers of elderly.

Together, these predictions have raised concerns within the Chinese Communist Party that the nation will "get old before it gets rich." This predicament could create serious social unrest.

Xi and others in China's Communist leadership no longer project unbridled confidence. Instead, they telegraph concern that global leadership is slipping out of reach.

[Get the best of The Conversation, every weekend. Sign up for our weekly newsletter.]

## DIVERGING VIEWS

These concerns are already reshaping China's foreign policy, leading it to take increasingly direct military action toward neighboring India – where it is engaged in a territorial dispute in the Himalayas – and near Taiwan. China is also redoubling its military efforts to assert its territorial rights to disputed islands the South China Sea and cracking down on democracy in Hong Kong.

Xi has embraced a confrontational new form of global diplomacy that more actively undermines U.S. interests abroad. Some call it "wolf-warrior diplomacy," after two blockbuster Chinese movies about Chinese special forces vanquishing American mercenaries in Africa and Asia.

This is the first time in six decades that China and the West hold such fundamentally different views of China's global trajectory.

The results could be destabilizing. If a weakened China feels threatened by Western containment, it may double down on its nationalistic displays in India, Taiwan, Hong Kong and the South China Sea.

The post-World War II international order, built to promote economic cooperation and avoid war, may not be able to withstand the stress of China's mounting challenges from within. A war between the West and China is still a remote possibility, but perhaps not as remote as it once seemed.

**MDT/THE CONVERSATION**

US-CHINA RELATIONS

# Wang urges Biden to lift trade restrictions, stop interference

**C**HINA'S top diplomat called yesterday for new U.S. President Joe Biden's administration to lift restrictions on trade and people-to-people contacts while ceasing what Beijing considers unwarranted interference in the areas of Taiwan, Hong Kong, Xinjiang and Tibet.

Foreign Minister Wang Yi's comments at a Foreign Ministry forum on U.S.-China relations come as Beijing presses the new administration in Washington to drop many of the confrontational measures adopted by former President Donald Trump.

Trump hiked tariffs on Chinese imports in 2017 and imposed bans and other restrictions on Chinese tech companies and academic exchanges as he sought to address concerns about an imbalance in trade and accusations of Chinese theft of American technology.

Trump also upgraded military and diplomatic ties with Taiwan, the self-governing island democracy claimed by China as its own territory, while sanctioning Chinese officials blamed for abuses against Muslim minorities in Xinjiang and a crackdown on freedoms in Hong Kong.

"We know that the new U.S. administration is reviewing and assessing its foreign policy," Wang told diplomats, scholars and journalists at the Lanting Forum. "We hope that the U.S. policy makers will keep pace with the times, see clearly the trend of the world, abandon biases, give up unwarranted suspicions and move to bring the China policy back to reason to ensure a healthy, steady development of China-U.S. relations."

While Biden has pledged reengagement and a more civil tone in U.S. diplomacy, its unclear whether he will make any fundamental changes in Washington's policies toward Beijing. China fa-



Wang Yi addresses the Foreign Ministry forum on U.S.-China relations in Beijing yesterday

ces more opposition than ever in Washington due to its trade record, territorial disputes with neighbors, and accusations of technology theft and spying. Taiwan enjoys strong bipartisan support, as do criticisms of China's human rights record, especially on Hong Kong, Xinjiang and Tibet.

In his first address before a global audience Friday, Biden said the U.S. and its allies must "prepare together for a long-term strategic competition with China."

"Competition with China is going to be stiff. That's what I expect, and that's what I welcome, because I believe in the global system Europe and the United States, together with our allies in the Indo-Pacific, worked so hard to build over the last 70 years," the president said in remarks delivered virtually to the annual Munich Security Conference.

As is standard in Chinese foreign policy, Wang put the onus for improving relations squarely on the shoulders of the U.S. and offered no direct proposals for major breakthroughs, even while encouraging increased dialogue.

Wang said China had "no intention to challenge or replace the United States" and was ready to peacefully coexist and seek common development.

Wang urged the U.S. to "stop smearing" the reputation of China's ruling Communist Party and to "stop conniving at or even supporting the erroneous words and actions of separatist forces for Taiwan independence and stop undermining China's sovereignty and security on internal affairs concerning Hong Kong, Xinjiang and Tibet."

