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CTM 40th ANNIVERSARY

A 27-YEAR-OLD MALE RESIDENT WAS DIAGNOSED WITH BELL'S Palsy AFTER BEING INOCULATED WITH THE MRNA COVID-19 VACCINE

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IC U-TURNS ON PRESERVING 200-YEAR-OLD CUSTOMS CHECKPOINT

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SHAKE SHACK OPENED ITS FIRST RESTAURANT AT THE LONDONER MACAO AIMING TO BRING A DIVERSE MENU AND EXCLUSIVE MACAU-THEMED ITEMS

P4

AP PHOTO



Japanese Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga asked the U.S. drug maker Pfizer Inc. for additional supplies of the COVID-19 vaccine to speed up his country's inoculation drive, which lags behind many other nations. Suga, after holding talks with President Joe Biden at the White House, wrapped up his Washington visit with a phone call to Pfizer CEO Albert Bourla.

AP PHOTO



Myanmar's junta released more than 23,000 prisoners to mark the traditional new year holiday, including at least three political detainees, and the military leader behind the February coup confirmed he would attend a regional summit later this month. It wasn't immediately clear if those released included pro-democracy activists who were detained for protesting the coup. State broadcaster MRTV said that junta chief Senior Gen. Min Aung Hlaing had pardoned 23,047 prisoners, including 137 foreigners who will be deported from Myanmar.

AP PHOTO



Pakistan A crackdown by security forces on protesting supporters of a banned Islamist party left at least three people dead and 20 others injured, a police official and a party spokesman said. Lahore police spokesman Rana Arif said supporters of the hard-line Tehreek-e-Labaik Pakistan party attacked police with a petrol bomb and took custody of five police officers, including Deputy Superintendent Umar Farooq Baluch. Arif alleged the officers were tortured.

More on backpage

THE WORST IS OVER

A total of 34,252 tourist arrivals were registered in a single day - the highest daily record since the pandemic as mainland holidaymakers are on the rise P3



SHENZHEN FASHION WEEK
LOCAL DESIGNER PRESENTS CITY'S 'CHARACTERISTICS' IN LATEST COLLECTION



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US, CHINA AGREED TO COOPERATE TO CURB CLIMATE CHANGE WITH URGENCY

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**DSAL
LAUNCHES
SUBSIDIZED
TRAINING
COURSE IN
ENGLISH**

The Labour Affairs Bureau (DSAL) has launched a new subsidized training course on Western Restaurant Service in the English language which will increase the vocational skills of unemployed or recently graduated residents. Organized with the Macao Institute for Tourism Studies, applications are open from today until April 23. Trainees who complete the course and cooperate with their employment referral will receive a training subsidy of up to 6,656 patacas.

**DSPA TO
KICK OFF
FOOD WASTE
COLLECTION
FOR
RECYCLING**

The Environmental Protection Bureau (DSPA) is launching a new service at four recyclable collection centers on Thursday, April 22, commemorating Earth Day. The centers located at Toi San, Ilha Verde, Seac Pai Van, and Iao Hon will accept food waste materials for recycling. The DSPA notes that the collection of food waste from the centers is exclusively for domestic waste and does not include the food and beverage establishments. The DSPA also advises citizens to drain away all water or sauce that might be included in the food waste before placing them in proper containers.

COVID-19

RESIDENT DIAGNOSED WITH BELL'S PALSY AFTER VACCINATION

RENATO MARQUES

A 27-year-old male resident of Macau has been reportedly diagnosed with facial nerve paralysis, known as Bell's palsy, after being inoculated with a vaccine against Covid-19, the Novel Coronavirus Response and Coordination Center reported in a press statement.

According to the same statement, the center acknowledged that the health condition occurred after the vaccine and, according to the rules established by the World Health Organization, the case has been recorded as the second serious case of adverse event following immunization (AEFI) in Macau.

The center explained that the man was inoculated with a dose of the mRNA vaccine manufactured by BioNTech after a medical evaluation at the Conde de São Januário Hospital Center (CHCSJ) on March 20. On the evening of April 10, the man manifested symptoms, including a headache, and on the afternoon of April 14, he displayed an asymmetry between the right and left sides of his face.

After visiting the Kiang Wu Hospital for consultation, the man was admitted to the hospital's neurology department with the diagnosis of Bell's palsy on the left side of his face.

On April 15, the man was discharged from the hospital after receiving a steroid treatment that aimed to reduce the symptoms, which included difficulty in closing the left eyelid, tearing in the left



eye, and facial numbness, among others.

According to the center, the patient's health condition has improved slightly although all the symptoms persist.

The health authorities noted that the "serious adverse event has already been reported to the Adverse Events Assessment Working Group after the inoculation of the vaccines against Covid-19 for analysis."

The same authorities also said that the causes of Bell's palsy are still unknown by the medical community, adding that "most patients begin to recover the facial nerves affected within two weeks from the onset of symptoms and regain normalcy within three to six months."

According to the Health Bureau's records, in the last five years, there have been 55 to 61 Bell's palsy patients per 100,000 people in the three hospitals - CHCSJ, Kiang Wu, and Hospital of the Macau Uni-

versity of Science and Technology. They added that the current average rate in Macau is 4.5 to 5.1 per 100,000 people per month.

Citing the statistical data, the health authorities concluded that the Covid-19 vaccination is not contributing to a rise in the incidence rate of Bell's palsy in Macau, reaffirming that although the case

needs to be reported as an AEFI, there is no certainty of a cause-effect relationship between the vaccine and the adverse event.

"Until experts can determine the relationship between the event and the vaccine, it is not possible to judge hastily that the event was caused by the vaccine. On the other hand, with the introduction of the vaccine to the market, a monitoring system will be created for observation," the center said.

Statistics on the AEFI reported by the health authorities noted that this was the second severe case of AEFI in Macau, from a total of 333 cases reported.

The same statistics show that, on average, there has been around 10 new AEFI cases in Macau recorded per day.

The latest data shows that there were 81,893 inoculations concluded, involving 52,688 people. The number of vaccinations concluded after two doses is now around 29,205.

QUARANTINE RAISED TO 28 DAYS FOR ARRIVALS FROM HIGH-RISK COUNTRIES

In response to the current Covid-19 situation in the Philippines, India, and Pakistan, the Novel Coronavirus Response and Coordination Center has raised the quarantine measures for those arriving in Macau from those countries to 28 days, the center informed in a statement. From midnight today, all people arriving from the aforementioned

destinations will have to undergo 28 days of medical observation in isolation at a government-designated hotel facility. The center also noted that after the completion of the medical observation, people arriving from such destinations will also need to undergo self-isolation for another seven days as generally enforced for all other locations.

CE attends Boao Forum for Asia in Hainan

HONEY TSANG

MACAU'S Chief Executive (CE) Ho Iat Seng is leading a delegation to take part in the Boao Forum for Asia Annual Conference 2021 in Hainan from today until tomorrow.

Liu Xianfa, Commissioner of the Office of the Commissioner of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of

the People's Republic of China in the Macau SAR, has been invited to join the delegation.

The delegation is also comprised of other key officials, including Secretary for Economy and Finance, Lei Wai Nong, and Chief-of-Office to the Chief Executive's Office.

This year's forum bears the theme "A World in

Change: Join Hands to Strengthen Global Governance and Advance Belt and Road Cooperation," and will last for four days from April 18 to 21.

A hybrid format will be utilized, primarily via in-person meetings coupled with some virtual sessions. The forum will revolve around six key topics, such as "Explore China;" "Un-

derstand the Changing World;" and "Dance with New Technologies."

Through a series of discussions, the event is intended to reach consensus across countries and regions towards world development, and to help the globe better navigate a post-pandemic era.

The event will bring together government and

business leaders across the world. Hong Kong's Chief Executive Carrie Lam Cheng Yuet-ngor is also invited to attend the forum.

Since its founding in 2001, the Boao Forum for Asia has been a non-governmental and non-profit international conference organization committed to fostering regional cooperation in Asia and beyond.