He said the U.S. should reactivate all levels of dialogue that he said the U.S. had effectively halted under the Trump administration, and boost cooperation on major bilateral and international issues. The COVID-19 pandemic, climate change and the global economic recovery are the three biggest issues on which the sides can cooperate, he said.

On trade, Wang said China would defend the rights of U.S. companies while hoping the U.S. would "adjust its policies as soon as possible, among others, remove unreasonable tariffs on Chinese goods, lift its unilateral sanctions on Chinese companies and research and educational institutes and abandon irrational suppression of China's technological progress."

The U.S. should also lift restrictions on media, educational and people-to-people exchanges to reverse sharp declines in numbers of Chinese stu-

dying in the U.S. and visits by Chinese for tourism or business, Wang said.

"I hope that the two sides will work together to steer the giant ship of

China-U.S. relations back to the course of sound development toward a bright future with boundless prospects," he said.

While the tone taken toward the U.S. by high-ranking diplomats such as Wang, senior foreign policy adviser Yang Jiechi and President Xi Jinping himself appears more positive than under Trump, China's Foreign Ministry spokespeople have remained combative.

At a briefing on Friday, spokesperson Hua Chunying contrasted the freak winter weather striking Texas with the robust social and economic interactions seen in China over the just-passed Lunar New Year holiday, without offering any show of sympathy.

"All this has given us a deeper understanding of what human rights truly mean and how to better protect them. We are more convinced that we are on the right path and have every confidence in the future," Hua said. MDT/AP

AD

A vibrant advertisement for a performance at DD3 Upper Floor. The background is a mix of red and orange with a city skyline silhouette. The text 'FEB 27' is in the top left. 'DD3 VERANDAH' is at the top center. 'PINOY RAP NIGHT' is written in large, stylized, 3D letters. Below it, 'FILIPINO HIP-HOP NIGHT' and 'PERFORMANCE OF MAKATANG MANGGAGAWA' are written in smaller text. At the bottom, 'DD3 UPPER FLOOR' is prominent, followed by '10 PM TILL LATE, 150 MOP/ 2 DRINKS'. The DD3 logo and 'KTV' are at the very bottom.

AP PHOTO



Anti-coup protesters hold up posters with images of deposed leader Aung San Suu Kyi during a rally near the Mandalay Railway Station yesterday

MYANMAR

# Protests swell after junta raises specter of force

**P**ROTESTERS gathered in Myanmar's biggest city yesterday despite the ruling junta's threat to use lethal force against people who join a general strike against the military's takeover three weeks ago.

More than 1,000 protesters gathered near the U.S. Embassy in Yangon despite barriers blocking the way, but left to avoid a confrontation after 20 military trucks with riot police arrived nearby. Protests continued in other parts of the city, including next to Sule Pagoda, a traditional gathering point.

Factories, workplaces and shops were shuttered across the country yesterday in response to the call for a nationwide strike. The closings extended to the capital, Naypyitaw.

The junta had warned against a general strike in a public announcement Sunday night on state television broadcaster MRTV.

"It is found that the protesters have raised their incitement towards riot and anarchy mob on the day of 22 February. Protesters are now inciting the people, especially emotional teenagers and youths, to a confrontation path where they will suffer the loss of life," the onscreen text said in English, replicating the spoken announcement in Burmese.

The junta's statement also

blamed criminals for past protest violence, with the result that "the security force members had to fire back." Three protesters have been fatally shot.

Trucks cruised the streets of Yangon on Sunday night, blaring similar warnings.

The protest movement, which seeks to restore power to the elected government of Aung San Suu Kyi and have her and other leaders released from detention, has embraced nonviolence.

The nationwide strike was dubbed Five-Twos, for the five number twos in the numeric form of yesterday's date.

"I am joining the 22222 nationwide protest as a citizen of the country. We must join the protest this time without fail," said 42-year-old Zayar, who owns a bottled water business in the capital.

Zin Mi Mi Aung, a 27-year-old saleswoman, also joined the strike.

"We don't want to be governed by the regime," she said as people marched and chanted behind her. "We will fight against them until we win."

Thousands of people gathered in the capital's wide boulevards, many on motorbikes to allow swift movement in the event of any police action.

Reports and photos of protests, some very large, in at least a dozen cities and towns were posted on social media. There were pictures of a particularly colorful event in Taunggyi, the capital of Shan State, where scores of small red hot-air balloons were set aloft. A bigger one was adorned with a drawing of the three-finger salute adopted by the anti-coup movement. The city is famous for its annual hot-air balloon festival.

In Pinyinmana, a satellite town of Naypyitaw, police chased people through the streets to arrest them.

The general strike was an extension of actions called by the Civil Disobedience Movement, a loosely organized group that has been encouraging civil servants and workers at state enterprises to walk off their jobs. Many transport workers and white collar workers have responded to the appeal.

On Saturday, a General Strike Committee was formed by more than two dozen groups to provide a more formal structure for the resistance movement and launch a "spring revolution."

The ominous signs of potential conflict drew attention outside Myanmar, with the U.S. reiterating that it stood with the people of Myanmar, also called Burma.

Secretary of State Antony Blinken said on Twitter the

U.S. would take firm action "against those who perpetrate violence against the people of Burma as they demand the restoration of their democratically elected government."

"We call on the military to stop violence, release all those unjustly detained, cease attacks on journalists and activists, and respect the will of the people," State Department spokesman Ned Price said on Twitter.

On Sunday, crowds in Naypyitaw attended a funeral for the young woman who was the first person confirmed to have been killed in the protests, while demonstrators also mourned two other protesters who were shot dead on Saturday in Mandalay, the country's second-biggest city.

Large crowds came out again in Mandalay.

The military prevented Parliament from convening on Feb. 1, claiming that elections last November won by Suu Kyi's party in a landslide were tainted by fraud. The election commission that affirmed the victory has since been replaced by the junta, which says a new election will be held in a year's time.

The coup was a major setback to Myanmar's transition to democracy after 50 years of army rule that began with a 1962 coup. Suu Kyi came to power after her party won a 2015 election, but the generals retained substantial power under a military-drafted constitution.

Under the junta, 640 people have been arrested, charged or sentenced, with 593, including Suu Kyi and President Win Myint, still in detention, according to the independent Assistance Association for Political Prisoners. **MDT/AP**

## this day in history

### 1959 MACMILLAN AND KHRUSHCHEV TALK PEACE



Britain and the USSR have expressed a willingness to expand Anglo-Soviet trade and cultural ties during the first official meeting between British prime minister Harold Macmillan and Soviet premier Nikita Khrushchev.

On the second day of his ten-day visit to the USSR - the first by a British prime minister since Sir Winston Churchill during the war - Mr Macmillan was driven to the Moscow Kremlin this morning for talks.

It was later revealed the two sides spoke of "cultural matters of interest between the two countries" and ways to encourage the exchange of literature, film and study.

Yesterday, during informal talks in Semyonovskoye, 60 miles south-east of the capital, neither side could agree on establishing a demilitarised "free" city in west Berlin or on unifying Germany.

They also discussed ways of stopping nuclear testing and reducing arms in general, although no actual agreement is expected.

This evening, the British delegation held a dinner for Mr Khrushchev at the British Embassy opposite the Kremlin on the other side of the Moscow River.

In a cordial atmosphere of goodwill, Mr Macmillan welcomed his host with a speech praising the achievements of the Soviet Union and looking back on the war years when the two nations were allies against fascism.

"When I reflect on the present situation in the world, I wonder whether we have not at least as great a common interest today. That common interest is peace. Somehow, in spite of the difficulties and obstacles, let us combine for peace."

In two days' time, Mr Macmillan will play host to the Soviet leader at a dacha, or country house, lent to him by the USSR's government on the outskirts of Moscow.

Mr Macmillan has a busy schedule ahead of him, with visits to the ballet, concerts, universities, art galleries, atomic stations, factories and farms.

Courtesy BBC News

## IN CONTEXT

A few days later, Mr Khrushchev famously snubbed the British delegation by refusing to join them on a visit to Kiev claiming he had to go to his dentist for a filling. America's Vice-President Nixon made his historic visit to Moscow some five months later. But this was just a brief thaw in the Cold War that had begun between East and West in 1947 and worsened as more countries developed nuclear weapons. Peace talks in Paris in 1960 collapsed after the USSR shot down a US spy plane over its air space. Then two years later, the Cuban missile crisis brought the world to the brink of nuclear war. During Macmillan's visit no agreement was reached towards reuniting Germany and in 1961 the building of the Berlin Wall ensured east and west would remain firmly separate for almost 30 years. Harold Macmillan was committed to curbing the arms race and played a major role in negotiating the Nuclear Test Ban Treaty of 1963, the first important treaty signed between the US, USSR and Britain since the end of the war.