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MGTO to select 700 applicants for helicopter tour by lots

THE highly celebrated "Helicopter Flight Experience Tour" received several thousand applications on its debut registration day on April 15 — far exceeding its quota of some 700 passengers — pushing the organizers into selecting the winners by drawing lots again.

In an interview with TDM, Deputy director of the Macao Government Tourism Office (MGTO) Ricky Hoi revealed that the quota for the tour is limited to around 700 owing to the limited passenger capacity of a helicopter and its flight schedule.

The deadline for the tour application is today, it will "soon" be followed by drawing lots digitally to select the participants.

Applicants who participated in the previous helicopter tour are also eligible for signing up for the flight this time, Hoi said, reassuring that the data of previously selected applicants had been erased.

Compared to the previous version dubbed "Macao Ready



Go! Local Tours", launched in June 2020, the current scheme not only includes six local tours, but also accommodation packages offered by the city's over 70 hotels and inns.

Among them, two staycation packages by Jai Alai Hotel and Legend Palace Hotel also offer helicopter rides. Applicants who are not selected in the forthcoming lot may take these two packages, Hoi suggested.

The helicopter tour is one of the six local tour itineraries of the domestic travel scheme dubbed "Stay, Dine and See Macao," and is also part of the government's third round of stimulus packages.

The travel scheme has been jointly organized by multiple parties, including the MGTO, Association of Macau Tourist Agents, and Macau Travel Agency Association and Travel Industry Council of Macau.

The MGTO first unveiled the particulars of the program on April 14. On the day, the director of the MGTO, Maria Helena de Senna Fernandes, already hinted at the possibility of electronically drawing lots if the number of applicants for the helicopter tour exceeds the quota.

This time's helicopter tour includes leisure and entertainment elements such as yacht sailing and afternoon tea following the

aerial trip.

In the previous scheme, the helicopter tour received applications by over 30,000 applicants. The organizer thus doubled the quota with two rounds of electronic lots, and 2,600 passengers were chosen to join the helicopter tour.

LIGHT FESTIVAL HIGHLY POSSIBLE IN DECEMBER

There is a high probability of the annual light festival returning in December this year.

Hoi added that preparations have commenced. Preliminarily, the MGTO may ask non-local vendors to plan the contents of the light festival. Afterwards, a local workforce will compile their ideas into the actual display. Furthermore, the MGTO also hopes to include mainland Chinese teams in order to make the festival more multifaceted.

Another popular event of the city, the Fireworks Display Contest, is less likely to be held this year, according to Hoi. He explained that it is still unclear if foreign technicians can enter Macau to prepare for their show, as each year the contest attracts 10 non-local teams to compete for the award.

He stressed that an evaluation on whether the fireworks contest will be held is in progress. If it will be suspended for another year, complementary activities will be held, Hoi said. **HT/AL**

TOURIST ARRIVALS HIT RECORD HIGH SINCE PANDEMIC

TOURIST arrivals in Macau reached a total of 191,828 visitors from April 9 to 15, showing an upward trend in recent days.

On Friday, the SAR welcomed 34,252 visitor arrivals, registering the highest daily record of visitor arrivals since the start of the Covid-19 pandemic.

The recent arrivals registered an average daily volume of 27,404 visitors, which surged by 111.7% compared with the average daily visitor arrivals during the Spring Festival Golden Week (12,947).

Hotel establishments saw an average occupancy rate of 61.0% between April 9 to 15, a rise of 12.7 percentage points compared to the Spring Festival Golden Week, which was 48.3%.

The Macao Government Tourism Office (MGTO) previously announced that it has been planning to launch a



series of promotions in various mainland cities. The campaigns will promote Macau as a safe and healthy destination using a hybrid format of both online and offline activities, specifically to entice more mainland holidaymakers to visit Macau after China saw some bullish tourism statistics during the Ching Ming Festival.

The MGTO is looking to boost visitor numbers over the Golden Week holiday from May 1 to 5.

Traditionally, the May Golden Week is a peak travel season for mainland tourists. However, the bureau believes that the boost in the number of tourist arrivals into the city will be predicated on a stable pandemic situation in China. **LV**

SCOOT CANCELS SG-MACAU ROUTE FLIGHTS

THE flights from Macau to Singapore intended to be operated by Singapore's low-cost airline Scoot have been canceled, according to an email the Times had access to.

Earlier this month, Scoot announced that it would launch three flights to Singapore from Macau, which would provide another option for local residents looking for flights out of Macau. According to its schedule for April, the airline would operate flights from Singapore to Macau and Macau to Singapore on April 20, 24 and 27.

The flights were scheduled to depart the SAR at 5:55 p.m. arriving in Singapore at 9:55 p.m.. A one-way ticket from Macau costs approximately HKD968.

However, a passenger received an email from Scoot noting that it would cancel the flight from Singapore to Macau on April 24 due to "operational constraints arising from the growing scale of the Covid-19."

A refund was offered amounting to 120% of the original itinerary value in the form of Scoot travel vouchers.

The Times has checked

whether all three flights were canceled. It could be seen that only a Macau to Singapore flight on April 24 was available at SGD175 (MOP1,050).

The cancellation of these flights has once again made it harder for Macau residents to travel out of Macau except to mainland China. Previously, the airline noted in a statement that the relaunch of the flights "was partly driven by moves to ease restrictions on both transit and inbound passengers in a safe and gradual manner, helping to support an increase in travel demand." **LV**

1. Depart - Macau To Singapore See whole month

Wed, Apr 21 No flights	Thu, Apr 22 No flights	Fri, Apr 23 No flights	Sat, Apr 24 SGD175.45	Sun, Apr 25 No flights	Mon, Apr 26 No flights	Tue, Apr 27 No flights
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Displayed fares are current lowest available and may not apply if you do not satisfy the booking conditions.

Sort by: Fare (lowest to highest)

MFM 17:55
Macau
Apr 24 (Sat)

4h 0m
Direct Flight

SIN 21:55
Singapore
Apr 24 (Sat)

SGD175.45

Economy ScootPlus



ANIMAL PROTECTION LAW

IAM to release animal abuse data

HONEY TSANG

THE Municipal Affairs Bureau (IAM) stated that it is now reviewing the possibility of publishing the statistics regarding violations of the Animal Protection Law, which has been in effect since September 2016.

Considering a surge in the number of cases of cruelty against animals over the past few months, lawmaker Ho Ion Sang made a written query in February, questioning the feasibility for the IAM to release the number of animal abuse cases, as well as the total number of successful prosecutions against these cases. Both of

them are currently not open data for the public to review.

In a written reply, the IAM reaffirmed that it "will provide the up-to-date prosecution number against any breaches of the law in a timely manner."

It also reassured the public that the authorities are now working closely with the Public Security Police Force in a bid to combat and prevent the relevant crimes.

The Animal Protection Law, in effect for almost five years, criminalizes any treatment of animals involving "cruel, violent or torturous" means.

Under the regulation, an abuser is subject to a maximum imprisonment of one year or a fine of up to 120 days.

It ranges from slaughter, abandonment, and inciting animals to fight with other animals or humans, to selling dogs aged under three months old.

Despite its passage, some expressed discontent that only a little progress has been carried out to protect animals from any maltreatment.

In March, the Society for Abandoned Animals (SAA) denounced the authorities, who SAA claimed only targeted pet owners for minor issues under the name of Animal Protection Law, instead of catching abusers who caused physical harm to the animals.

The SAA said the government has failed to safeguard physically abused animals.

IC U-turns on preserving 200-year-old customs checkpoint

AFTER waving away concerns over the historic values of No 5-7 Pátio do Amparo raised at an earlier Urban Planning Committee plenary, the Cultural Affairs Bureau (IC) has done a U-turn and pledged to conduct further studies on the site, Mok Ian Ian, president of the Cultural Affairs Bureau said.