MACAU'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

**YOUR STARS**



**ARIES**

**Mar. 21-Apr. 19**

As an Aries, your natural mode of operation is to dive headfirst into any activity. Monday's skies work against that drive, making the week slow to start.



**TAURUS**

**Apr. 20-May. 20**

Expect to be answering emails, caught up in unexpected chats, or circling back to messages that slipped through the cracks of your awareness last week.



**GEMINI**

**May. 21-Jun. 21**

Today's initiative-hungry Cancer moon allows you to review your resources and take stock of your talents. Try to see what skills you can implement into expanding your horizons.



**CANCER**

**Jun. 22-Jul. 22**

The universe is looking to pamper you today, Cancer. Let yourself lavish in the attention you're craving! The moon wades through your sign all day and individual needs.



**LEO**

**Jul. 23-Aug. 22**

Don't expect to jump right into action today, Leo. You're likely to be craving rest and in need of a social hiatus, as the moon meanders into moody Cancer today.



**VIRGO**

**Aug. 23-Sep. 22**

You're likely to be craving more social interaction than you typically care for, so allow yourself to reach out and re-establish lines of connections with the people you actually want in your world.



**LIBRA**

**Sep. 23-Oct. 22**

You're only just scratching the surface of the new responsibilities you've taken on, Libra. This time of year works to get you organized and efficient, which takes sufficient effort to accomplish.



**SCORPIO**

**Oct. 23-Nov. 21**

Prioritize finding ways to shake up your routine, learn something new, or get lost in an informative book or movie today. Your mind is hungry for new information!



**SAGITTARIUS**

**Nov. 22-Dec. 21**

The murkier and more vulnerable side of relationship matters take on an especially important place in your focus today, as the moon wades through deep-feeling Cancer all day.



**CAPRICORN**

**Dec. 22-Jan. 19**

Luna's presence in your opposite sign helps you explore what's happening in your heart, what your current relationship-story looks like, and what needs improving.



**AQUARIUS**

**Jan. 20-Feb. 18**

To feel your best today, aim to be productive in whatever capacity feels right to you. You needn't make a massive effort, just one that helps you activate your personal talents.



**PISCES**

**Feb. 19-Mar. 20**

If you can swing it, let yourself get lost in an activity that activates your creativity and self-expression. You're looking to inhabit your own personal stage, so try to incorporate a bit of playfulness into your day.

**The Born Loser by Chip Sansom**



**SUDOKU**

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

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

**WEATHER**

	MIN	MAX	CONDITION
<b>CHINA</b>			
Beijing	0	4	overcast
Harbin	-20	-11	clear
Tianjin	1	5	overcast
Urumqi	-4	0	clear
Xi'an	7	21	cloudy
Lhasa	-1	15	clear
Chengdu	11	22	cloudy
Chongqing	15	24	overcast
Kunming	7	20	clear
Nanjing	5	15	cloudy
Shanghai	8	12	cloudy
Wuhan	12	21	cloudy
Hangzhou	8	15	cloudy
Taipei	17	22	drizzle
Guangzhou	17	30	cloudy
Hong Kong	19	26	clear
<b>WORLD</b>			
Moscow	-23	-12	clear
Frankfurt	3	10	clear
Paris	11	15	cloudy
London	4	11	clear
New York	2	5	cloudy

**CROSSWORDS**

ACROSS 1- Bristle; 5- Strange; 8- Mother of the Titans; 12- Adhere closely; 14- To \_\_\_ (perfectly); 15- Pull down; 16- Utah's \_\_\_ Mountains; 17- Start of something small?; 18- At the drop of \_\_\_; 19- Like chrome, nickel, or steel; 21- Female beast; 23- Conducted; 24- United; 25- Susan of "L.A. Law"; 26- Pollen producer; 30- One of Chekhov's "Three Sisters"; 32- Cooperative race; 33- Astonishment; 37- Waste allowance; 38- Delight; 39- Sky color; 40- Seaport in S Alaska; 42- Reposes; 43- Foam; 44- Fondle; 45- Relaxing resort; 48- Mil. address; 49- Back muscle, briefly; 50- Blue coloring; 52- Belongs; 57- Harvest; 58- As to; 60- Fabric woven from flax yarns; 61- Being, to Brutus; 62- \_\_\_ about (approximately); 63- Uneven; 64- Baby blues; 65- Kan. neighbor; 66- Romain de Tiroff, familiarly.