At the concerned Urban Planning Committee plenary, member Lui Chak Keong

reiterated that there is scientific data to prove the historic values of the site. Given that the site was a customs checkpoint, he even stressed that it is a prominent resource for national education because it is symbolic to China's sovereignty on Macau.

The scientific data Lui mentioned is an antique map made by Portuguese military engineer Ozorio in 1831, which was pur-

chased by the Macau University of Science and Technology in 2017. The map shows that the current site falls within the area of the old customs checkpoint.

Even so, IC vice president Leong Wai Man turned down Lui's recommendation to conduct further studies, adding that the site "has no obvious archaeological values."

Over the weekend, the IC president an-

nounced the revoking of its decision and pledged to conduct further studies on the matter. Moreover, the draft development plan for the site has also been put on hold.

Mok added that previous studies of the site had not shown sufficient historic values to preserve the site.

Proving the site to be an antique customs checkpoint will very likely qualify the site as a national relic. **AL**

SHAKE SHACK OPENS WITH LOCALISED MENU



RENATO MARQUES

WORLD-FAMOUS modern-day burger chain Shake Shack opened its first restaurant in Macau over the weekend.

Located at the newly opened The Londoner Macao, the restaurant aims to bring to Macau a diverse menu which includes the worldwide classics that made the brand famous, as well as some brand-new and exclusive Macau-themed items.

The "Ginger Crush," made from blending vanilla frozen custard with ginger juice, pineapple and mango purée, is one of the new items from Shake Shack that capture the flavors of Macau. The menu is completed with the "Olá, Serradura" and the "Queen of Tart," a vanilla frozen custard dessert blended with a Portuguese egg tart and strawberry purée.

Known for its all-natural Angus beef burgers, hormone-free chicken sandwiches, and flat-top beef dogs, among others, Shake Shack aims to foster deep community investment through

premium ingredients, caring hiring practices, and inspiring designs.

The design of the restaurant was inspired by the lotus flower, a symbol of Macau, replete with Portuguese-style tiles that create a unique and homely environment for both locals and visitors.

The design of the tiles was done by local illustrator Kun Lam and named "Shake Shack Azulejos" to mark Macau's heritage. It also includes several details inspired by Macau street names.

As Macau is known for gaming, Shake Shack also presents a Macau-exclusive series of table games ranging from Mahjong, playing cards, set of dice to tic-tac-toe - all in Shake Shack style.

With the soft opening of Shake Shack, Macau joins the long list of cities and regions where the brand is already featured. Shake Shack can be found in over 300 locations, which include the USA, Hong Kong, Shanghai, Singapore, Philippines, Dubai, Mexico, Istanbul, Tokyo, and Seoul, among others.

DSEC LAYING THE GROUNDWORK FOR 2021 POPULATION CENSUS

THE Statistics and Census Service (DSEC) convened meetings with the city's tertiary institutions and associations to lay the groundwork for the city's 16th Population Census this year.

Since March, authorities have visited the institutions participating in the decennial Population Census project to jointly discuss the data collection arrangements to ensure a smooth operation.

The institutes include the City University of Macau, the University of Macau, the Macau University of Science and Technology, the Macau Hotel Association, and more.

The data collection for the 2021 Population Census will be carried out in two phases.

The first stage commenced on April 1. It covers the marine population and individuals living in collective quarters like dormitories and staff quarters, and will last until May 31.

The second phase will run from August 7 to 21 to gauge the number of households living in general housing units.

According to official data, Macau's total population was 683,100 at the end of 2020, up 3,500 year-on-year. Of this, the share of the elderly population increased by 1.0 percentage points year-on-year to 12.9%, while the share of adults dropped by 1.1 percentage points. These numbers point to a continuously aging population in Macau. **HT**

MACAU'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

ANTHONY LAM

SHENZHEN FASHION WEEK

Local designer stages latest collection

AT the recent Shenzhen Fashion Week, local designer Nuno Lopes once again staged his latest collection from his namesake brand and received positive feedback from the audience.

Not only were the clothes made in Macau, but the designer also hired an all-Macau artist team for the show, from stage visuals to music. He also invited Sofia Paiva, local artiste and Macau representative for Miss International Pageant, as a special appearance at the finale.

The inspiration behind this collection came from Lopes' Macau's roots. Due to the current global crisis and travel restrictions, Lopes, with the time spent not being able to travel abroad, has been re-introduced to and rediscovered "the beauty of this small little city with big personality," he said.

The collection is called Chandelier Dream. Inspiration was taken from the Ruins of St Paul's. Lopes imagined when it was still a church. "[It] was once the grandest cathedral in the Far East with baroque style architecture and gilded interiors," he told the Times. "There weren't any paintings that documented the grandeur of this great church, so I used my imagination and visualized that in this collection that comes with



Nuno Lopes (center)

heavy crystal beading and baroque patterns."

Meanwhile, the designer pointed out that the color scheme was heavily inspired by the mural paintings at The Chapel of Capela de Nossa Senhora da Guia on the Guia Hill.

Time was the main challenge in making this collection happen, Lopes said. It took the team only a month and a half to finish the manufacturing process. "It was quite a last-minute notice [...] that this year's Shenzhen Fashion week is going ahead," he explained.

"Production difficulties for this collection would be the hand beading all the crystal pieces on the garments and trying to find the balance between commercial and artistic."

With extended use of shiny materials such as crystals, most

of the show pieces glittered especially on the runway. It raises the concerns whether these pieces can be worn on an everyday basis, or are only suitable for special events.

"This collection at the first glance might be very extravagant but there's actually some items that can be worn on everyday occasions, such as the underwear, swim shorts, blazers and jumpers," Lopes said, adding that he is always in search of the balance between show pieces and more commercial pieces.

He thinks that it is quite a challenge because the clothes need to be eye-catching and visually one of a kind. "I think that's the magic of a fashion show," he remarked.

When asked to compare this collection with his previous golden collection, Lopes said one of his most consistent goals was to minimize the usual gold color that are normally associated with that collection.

In terms of other elements and factors, the designer thinks this collection is more refined than the previous one.

"It contains more hand beading and the use of different materials apart from just using fabrics," he explained. "We used materials such as glass and chandelier crystals to create some of the signature pieces in this collection."

AD

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世界地球日:《健康生活.生命有價.愛護地球》
Inclusive healthy and sustainable lifestyle on World Earth Day

世界地球日
系列活動
日期:2021年4月22日
時間:10:12:00

10:00-11:00 匹克球展示
11:00-11:15 植樹儀式
11:15-12:00 匹克球友誼賽

主辦單位: 澳門展現自我協會
合辦單位: 神星星河環能公益聯盟, 澳門龍騰體育會, 澳門雅辰酒店, 澳門綠色未來

World Earth Day awakens members of the Macau IC2 Association to have a healthy and sustainable lifestyle.

They believe that life is valuable and mankind should promote the core values behind World Earth Day.

More importantly, humans should make good use of the resources found on Earth and learn that these are essential for a sustainable development.

This meaningful event is open to the public.
Dress Code: Sport or Casual
- high heels are not allowed.

The Macau IC2 Association is promoting an inclusive pickleball game and a tree planting activity on 22nd April 2021 at 11am, in the beautiful garden of the Artyzen Grand Lapa Macau.

主辦單位 Organizer: 澳門「展現自我」協會 Macau IC2 Association
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Jimmy Lai

HONG KONG

LAI AND OTHER TOP ACTIVISTS SENTENCED AMID CRACKDOWN

IAIN MARLOW & CHLOE LO

HONG Kong media tycoon and pro-democracy activist Jimmy Lai was sentenced Friday to a total of 14 months in prison for attending unauthorized protests and charged with more national security offenses as authorities pursue a deluge of cases against the city's most high-profile dissidents.

Lai, 73, and the founder of the pro-democracy Apple Daily newspaper, was sentenced alongside other prominent activists for participating in two protests not approved by police in August 2019, at the height of the city's unrest.