DOWN: 1- Worthless person; 2- Peace Nobelist Wiesel; 3- Hue; 4- Architectural pier; 5- Auricular; 6- Lair; 7- Removal of charged atoms; 8- Stuff; 9- Oohed and \_\_\_; 10- Rub out or remove from memory; 11- Fidgety; 13- Kitchen; 14- Among; 20- Author Deighton; 22- Basic unit of heredity; 24- To talk, usually in a pompous manner; 26- Mex. miss; 27- Small gull; 28- A Baldwin brother; 29- Course with pluses and minuses; 30- Picture; 31- Yellowish brown; 33- 1836 siege site; 34- Additional; 35- Kernels; 36- Dick Tracy's love; 38- Outburst; 41- Iridescent gemstone; 42- Child's toy; 44- Automotive vehicle; 45- Rocky debris; 46- Flowery verse; 47- Put down; 49- Lewd look; 51- Primates with short tails or no tail; 52- No \_\_\_!; 53- Yorkshire river; 54- Are you \_\_\_ out?; 55- Treehouse used by birds; 56- Dagger of yore; 59- Compass dir.

**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



**FOR SALE**

**Taipa - Nam Kwai Duplex**  
 HK\$10,500,000 1,746 ft<sup>2</sup> 4 1/2 4 1/2

**FOR RENT**

**Commercial Office, BCM Building**  
 \$85,000/mth 4,100 ft<sup>2</sup>

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

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

**PROPERTY LIST**

- [Macau] Stylish apartment ZAPE 2 1/2 1 1/2  
 720 ft<sup>2</sup> \$7,600,000 (ref: n/a)
- [Coloane] Hellene Gardens 1 3 1/2 2 1/2  
 1,663 ft<sup>2</sup> \$7,900,000 (ref: n/a)
- [Taipa] Manhattan 3 1/2 2 1/2  
 1,626 ft<sup>2</sup> \$18,500/mth (ref: 20031001)
- [Taipa] Manhattan spacious 3 1/2 2 1/2  
 1,720 ft<sup>2</sup> \$18,800/mth (ref: n/a)

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AD

BANKING

# HSBC'S TOP EXECUTIVES FOLLOWING THE MONEY PREPARE ASIA MOVES

HSBC Holdings Plc is considering the return of some global leaders to the bank's original hometown, reinforcing Asia's role as its center of gravity.

A cadre of senior executives is set to relocate in coming months to Hong Kong from HSBC's Canary Wharf headquarters, say people familiar with the plans, as Europe's biggest bank pares its global ambitions.

Chief Executive Officer Noel Quinn will begin marketing what's known internally as the "pivot to Asia" on Tuesday when he announces 2020 earnings. Moving the trio - Nuno Matos, chief executive of wealth and personal banking; Greg Guyett, co-head of global banking and markets, and Barry O'Byrne, chief executive of global commercial banking - would mean businesses responsible in 2019 for 95% of net revenue will be run out of Hong Kong.

Other roles are also being reshuffled as part of the latest strategy, according to an announcement yesterday. Chief Financial Officer Ewen Steven-



son will take on responsibility for the bank's transformation agenda and mergers and acquisitions strategy. Michael Roberts, head of its North American business, will now lead its businesses in the U.S., Canada and Latin America.

Colin Bell, group head of compliance, will become CEO of HSBC Europe and HSBC Bank Plc, the U.K. non-ring-fenced unit. Stephen Moss, currently head of Europe, the Middle East, North Africa, Turkey, Latin Ame-

rica, and Canada, will relocate from London to Dubai to head the Middle East, North Africa and Turkey.

HSBC will also appoint Hong Kong-based executive Kee Joo Wong to run the bank's operations in Singapore, according to people familiar with the matter who asked not to be identified discussing internal matters. Wong, the Asia-Pacific head of global liquidity and cash management, will replace Tony Cripps, who was tapped to run the lender's Saudi British Bank.

The focus on Asia involves more than economics. China's crackdown on Hong Kong has increasingly forced HSBC to accept criticism in the U.S. and U.K. as a cost of doing business. Quinn was summoned to testify to British lawmakers this month over the lender's decision to close the accounts of an exiled Hong Kong democracy activist.

The coming reset comes just 12 months after an overhaul that called for cutting 35,000 jobs, about 15% of the total, over three years.

But Chairman Mark Tucker told the Asian Financial Forum conference in January that the pandemic has upended those plans. "Economic realities mean that what we were planning to do in February we need to be even more urgent in doing," Tucker said.

HSBC will probably report pre-tax adjusted profits fell to \$11.7 billion in 2020, close to half of 2019, largely driven by soaring bad debt charges amid the pandemic, according to the average of 19 forecasts on the bank's website. Its shares, which tumbled last year, have gained about 11% so far in 2021, though they have lagged behind rivals such as JPMorgan Chase & Co. and Banco Santander SA.

Seeking avenues for growth, Quinn said the bank wants to become a "market leader" in wealth management. It's now a relative minnow in the business compared to some of its international peers. While HSBC's private bank manages less than \$400 billion of client assets, UBS Group AG, the world's largest wealth manager, looks after customer funds totaling about \$2.6 trillion.

Founded in 1865 as the Hongkong and Shanghai Banking Corp., HSBC moved its base to London in 1993 after buying Midland Bank in the run-up to the colony's 1997 return to China. MDT/BLOOMBERG

AD

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SINCE 1996

# Man City earns 18th straight win, Spurs lose again in EPL

**E**XACTLY three months ago, Jose Mourinho's Tottenham was outwitting Manchester City to go top of the Premier League and leave Pep Guardiola doubting the direction he was taking his slumping midtable team.

On Sunday, Mourinho was downplaying talk of a crisis at Tottenham while virtually ruling out its chances of finishing in the top four, and Guardiola was celebrating an 18th straight win in all competitions as City took a major step toward another league title.

Things are changing fast in the lives of two of soccer's most storied managers, whose teams are going in opposite directions this season.

City beat Arsenal 1-0 thanks to Raheem Sterling's second-minute header to preserve its 10-point lead over Manchester United and Leicester, which both also won Sunday.

City's last defeat in any competition? That 2-0 loss at Tottenham, 26 games ago.

"The run has been incredible," Guardiola said. "I could not expect it."

That victory back in November is looking like the high point of a turbulent season for Spurs, who have plunged to ninth place on the back of five losses in their last six games — the latest being a 2-1 defeat at West Ham.

"I wouldn't say crisis," Mourinho said. "I would say a bad — a really bad — run of results."

Mourinho has never done this poorly at a club in his distinguished managerial career, however. After 50 league matches in charge of Tottenham, he has collected 81 points — easily the lowest total from any of the teams where he has been in charge.

It's even got to the stage where, with three months left of the league season, Mourinho is counting on winning the Europa League to qualify for next season's Champions League

"In the Europa League, we are alive," said Mourinho, with Tottenham close to reaching the last 16. "The Europa League is a window

AP PHOTO



Manchester City players celebrate after their opening goal

of opportunity that is open for us."

United beat Newcastle 3-1 to stay in second place on goal difference from Leicester, which won 2-1 at Aston Villa.

## STERLING'S LEAP

City's winner at Arsenal came from an unlikely source — the head of Sterling.

With just 80 seconds gone, Sterling evaded Arsenal's two center backs — Rob Holding and Pablo Mari — and met Riyad Mahrez's cross with a glancing header inside the far post.

"I'm 5 foot 7 and a half," Sterling said, "and every time I score a headed goal, it's an extra buzz."

In fact, Sterling also scored with his head two weeks ago — but that was from a little more than a meter out in City's 4-1 win at Liverpool.

City has 13 straight wins in the league and looks unstoppable with 13 games left in its campaign.

## SLOPPY UNITED

United was far from convincing in beating Newcastle for just a second win in its last six league matches.

Held 1-1 at halftime after Newcastle winger Allan Saint-Maximin canceled out Marcus Rashford's opener, United needed a bit of fortune and yet another penalty from Bruno Fernandes to hold onto second place.

A pass across the area from Nemanja Matic was helped on by the studs of the sliding Fernandes and went straight to Daniel James, who buried a shot inside the near post in the 57th.

Fernandes then converted a penalty for his 22nd goal of the season after Marcus Rashford was tripped.