For one of these protests, Hong Kong's "father of democracy" Martin Lee, 82, was handed a suspended sentence in the same case, as were senior lawyers and former lawmakers Margaret Ng, 73, and Albert Ho, 69, in recognition of their advanced ages and contributions to society, District Court Judge Amanda Woodcock said.

"The wrongful prosecution, conviction and sentencing of these activists underlines the Hong Kong government's intention to eliminate all political opposition in the city," Amnesty International's Asia-Pacific regional director Yamini Mishra said in a statement Friday.

'EFFECTIVE INTIMIDATION'

Earlier in the day, Lai was charged with two additional crimes under the city's sweeping national security law - another count of foreign collusion, and for

trying to help a local activist flee to Taiwan.

The developments came on a day when Lai, a well-known critic of Beijing, faced four separate court appearances. He had two sentencing, a brief hearing on his national security law offenses and also attended a separate hearing for a fraud case related to his company's office space.

"Four cases in one day? Come on, that's ridiculous," said Mark Simon, Lai's long-time deputy. "This is about showing their ability to crush the guy they think is the most powerful man in the movement. They're sending a message to everyone."

And yet Lai is only the most prominent among many Hong Kong democracy campaigners facing multiple charges for challenging Beijing's tightening grip over the financial hub following sometimes-violent protests in 2019. While Hong Kong's government maintains it's pursuing cases with no political motivations, lawyers and activists say the flood of legal proceedings is designed to deter others from organizing demonstrations and criticizing Beijing.

"This is not potential but actual, effective intimidation," said Jerome Cohen, founder of the U.S.-Asia Law Institute at the New York University School of Law and one of the U.S.'s foremost legal experts on China. "Piling on of prosecutions against many of Hong

Kong's most distinguished liberal reformers not only removes them from the active scene but also deters and suffocates others."

Hong Kong's Department of Justice did not respond to a request for comment.

The sentencing drew attention in the U.S., where House Speaker Nancy Pelosi was among members of Congress criticizing the moves on Friday morning, calling them "another sign of Beijing's assault on the rule of law."

All were charged with subversion under the security law for a plan to win Legislative Council elections, vote down the city's budget, then try and force the resignation of Hong Kong's CE

In sentencing, Judge Woodcock said she took into account the violence of previous 2019 protests and the public disruption that occurred on both days in August 2019 when she handed down jail time for all other defendants.

Also sentenced Friday were former lawmakers Lee Cheuk-yan, Au Nok-hin and Cyd Ho, as well as activist Leung "Long Hair" Kwok-hung, who received prison terms ranging from eight to 18 months for the same protest in August as Martin Lee.

Besides Lai, numerous other figures are facing multiple cases as the authorities try to ensure

the unrest of 2019 never happens again. Activists also contend the jailing of so many campaigners and lawmakers, including 47 arrested under the national security law for holding a democratic primary last summer, is to ensure the opposition camp never wins another election. The pro-democracy bloc swept polls for district offices, the lowest level of government, after the protests.

One of them facing multiple cases is Ho - the lawyer, human rights activist and former chairman of the city's opposition Democratic Party who was sentenced on Friday. He faces a total of four separate cases for attending protests.

"The mainland government is now certainly exercising what they call 'comprehensive control' over Hong Kong," Ho said ahead of the sentencing.

"They want to not only intimidate, they want to completely silence the leading dissidents by sending them to prison."

Another is Joshua Wong, who led demonstrations in 2014 and was the subject of the Netflix documentary "Joshua: Teenager vs. Superpower." He has faced four separate cases. Wong was already in jail serving a sentence for leading a protest outside police headquarters in 2019 when he was rearrested and charged with the group of 47.

All were charged with subversion under the security law for a plan to win Legislative Council

elections, vote down the city's budget, then try and force the resignation of Hong Kong's chief executive - a maneuver that is legal under the city's mini constitution.

That election was delayed by a year and is now slated for December, providing Beijing enough time to overhaul the city's electoral system in a way that allows authorities to veto any opposition candidate.

'WE WILL PREVAIL'

The financial pressure on the defendants resulting from their legal battles - particularly for full-time politicians who have lost their positions and salaries -- can be immense.

Lam Cheuk-ting, a senior figure in the Democratic Party, faces five criminal cases - including national security charges over the primary - in addition to several civil suits. He ended up selling his apartment in part to pay legal fees.

"I may be one of the politicians facing the most cases," Lam said in a previous interview. "The legal cost is a heavy burden for me." Political parties have helped with expenses, and there have been some crowd-funding efforts. Still, prosecutors have repeatedly sought -- and succeeded -- to keep many of the city's prominent activists in jail while they pile on charges.

Lee Cheuk-yan, who received a 14-month sentence in two cases Friday, still faces two separate other legal cases, and has also sold his apartment.

"I feel very peaceful because we are proud of what we have done," Lee said as he walked into the courtroom surrounded by supporters ahead of Friday's proceedings. "Though I have two sentencings today and two more trials to come I believe that if we walk together in Hong Kong for freedom and democracy, we will prevail." **BLOOMBERG**

Beijing says US 'too negative' toward China

KEN MORITSUGU, BEIJING

A top Chinese diplomat said Friday that U.S. policy toward China is "too negative" and that cooperation could be critically important as the Biden administration focuses on combatting COVID-19 and promoting economic recovery.

The U.S. appears to be highlighting confrontation and playing down cooperation, Vice Foreign Minister Le Yucheng said in a wide-ranging interview with The Associated Press.

"Such an approach, I must say, is too negative," he said, adding that it lacks "a forward-looking spirit."

China could be a partner as Biden tackles the coronavirus and the economy, he said.

"To me it is hard to imagine the two priorities can be resolved without a cooperative and healthy China-U.S. relationship," he said.

Le also signaled that China is unlikely to make any new pledges at a climate change meeting called by President Joe Biden for this week. He spoke as Biden's climate envoy, John Kerry, was discussing the issue on the second day of closed-door meetings with Chinese counterparts in Shanghai.

Chinese President Xi Jinping announced last year that China would be carbon-neutral by 2060 and aim to reach a peak in its emissions by 2030.

"For a big country with 1.4 billion people, these goals are not easily delivered," Le said. "Some countries are asking China to achieve the goals earlier. I am afraid this is not very realistic."

Le said he had no details on the Kerry meetings in Shanghai.

Biden has invited 40 world leaders, including Xi, to an April

AP PHOTO



Chinese Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs Le Yucheng speaks during an interview with the Associated Press at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Beijing

22-23 virtual climate summit. The U.S. and other countries are expected to announce more ambitious national targets for cutting emissions and pledge financial help for climate efforts by less wealthy nations.

Le said that China would convey a positive message at the meeting, but added that China is responding to climate change on its own initiative, not because others asked it to. On whether Xi would join the summit, Le said "the Chinese side is actively studying the matter."

The U.S. and China are increasingly at odds over a range of issues, including human rights in Tibet and the Xinjiang region, a crackdown on protest and political freedom in Hong Kong,

China's assertion of its territorial claims to Taiwan and most of the South China Sea and accusations Beijing was slow to inform the world about the COVID-19 outbreak that became a devastating pandemic.

China hoped for an improvement in relations under Biden, who succeeded President Donald Trump in January, but the new administration has shown no sign of backing down on hardline policies toward China. The two sides traded sharp and unusually public barbs at the start of talks in Alaska last month.

Le said that after the opening of the Alaska talks, the dialogue was constructive and useful and that both sides are following up on the issues discussed.

The two countries could team up on coronavirus response, he said, but any cooperation must be on an equal basis, an apparent reference to the U.S. pressure on China on multiple fronts.

"It is not one side drawing up a laundry list of demands to the other side," Le said. "In cooperation, one should not be selfish and care only about one's own interests with no regard for the well-being of the other side."

On the same day that a number of Hong Kong pro-democracy activists were sentenced, Le defended China's crackdown on protest in the semi-autonomous territory. He described the convicted as rioters and said "they deserve what they got."

He added, "I don't think it is

anything strange if Hong Kong somehow becomes more like a Chinese city because after all Hong Kong is part of China."

The U.K., U.S. and others have accused Beijing of reneging on a commitment to run the former British colony under a so-called "one country, two systems" framework for 50 years after its 1997 handover to Chinese rule.

Le brushed aside such critiques, saying, "Hong Kong is always China's Hong Kong and this is something that will not change."

The vice minister also condemned Western sanctions against companies accused of human rights and labor abuses in Xinjiang. The U.S. blocked imports from several companies operating in the region last year, and added a blanket ban on Xinjiang's cotton and tomato products in January.

Rather than protecting workers, Le said, "the sanctions have damaged human rights in Xinjiang, resulting in forced unemployment and forced poverty in Xinjiang."

He also repeated warnings against American government contact with Taiwan, after Biden sent a delegation of former U.S. officials to meet the island's president this week. China claims self-governing Taiwan as its territory and says, like Hong Kong, it should be under Beijing's control.

"The U.S. should never try to play the Taiwan card," Le said. "It is very dangerous. This is our red line. The U.S. should never try to cross it."

American military officials have warned that China may be accelerating its timeframe for capturing control of Taiwan. Asked if China had a deadline, Le said only that it was a "historical process." AP

HONG KONG

Trudeau Visa gets over 500 applications

KAIT BOLONGARO

JUSTIN Trudeau's special immigration initiative for Hong Kong residents received more applications than expected in its first three weeks, according to a spokesperson for Canada's immigration minister.

From Feb. 8 to 28, 524 people applied for a three-year open work permit designed for young, educated individuals from the former British colony. It also expedites their eligi-

lity to apply for permanent residency to one year.

Immigration Minister Marco Mendicino announced the new visa measures in November as a response to China's disqualification of lawmakers deemed insufficiently loyal and its crackdown on pro-democracy protests.

"With many young Hong Kongers casting their eyes abroad, we want them to choose Canada. That's why we've made extensive efforts to help them come to Canada,"

press secretary Alexander Cohen said by email Friday.

Canada's relations with China have hit their lowest point since diplomatic ties were established five decades ago. Two Canadians accused of spying were put on trial last month after more than two years behind bars. The men were locked up by Beijing shortly after the December 2018 arrest of a top Huawei Technologies Co. executive in Vancouver on a U.S. extradition request.

BLOOMBERG

BLOOMBERG



AP PHOTO



U.S. special envoy for climate John Kerry

CLIMATE CHANGE

US, China agree to cooperate on climate crisis with urgency

HYUNG-JIN KIM, SEOUL

THE United States and China, the world's two biggest carbon polluters, agreed to cooperate to curb climate change with urgency, just days before President Joe Biden hosts a virtual summit of world leaders to discuss the issue.

The agreement was reached by U.S. special envoy for climate John Kerry and his Chinese counterpart Xie Zhenhua during two days of talks in Shanghai last week, according to a joint statement.

The two countries "are committed to cooperating with each other and with other countries to tackle the climate crisis, which must be addressed with the seriousness and urgency that it demands," the statement said.

China is the world's biggest carbon emitter, followed by the United States. The two countries pump out nearly half of the fossil fuel fumes that are warming the planet's atmosphere. Their cooperation is key to a success of global efforts to curb climate change, but frayed ties over human rights, trade and China's territorial claims to Taiwan and the South China Sea have been threatening to

undermine such efforts.

Meeting with reporters in Seoul on yesterday, Kerry said the language in the statement is "strong" and that the two countries agreed on "critical elements on where we have to go." But the former secretary of state said, "I learned in diplomacy that you don't put your back on the words, you put on actions. We all need to see what happens."

Noting that China is the world's biggest coal user, Kerry said he and Chinese officials had a lot of discussions on how to accelerate a global energy transition. "I have never shied away from expressing our views shared by many, many people that it is imperative to reduce coal, everywhere," he said.

Biden has invited 40 world leaders, including Chinese President Xi Jinping, to the April 22-23 summit. The U.S. and other countries are expected to announce more ambitious national targets for cutting carbon emissions ahead of or at the meeting, along with pledging financial help for climate efforts by less wealthy nations.

It's unclear how much Kerry's China visit would promote U.S.-China cooperation on climate issues.

While Kerry was still in Shanghai, Chinese Vice Foreign Minister Le Yucheng signaled Friday that China is unlikely to make any new pledges at next week's summit.

"For a big country with 1.4 billion people, these goals are not easily delivered," Le said during an interview with The Associated Press in Beijing. "Some countries are asking China to achieve the goals earlier. I am afraid this is not very realistic."

During a video meeting with German and French leaders Friday, Xi said that climate change "should not become a geopolitical chip, a target for attacking other countries or an excuse for trade barriers," the official Xinhua News Agency reported.

On whether Xi would join the summit, Le said "the Chinese side is actively studying the matter."

The joint statement said the two countries "look forward to" next week's summit. Kerry said yesterday that "we very much hope that [Xi] will take part" in the summit but it's up to China to make that decision.

Biden, who has said that fighting global warming is among his highest priorities, had the United States rejoin

the historic 2015 Paris climate accord in the first hours of his presidency, undoing the U.S. withdrawal ordered by predecessor Donald Trump.

Major emitters of greenhouse gases are preparing for the next U.N. climate summit taking place in Glasgow, U.K., in November. The summit aims to relaunch global efforts to keep rising global temperatures to below 1.5 degrees Celsius as agreed in the Paris accord.

According to the U.S.-China statement, the two countries would enhance "their respective actions and cooperating in multilateral processes, including the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Paris Agreement."

It said both countries also intend to develop their respective long-term strategies before the Glasgow conference and take "appropriate actions to maximize international investment and finance in support of" the energy transition in developing countries.

Xi announced last year that China would be carbon-neutral by 2060 and aims to reach a peak in its emissions by 2030. In March, China's Communist Party pledged to reduce carbon emissions per unit of economic output by 18% over the next five years, in line with its goal for the previous five-year period. But environmentalists say China needs to do more.

Biden has pledged the U.S. will switch to an emissions-free power sector within 14 years, and have an entirely emissions-free economy by 2050. Kerry is also pushing other nations to commit to carbon neutrality by then. **AP**

this day in history

1995 MANY FEARED DEAD IN OKLAHOMA BOMBING



A huge car bomb has exploded at a government building in Oklahoma City killing at least 80 people including 17 children at a nursery.

At least 100 people have been injured and the number of dead is expected to rise.

In an emotional speech, President Bill Clinton vowed "swift, certain and severe" punishment for those behind the atrocity.

"The United States will not tolerate and I will not allow the people of this country to be intimidated by evil cowards," he told a White House news conference this evening.

The blast happened just after 0900 local time when most workers were in their offices. It destroyed the facade of the ten-storey Alfred Murrah Building.

One survivor said he thought there was an earthquake: "I never heard anything that loud. It was a horrible noise...the roar of the whole building crumbling."

There were scenes of chaos as paramedics treated the wounded on the pavement and rescue workers battled to dig out those still trapped in the rubble.

The building housed a children's nursery on the second floor as well as social security, customs, agriculture and the Federal Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms (ATF).

Some federal agents noted that the ATF mounted the operation two years ago today which ended the siege of David Koresh's Branch Davidian cult in Waco, Texas. However members of the cult commemorating the siege have angrily denied any connection.

The State Department would not discuss the possibility of this being a terrorist attack but the FBI and Oklahoma police put out an alert for three men believed to be of Middle Eastern origin driving a brown Chevrolet pick-up truck.

Sheikh Omar Abdel Rahman and ten of his supporters are currently on trial for the World Trade Center bombing in February 1993.

Government buildings in Washington and all over the US have been put on high alert. Federal offices in Wilmington, Boston and Rochester were evacuated after bomb scares.

Courtesy BBC News

IN CONTEXT

The Oklahoma bomb killed 168 people, including 19 children, and injured more than 500 others.

It took rescuers almost six weeks to recover the bodies of all the victims from the rubble.