## SOLID LEICESTER

Leicester tripped up in the second half of last season to miss out on a Champions League qualification place, but looks in better shape to secure a top-four spot this time.

Goals in the first 23 minutes by James Maddison and Harvey Barnes were enough to see off Villa, which was without captain Jack Grealish because of injury.

Bertrand Traore gave Villa hope by pulling a goal back in the 48th.

Leicester is six points clear of fifth-place Chelsea and has only lost one of its last 12 league games.

## THE MOYES EFFECT

West Ham occupies the fourth and final Champions League spot — somewhat unexpectedly — after its win over Tottenham.

Jesse Lingard, rejuvenated after his loan move from Manchester United last month, scored what proved to be the winning goal in the 47th minute after running onto a pass

from Pablo Fornals and burying an angled shot with his left foot.

Tottenham had also conceded a goal early in the first half, with fit-again striker Michail Antonio

converting a loose ball from close range. Lucas Moura pulled a goal back for Tottenham in the 64th.

West Ham has only lost one of its last nine league games under former Man

United manager David Moyes, who continues to rebuild his coaching reputation at an east London club that is more often found fighting against relegation. **AP**

AD



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**OPINION**

**Our Desk**

Renato Marques



**PREDICTIONS FOR THE  
 OX-PICIOUS NEW YEAR**

This new year will be running under the auspiciousness of the Metal Ox. This means that it will be certainly a lucky one (as they all are).

In terms of relationships, this will be yet another perfect year to test both in-person and long-distance relationships. This is because it is most likely that borders will remain closed for the whole year (or a very large part of it).

Consequently, visiting friends and family members located anywhere other than on the mainland is not recommended as this can bring enormous complications to your life. If you still choose to visit them, you will be granted long periods of introspection while in isolation, which can be positive and give you the time you need to know yourself better.

This context will continue to work as a test on all your relationships, creating a kind of Darwinian "natural selection" in which the strong ones will survive and grow stronger, while the weak and unsuitable will perish.

Be aware that this year will also be favorable to conflicts and arguments with those closest to you.

Try to clear your house of unnecessary items like that stationary bicycle that you bought years ago and has been serving since then as a clothes hanger. Find as much space in the house as possible, as the agglomeration of people in a small space fosters conflict.

To avoid most of these conflicts, upgrade your home internet plan to at least 250Mbps so the streaming of Korean dramas does not hamper the watching of YouTube favorites, or online gaming.

Like the hardworking animal that it represents, the Year of the Ox will be definitely very prone to hard work for people employed in most activity sectors in Macau. Exceptions are to be made only if you work in gaming or public sectors. In the first case, it will be a year of long waits and prayers. In the second case, it will be just another year, no ups, no downs, as though you are living on a different planet.

Contrasting with those working in the private sector who will feel that this year will be another dry spell for career progress and salary increase, those in the public sector might be surprised with unexpected considerable savings.

Unfortunately, I also predict that many people in Macau will lose their jobs in the Year of the Ox as a result of the non-alignment of the policies of their companies/employers with the real market, causing great damage to many.

Still, and on the positive side, if you are the hardworking kind of person, this will be just another year for you. Obstacles will certainly arise but you should be well prepared to surpass them with a smile on your face. If, on the contrary, you are more of the whining kind, please be aware that this might be another terrible year for you. Find shelter as soon as possible in all Social Media platforms, gather as many likes and followers as possible, and supply yourself with as many archived photos as you can find of trips you took in the past few years, which you probably did not enjoy because you were too busy making the perfect scenario out of it. Post all those in your newsfeed interspersed with cries, calls for the reopening of the borders, rhetorical questions about when you will be able to travel again, or blaming someone else for your failures.

Happy New Year! or, as we say, "Hope you get rich!"

The Biovac Institute, a South African vaccine company, is formulating expansion plans aimed at helping Africa become more self-sufficient when it comes to accessing the immunizing shots.

The coronavirus outbreak has highlighted the continent's reliance on imported vaccines, with limited shot-making facilities only present in South Africa, Senegal and Egypt. Biovac, which is 47.5% state-owned, is in talks to produce a Covid-19 vaccine at its facilities, and Aspen Pharmacare Holdings Ltd. has agreed to make Covid-19 shots on behalf of Johnson & Johnson at a facility in the

southern city of Port Elizabeth.