Timothy McVeigh, a 33-year old Gulf War veteran, was convicted of the attack and sentenced to death by lethal injection after a two-month trial. He was executed at Terre Haute federal prison in Indiana on 11 June 2001.

The execution was watched via CCTV by about 30 people including 10 survivors of the bombing and members of the media.

The motive for the attack was apparently retaliation against the US Government for the bloody end to a siege near Waco, Texas, in which 82 members of the Branch Davidian sect died.

In December 1997 his former army colleague Terry Nichols was convicted of manslaughter and conspiracy and sentenced to life in jail.

A third man, Michael Fortier, confessed to knowing in advance about the bombing and was sentenced to 12 years after agreeing to be a key witness for the prosecution.

In 2000 a memorial to the victims was opened by President Clinton at the site of the bombing.

MACAU'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

YOUR STARS

ARIES
Mar. 21-Apr. 19
 Losses could occur if you haven't been careful when dealing with joint financial ventures. Take care that arrangements to spend quality time together are made in advance.

TAURUS
Apr. 20-May. 20
 You'll be tempted to spend extravagantly today. Listen to the problems of others and offer suggestions where possible. You may want to tell someone how you really feel.

GEMINI
May. 21-Jun. 21
 Try to be a bit more understanding or you may end up spending the evening alone. You might be overly emotional concerning situations at work.

CANCER
Jun. 22-Jul. 22
 Avoid confrontations with coworkers who aren't pulling their weight. Take care of any paperwork concerning institutional or governmental agencies. Romance will develop through work related activities.

LEO
Jul. 23-Aug. 22
 Accommodate others but not before you do your own thing. Do the proper safety checks before you go out. Try to deal with it quickly; don't dwell on past regrets. Your ideas can be put into action.

VIRGO
Aug. 23-Sep. 22
 You may want to get a little extra rest. You are prone to infections and fevers. You will meet new and exciting people if you attend social activities or sporting events.

LIBRA
Sep. 23-Oct. 22
 You are likely to be left alone if you aren't willing to bend just a little. Your changing philosophies may lead you into new circles and open doors that will give you a unique outlook on life.

SCORPIO
Oct. 23-Nov. 21
 You will do your best work on your own. You will accomplish the most in the work environment today. Your ability to dazzle others with your unique and innovative ideas will attract attention.

SAGITTARIUS
Nov. 22-Dec. 21
 Trips, educational pursuits, or projects that could lead to new outlooks should be on your agenda. Keep your cash in your pocket and offer them sound advice rather than your financial assistance.

CAPRICORN
Dec. 22-Jan. 19
 Your outgoing, aggressive nature will attract someone you've been eager to meet. Deep discussions may only lead to friction. Don't let others bully you into agreeing with them.

AQUARIUS
Jan. 20-Feb. 18
 The knowledge you have will enhance your reputation. You can get ahead if you are willing to take a partner. You are best to listen for the time being.

PISCES
Feb. 19-Mar. 20
 You will need to take a look at the renovations that are necessary and try to find the cheapest way to get things done. Alienation may be the result of a misunderstanding.

The Born Loser by Chip Sansom



SUDOKU

EASY

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

EASY+

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

MEDIUM

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

HARD

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					5			
			5	1				
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		3					7	
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1	6							

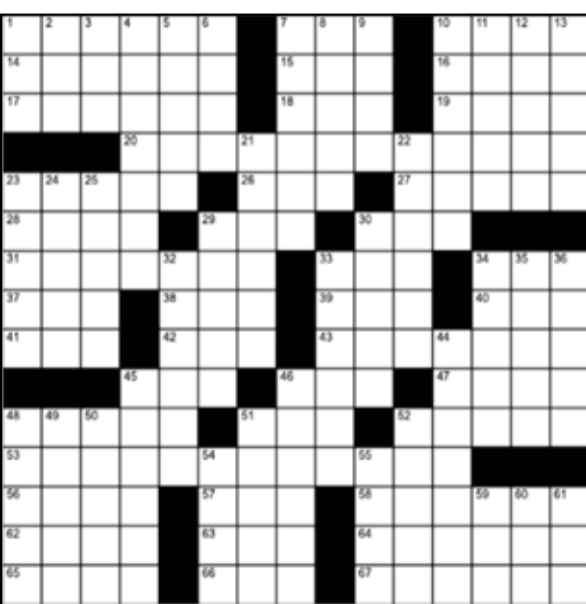
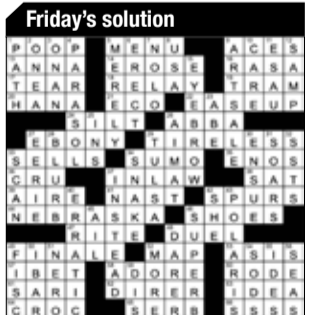
WEATHER

	MIN	MAX	CONDITION
CHINA			
Beijing	10	28	clear
Harbin	3	16	clear
Tianjin	14	28	clear
Urumqi	9	21	cloudy
Xi'an	11	22	drizzle
Lhasa	3	15	cloudy
Chengdu	13	16	drizzle
Chongqing	14	19	drizzle
Kunming	13	25	clear
Nanjing	9	23	clear
Shanghai	12	21	clear
Wuhan	11	21	cloudy
Hangzhou	11	23	clear
Taipei	18	23	cloudy
Guangzhou	19	25	shower
Hong Kong	21	23	cloudy
WORLD			
Moscow	6	9	drizzle
Frankfurt	5	10	drizzle
Paris	5	12	overcast
London	2	12	cloudy
New York	6	16	cloudy

CROSSWORDS

ACROSS 1- Hardened part of the skin; 7- Like; 10- Tears; 14- Familiarize; 15- Rejections; 16- Morales of "NYPD Blue"; 17- Lure; 18- Speck; 19- Highly ranked competitor in sporting events; 20- Occult; 23- Concerning; 26- Crosses (out); 27- Coeur d'...; 28- It may be happy; 29- Captive soldier; 30- Mus. slow-up; 31- Went in; 33- Attach by stitches; 34- Penlight battery; 37- ...Lingus; 38- Hosp. area; 39- Links org.; 40- Star Wars letters; 41- Rap's Dr. ...; 42- Airline to Stockholm; 43- Taller and thinner; 45- Sloth, for one; 46- Actor Holbrook; 47- Goofing off; 48- Burning desire?; 51- Possesses; 52- Twisted expression?; 53- Statistical data of a population; 56- Ireland; 57- Dadaist Jean; 58- African sands; 62- Lo-cal; 63- HST's successor; 64- Van Gogh masterpiece; 65- Antiquing agent; 66- Equivalent wd.; 67- Kathmandu resident;

DOWN 1- Runner Sebastian; 2- Prince Valiant's son; 3- Plastered; 4- Unhurried ease; 5- Not abridged; 6- Part of a process; 7- One of the 12 apostles; 8- Birds on Canadian coins; 9- Charles barker; 10- Outcome; 11- Grenoble's river; 12- Song of joy; 13- Move sideways; 21- Second book of the Bible; 22- Island off the SE coast of China; 23- In the future; 24- Stupid mistake; 25- Unconventional; 29- Hickory-nut; 30- Royal; 32- Ascending; 33- Spatter; 34- Line in a play directed to the audience; 35- Designer Simpson; 36- Broadcaster; 44- Affinity; 45- Oklahoman; 46- Occur; 48- Journalist ... Rogers St. Johns; 49- Outfit anew; 50- Strike hard; 51- Firm; 52- Frighten; 54- X-ray units; 55- The doctor ...; 59- Al Jolson's real first name; 60- Fam. member; 61- ... see it...;