"It's important to deal with the current pandemic, but we have to build capability for the future so that we won't be in a similar situation in ten years," Morena Makhoana, Biovac's chief executive officer, said in an interview last week. "You cannot rely on importing vaccines as a country, you need to be self-sufficient."

While countries from the U.S to the U.K. and China were among the first nations to start inoculating their populations, Africa has barely started.

AP PHOTO



**HAIRCUTS, PUBS, GYMS  
 MUST WAIT AS UK LIFTS  
 LOCKDOWN SLOWLY**

JILL LAWLESS, LONDON

U.K. Prime Minister Boris Johnson is setting out a road map today [Macau time] for lifting one of Europe's strictest national lockdowns — but the millions of Britons longing for a haircut or an evening out still face a long wait.

Johnson announcing a plan to ease restrictions in increments, starting by reopening schools in England on March 8. People will be allowed to meet one friend or relative for a chat or picnic outdoors from the same day.

Three weeks later, people will be able to meet outdoors in groups of up to six outdoors, and amateur outdoor sports can resume. But restaurants, pubs, gyms and hairdressers are likely to remain closed until at least April.

The measures being announced apply to England. Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland all have slightly different lockdowns in place.

Britain has had Europe's deadliest coronavirus outbreak, with more than

120,000 deaths.

Faced with a dominant virus variant that scientists say is both more transmissible and more deadly than the original virus, Britain has spent much of the winter under a tight lockdown. Bars, restaurants, gyms, schools, hair salons and nonessential shops are closed, people are urged not to travel out of their local area and foreign holidays are illegal.

**Hopes for a return  
 to normality rest  
 largely on Britain's  
 fast-moving  
 inoculation program**

Hopes for a return to normality rest largely on Britain's fast-moving inoculation program that has so far given more than 17.5 million people, a third of the adult population, the first of two doses of vaccine. The aim is to give every adult a shot of vaccine by July 31, and to protect over 50s and the medically vulnerable by getting them a first vaccine jab by April 15.

But the government cautions that the return of the

country's social and economic life will be slow. Johnson's Conservative government has been accused of reopening the country too quickly after the first lockdown in the spring, and of rejecting scientific advice before a short "circuit-breaker" lockdown in the fall. It does not want to make the same mistakes again.

The government says progress on easing restrictions will depend on vaccines proving effective at lowering hospitalization and deaths, infection rates remaining low and no new virus variants emerging that throw the plans into disarray.

Vaccines Minister Nadhim Zahawi said the government's plan for easing restrictions was "steady as she goes."

"Outdoor versus indoor, priority being children in schools," he said. "Second priority is obviously allowing two people on March 8 to meet outside for a coffee to address some of the issues around loneliness and of course mental health as well."

MDT/AP

UN's top human rights body has opened its first and highest-level meeting of 2021, amid growing concerns on issues including the military coup in Myanmar, the arrest of opposition leader Alexei Navalny in Russia and the rights situations in countries including Ethiopia and Sri Lanka. The four-week session at the Human Rights Council that started yesterday has drawn several presidents and prime ministers for its "high-level segment," and Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro, whose government has led a violent crackdown against dissent, was set to speak.

European Union yesterday imposed sanctions on 19 more officials in Venezuela accused of undermining democracy or rights abuses in the crisis-torn South American country. EU foreign ministers targeted the 19 with asset freezes and travel bans "in view of the deteriorating situation in Venezuela following the December 2020 elections." The main opposition parties boycotted those polls. It means that a total of 55 Venezuelan officials are now subject to EU sanctions.



New Zealand Volunteers in New Zealand successfully refloated 40 stranded whales yesterday but remained concerned they might beach themselves again overnight. A pod of 49 long-finned pilot whales earlier stranded themselves on Farewell Spit, a remote beach on the South Island, according to authorities. Nine of the whales died.

Mexico Six members of the military were killed when the plane they were in crashed in the southeastern state of Veracruz. A statement from Mexico's Secretary of Defense said the accident took place in the morning when the air force's Learjet 45 was taking off from the airport in the city of Xalapa. The statement did not say what caused the crash or how many people were on board the plane.

Nigeria A military plane crashed in Nigeria, killing all seven people on board, said officials. The King Air 350 plane had just taken off from the airport in Abuja, Nigeria's capital, when it reported engine failure and tried to return, said Ibikunle Daramola, a spokesman for the Nigerian Air Force in a tweet.