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



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3 2



Property Hotlist



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4 3



Ocean Gardens, Taipa
\$14,000/mth
1,030 ft²
2 2



Taipa Village studio with Enclose Balcony
\$7,900/mth
360 ft²
1



More Listings

For Sale

- [Taipa] Superb Studio 1 1 650 ft² \$3,780,000 (ref: 20076001)
- [Macau] Duplex apartment 2 1 1,100 ft² \$4,680,000 (ref: 20116003)
- [Macau] Stylish apartment ZAPE 2 1 720 ft² \$7,450,000 (ref: n/a)
- [Taipa] Manhattan luxury 3 2 1,720 ft² \$12,980,000 (ref: 19096006)
- [Taipa] Manhattan D unit 4 2 2,305 ft² \$17,980,000 (ref: 18075558)

For Rent

- [Macau] One Central 2 2 1,269 ft² \$18,500/mth (ref: n/a)
- [Taipa] Manhattan spacious 3 2 1,720 ft² \$18,800/mth (ref: n/a)
- [Taipa] One Central w/ balcony 3 3 2,332 ft² \$29,800/mth (ref: 20101001)
- [Macau] Retail Shop, Barra area 1,968 ft² \$48,000/mth (ref: n/a)
- [Taipa] Commercial office- BCM building 4,100 ft² \$85,000/mth (ref: 21011001)

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BASEBALL

SEAN KAZMAR MAKES IT BACK TO MAJORS AFTER 13-YEAR ABSENCE

SARAH TROTTO, CHICAGO

SEAN Kazmar Jr. grounded into a double play — and sounded overjoyed.

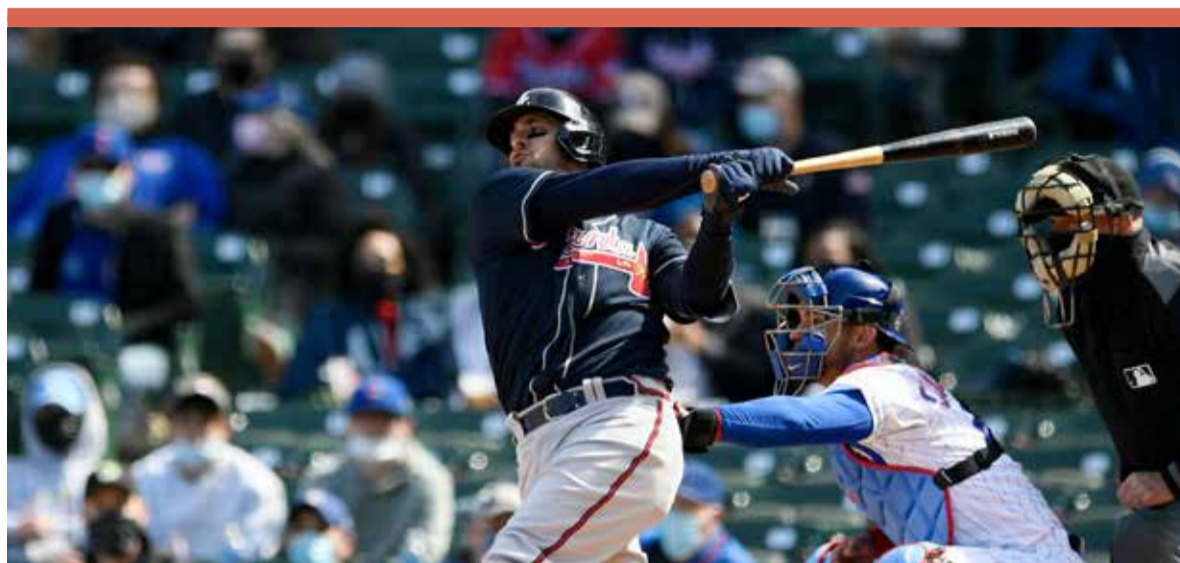
“Definitely everything and then some,” he said. “What an amazing feeling.”

While Kazmar and the Atlanta Braves lost to the Chicago Cubs 13-4, his pinch-hit appearance in the fifth inning marked the 36-year-old infielder's first major league game since Sept. 23, 2008, with the San Diego Padres — a span of 12 years, 6 months, 25 days.

“Obviously wasn't the outcome we were looking for. A win would have been nice,” he said. “But what a good feeling — just last night when Snit told me and waking up and then getting that opportunity early in the game was awesome. But, again, yeah, man, amazing feeling, and hopefully stick around a little longer.”

Kazmar was in his hotel room Friday night watching the Braves' game on television and realized his odds of a callup were getting better when Ender Inciarte injured a hamstring in the fourth inning and Ozzie Albies Jr. was hit on the

AP PHOTO



Atlanta Braves' Sean Kazmar Jr. bats during the fifth inning of a baseball game against the Chicago Cubs, Saturday

right calf by Justin Steel's pitch in the ninth.

“Watching the game and seeing everything kind of go down,” Kazmar said. “I tell guys all the time you never know in this game. And sure enough, obviously, I'm a testament to it. You never know.”

He got a call after the game to contact Braves manager Brian Snitker.

“That was probably one of the greatest moments I've had as a

manager at all the levels, quite honestly,” Snitker said. “It's amazing. You go from '08 to 2021, in between, you've got to be kidding me, to have the perseverance and the dedication and the drive.”

Kazmar was at home living on unemployment insurance last year during the COVID-19-shortened season, when the minor leagues were called.

“There could have been obvious times where I doubted

that this opportunity would ever come,” he said. “Honestly, it never really left my mind, especially the last few years that I've been playing in Gwinnett I still felt like I had the ability to play at this level. Just super fortunate to get this opportunity — one to do it with an Atlanta Braves uniform on and secondly to do it at Wrigley Field is amazing.”

Kazmar appeared in 19 games in 2008 with San Diego for his only

previous major league action, and had since played in Triple-A for the Padres, Seattle Mariners, New York Mets and Braves, plus Double-A for the Mets — a total of 1,106 minor league games.

The gap between big league appearances was the greatest since that of right-hander Ralph Winegarner, according to Elias Sports Bureau. Winegarner played on June 23, 1936, for the Cleveland Indians and did not return to the majors until July 7, 1949, with the St. Louis Browns, a span of 13 years, 14 days.

Kazmar took a curveball from Trevor Williams for a strike, fouled off two fastballs, then grounded a curveball to second for a 4-6-3 double play.

“Looking back at those 12 whatever years, 200 days, it kind of flew by in a sense,” he said. “You only get one shot at this career. It didn't seem as long as it felt.”

His wife, Jen, made it to Wrigley for the game.

“I knew my wife would drop everything she has. She was actually at our boy's — Sean III, his baseball game had just started. And luckily enough we had the in-laws in town,” the elder Kazmar said. “Her and my mom were able to rush and get on a red-eye last night. And obviously with all the (COVID-19) protocols and stuff, it's kind of weird not being able to see them. I got to say hi to them before the game.” AP

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OPINION

World Views

Clara Ferreira Marques, MDT/Bloomberg



DON'T WRITE OFF CHINA'S VACCINES – THE WORLD NEEDS THEM

It's been an awkward time for the head of the Chinese Center for Disease Control and Prevention. Gao Fu was cited over the weekend as telling a health conference that the agency was considering options to improve the efficacy of China's shots against Covid-19, which was currently "not high." His remarks, perhaps the first significant hint of official concern over the protection rate offered by homegrown vaccines, were censored. Gao hurriedly gave an interview dismissing the episode as a misunderstanding. But the harm was done — because he was right.

China's vaccines do appear to shield less effectively than those developed elsewhere. This is bad news for everyone, in a week when Johnson & Johnson's vaccine became the latest paused-over blood-clot concerns. We all need the most populous country in the world to inoculate its citizens, and to succeed in supporting vaccination drives in countries like Indonesia, the worst-infected nation in Southeast Asia. Low efficacy fuels hesitancy and, crucially, makes it harder to achieve herd immunity — the point at which normal life can resume.

But that doesn't make Beijing's shots useless. By hoarding vaccines, the Western world has left many in emerging economies uncovered. While more than 848 million doses have been administered, countries with the highest incomes are getting vaccinated 25 times faster than those with the lowest. The United States, with 4% of the world's population, has 24% of vaccinations, according to Bloomberg's Covid-19 tracker. For the have-nots, a stopgap shot that may at least keep people out of under-resourced hospitals is well worth it.

First, the problems. Sinovac Biotech Ltd.'s shot posted efficacy levels of just above 50% in a final-stage trial in Brazil, narrowly clearing the minimum required by most regulators. Other Chinese immunizations have delivered rates between 66% and 79%, still below leading Western alternatives. Russia's Sputnik is above 90%.

Part of the trouble may well be the technology. Inactivated virus vaccines, like Sinovac, use a proven method, but one that generally induces antibody-mediated immunity and requires a substance called an adjuvant to help strengthen the response. Other options do better, particularly cutting-edge shots developed by BioNTech SE/Pfizer Inc. and Moderna Inc., which use messenger RNA to tell the body how to fight Covid-19. China is developing its own mRNA candidates, but the most advanced is only just preparing to begin late-stage trials.

It hasn't helped that China has been so reluctant to publish peer-reviewed trial data for its main vaccines, making even acceptable rates appear less secure, hard to compare and open for debate.

This is adding up to a significant problem at home. Beijing's propaganda machine spent months denigrating alternatives and telling people that not only had China made vaccines domestically, but that they were the best. Finding otherwise, as information trickles down, will feed suspicion in a population already hesitant due to past scares.

That matters, given that lower efficacy rates also require a higher percentage of people to receive injections before China can reach levels that protect 1.4 billion. Troublesome vaccine gaps might increase vulnerability, Nicholas Thomas, associate professor at the City University of Hong Kong, told me — especially if people return to old social behaviors, and coronavirus variants come in through regions like the porous border with Myanmar. Informal trade networks reaching into large cities then become vectors for the disease. So far, 179 million doses have been administered in China, far from an official target of vaccinating 40% of the population by the end of June.

The problem stretches abroad, too. With many left behind in the scramble, China has distributed vaccine aid and sold shots to dozens of countries, usually friendly or geopolitically significant — United Arab Emirates, Mexico, Serbia — often competing with Russia and India. Now, Beijing is dealing with embarrassing questions. Chile, which bet big on Sinovac and has moved quickly to vaccinate, is still seeing high daily infection rates.

Yet while efficacy is important — how a vaccine works in trials — it isn't everything. Ease of storage, price and availability all matter, too, and there Chinese options do better. [abridged]

NAVALNY'S DOCTOR: PUTIN CRITIC 'COULD DIE AT ANY MOMENT'

A doctor for imprisoned Russian opposition leader Alexei Navalny, who is in the third week of a hunger strike, says his health is deteriorating rapidly and the 44-year-old Kremlin critic could be on the verge of death.

Physician Yaroslav Ashikhmin said Saturday that test results he received from Navalny's family show him with sharply elevated levels of potassium, which can bring on cardiac arrest, and heightened creatinine levels that indicate impaired kidneys.

"Our patient could die at any moment," he said in a Facebook post.

Anastasia Vasilyeva, head of the Navalny-backed Alliance of Doctors union, said on Twitter that "action must be taken immediately." Navalny is Russian President Vladimir Putin's most visible and adamant opponent.

His personal physicians have not been allowed to see him in prison. He went on hunger strike to protest the refusal to let them visit when he began experiencing severe back pain and a loss of feeling in his legs. Russia's state penitentiary service has said that Navalny is receiving all the medical help he needs.

THE BUZZ

AP PHOTO



FASHION INDUSTRY EVOLVES, AS VIRUS FORCES A RETHINK

THOMAS ADAMSON & FRANCOIS MORI, PARIS

THE pandemic has torn a multibillion-dollar bite out of the fabric of Europe's fashion industry, stopped runway shows and forced brands to show their designs digitally instead.

Now, amid hopes of a return to near-normality by the year's end, the industry is asking what fashion will look like as it dusts itself off and struggles to its well-heeled feet again.

Answers vary. Some think the Fashion Week format, in use since the 1940s, will be radically rethought. Others believe Asia will consolidate its huge gains in influence. Many see brands seeking greater sustainability to court a younger clientele.

"The impact of the pandemic will be unquestionably to increase the importance and influence of Asia on fashion," said Gildas Minvielle, economist at the Institut Francais de la Mode in Paris.

"Luxury in Europe has already rebounded but it's only because it's globalized, only because of Asian buyers," Minvielle said. "They spent on European brands."

Asian buyers are still considered a largely untapped market, yet their wealth has recently tipped over that of Westerners. China, in particular, was already considered the worldwide engine of growth in the luxury industry before the pandemic. Its quicker containment of the

virus will leave it in an even stronger position.

"In the next 50 years money will come from the East as it has been [coming] in the last 50 years from the West," said Long Nguyen, chief fashion critic of The Impression.

This could see a designer aesthetic that panders more to Chinese tastes.

Another trend that's been strengthened during the pandemic is the decision to forgo the frenetic pace of runway calendar shows.

As the virus tore across the globe from East to West, these morphed overnight from a live, in-person, sensory experience to a pre-taped digital display released online. Many predicted devastation for the industry, but houses have proved surprisingly resilient. That's because the system was already overdue a shift.

Since the advent of social media, brands have become much less reliant on traditional advertising outlets such as fashion magazines. Now, they create their own online channels, circumventing the glossies, to get their designs out.

"Each brand is a media entity unto itself," Nguyen said, calling the way the industry operates "obsolete."

Moreover, as buyers themselves move online, houses have necessarily become much less dependent on traditional sales outlets such as department stores.

Some houses have done better than expected with the new digital format.

Smaller brands, in particular, have welcomed the break from staging runway shows that can be astronomically expensive — for relatively little return.

Paris couture designer Julien Fournie said the virus has led him to question "whether fashion shows were really necessary" in the first place.

The virus saw many brands, including Balenciaga, Alexander McQueen and Bottega Veneta of French luxury giant Kering, tearing up the traditional calendar to show their new collections when it suits them — both creatively and financially. Saint Laurent started the trend last year, drawing headlines for quitting Paris Fashion Week to "take control of its pace."

The advantage for these brands is to set dates on their own terms, with collections that don't compete with others for attention at the same time. Yet many nostalgic critics, buyers and consumers argue that nothing can replace the physical runway experience.

"Brands have been deciding more and more when their optimal time to show is [...] They want to control their business more and that is their right," Pascal Morand, Paris fashion federation Executive President.

"But this is not the end to Fashion Week. No matter what people say they are all awaiting a return to the runway and to come back to the physical experience." MDT/AP

Iran's daily coronavirus death toll climbed over 400 for the first time in months yesterday, as the country, which has long had the region's largest outbreak, battles a post-holiday infection surge. Iranian health authorities recorded 405 fatalities from the virus, pushing the total death toll to 66,732. Officials increasingly have warned about the impact of trends seen nationwide during the Persian New Year, or Nowruz.

AP PHOTO



Russia's main security agency says it has arrested two Belarusians who it said were preparing a plot to overthrow Belarus' government and kill authoritarian President Alexander Lukashenko. One of the men arrested, Aleksandr Feduta, was Lukashenko's spokesman when he was first elected in 1994, but later joined the opposition. The other, lawyer Yuras Zyankovich, has dual Belarusian-U.S. citizenship.

AP PHOTO



Czech Republic announced that it was expelling 18 Russian diplomats who it has identified as spies in a case related to a huge ammunition depot explosion in 2014. Prime Minister Andrej Babis said the move is based on "unequivocal evidence" provided by the Czech intelligence and security services that points to the involvement of Russian military agents in the massive explosion in an eastern town that killed "two innocent fathers."

AP PHOTO



German defense minister says she wants to help bring some Afghan employees of her country's military to Germany as it prepares to leave Afghanistan after nearly 20 years. NATO allies including Germany are set to join the United States in pulling their remaining troops out of Afghanistan, starting on May 1. Germany currently has just over 1,000 troops participating in the mission there, and about 300 local employees.