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**THE HEALTH AUTHORITY IS NOW CONSIDERING TO PUSH BACK THE IMPORT OF ASTRAZENECA COVID-19 VACCINES UNTIL 2022**

**BUS DRIVERS IN TROUBLE AFTER DANGEROUS DRIVING BEHAVIOR**

**THE VIP SEGMENT RAKED IN SOME MOP9.13 BILLION IN THE FIRST QUARTER SURPASSING PROJECTIONS BY BANKING GROUPS**



**Japan's** government said it is asking Myanmar to release a Japanese journalist (pictured) who was arrested by security forces in its largest city of Yangon the previous day. Chief Cabinet Secretary Katsunobu Kato told reporters that his government is asking Myanmar authorities to explain the arrest and release him as soon as possible.

**Philippines** An approaching typhoon has flooded villages in the eastern and central Philippines, where more than 68,000 people have been evacuated to safety as a precaution although the unusual summer storm may not blow inland. Typhoon Surigae was about 235 km east of eastern Catanduanes province yesterday afternoon with sustained winds of 195 kph and gusts of up to 240 kph. It is forecast to slowly move northwestward and then veer eastward away from the northern Philippines around Thursday.



**Australia's** government reversed a decision to strip soldiers of unit citations due to war crime allegations in Afghanistan and announced an inquiry into suicides among veterans and serving members of the military. Australian Defense Chief Angus Campbell had decided to take citations from more than 3,000 special forces troops after a military report released in November found evidence that Australian soldiers unlawfully killed 39 Afghan prisoners, farmers and civilians.

More on backpage

# BIG SPENDING

**THE GOVERNMENT PROPOSES TO INJECT AN ADDITIONAL MOP9.11 BILLION TO THE 2021 BUDGET TO FACILITATE THE THIRD STIMULUS SCHEME AND OTHER SPENDING**



**NEW IMMIGRATION LAW**

## IRIS RECOGNITION SYSTEM NEEDED TO SAFEGUARD PUBLIC INTERESTS, SECURITY

AP PHOTO



## NASA MAKES HISTORY WITH FIRST FLIGHT ON MARS

COVID-19

# VACCINATION INSURANCE WILL NOT COVER FACIAL NERVE PARALYSIS CASE: SSM

HONEY TSANG

**T**HE insurance program, purchased by the SAR government for local inoculation participants, will not cover the city's second serious adverse event, which involved a 27-year-old male being afflicted with facial nerve paralysis following the inoculation.

The statement was made by Dr Tai Wa Hou, coordinator of the Health Bureau's (SSM) Covid-19 Vaccination Operation, at yesterday's Covid-19 media briefing.

The current vaccination insurance scheme covers local residents only for "death or severe physical disability," confirmed to be caused by Covid-19 vaccines, he added.

"The facial nerve paralysis, in this case, is not considered as severe physical disability and thus will not be covered," Tai explained.

In addition, the link between



the vaccination and facial nerve paralysis has not been confirmed as yet, Tai explained. The dedicated medical team has not yet come together for the scheduled meeting to make a conclusion for the incident's cause, he said.

"The meeting is set to be held in the coming days," Tai said and vowed that the investigation re-

sults as to whether the incident is related to mRNA vaccine will be laid bare to the public in due course.

If the link between facial paralysis, also known as Bell's palsy, and vaccination is confirmed in the aforementioned case, the SSM will provide guidelines for the concerned individual regar-

ding the inoculation with the second dose.

"If it's proven as a coincidental event, the individual can for sure proceed with the original plan to take the second jabs," he added.

Leong Iek Hou, coordinator at the Center for Disease Control and Prevention, emphasized that "the adverse event" is not dee-

med identical to "the side effects" following the jabs.

As of 4 p.m. yesterday, the event was the second among the city's 353 reported adverse events after vaccination.

The first case was reported on April 16. The involved individual received the first dose of BioNTech-produced mRNA vaccine on March 20 and developed a slight headache on April 10 and manifested more serious symptoms on April 14, such as facial asymmetry, tearing, and difficulty in closing his eyelids.

The patient was admitted to the Kiang Wu Hospital on April 14 and discharged a day later on April 15.

"In general, it takes around three to six months for the symptoms of facial nerve paralysis to go away," Tai said.

Bell's palsy is not considered as "rare" in Macau, with an incidence ratio of two out of 100,000 people, Tai said.

## French chamber to hold gala dinner to raise MOP50,000

LYNZY VALLES

**T**HE France Macau Chamber of Commerce's (FMCC) annual gala dinner will finally be held at MGM Macau on May 28 after being postponed last year due to the Covid-19 outbreak.

Themed "A Night at the Museum," FMCC's 2021 Charity Gala Dinner will be held to raise funds, for the third year, for Macao Fok Sin Association's (MFS) project, "Visit the Elderly."

The project includes organizing personal visits and handing gifts to unprivileged local elderly with low mobility, who lack emotional and financial support and miss out on having caring family members.

Both FMCC and MFS are aiming to raise MOP50,000.

The FMCC expects to raise the amount again this year through raffle tickets' sales where prizes can be won.

In the last charity gala dinner in 2019, the FMCC raised MOP70,000 to support MFS' similar project.

During that year, FMCC members joined hands with MFS and conducted visits to underprivileged elderly households in the social housing complex of Ilha Verde district and Coloane. The group of volunteers distributed gift packages to more than 200 elderly households. Each kit contained a FMCC customized blanket, organic rice, cooking oil, soya sauce, noodles and oatmeal.

Following this partnership, the French chamber decided to renew their

support to MFS for a third time, with the aim of bringing "warmness and care for the unprivileged elderly."

In recent years, the group raised funds to benefit numerous Macanese charity organizations, with the intention to support the local community in different ways.

The finalized program for the event is yet to be updated.

In FMCC's statement written last year, it stated that the dinner "will take you into the world of the most famous temples of art. Celebrate with us iconic museums such as [the] Louvre, le Musee d'Orsay and the Centre Pompidou."

The Times is a media partner of the upcoming event.

## BUS DRIVERS IN TROUBLE AFTER VIRAL SOCIAL MEDIA FOOTAGES

**T**WO videos circulating on social media platforms which displayed the dangerous driving behavior of two local bus drivers were used as grounds by bus companies Transportes Colectivos de Macau (TCM) and Transportes Urbanos de Macau (Transmac) to enforce sanctions on their drivers.

In the most serious case, the driver of a 3A route bus operating under TCM was dismissed from the company.

Footage on social media captured by a surveillance camera of a private vehicle following the bus shows the vehicle coming out from its lane at Rua dos Lorchas and going into the traffic lane in the opposite direction to overtake several vehicles stopped in traffic.



The company responded almost immediately through their official Facebook page, apologizing to the public for the actions of the driver, noting that he had been immediately suspended from his duty. Later, the company acknowledged the decision to dismiss the driver from his duties.

In the second case, which occurred the following day, a Transmac 17 route bus was portrayed traveling in the wrong way at Rua de Pedro Coutinho.

A note from a company pointed out that the driver of the bus on the line had made a mistake in his itinerary and had corrected it immediately, causing no harm.

Following the case, Transmac also said that after a preliminary evaluation, the company decided to suspend the driver for an undisclosed time, adding that in the meantime, he will be cooperating with the police authorities by filing a detailed report on the case. **RM**

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

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

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

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**ADMINISTRATOR & CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER**

Kowie Geldenhuys kowie@macaudailytimes.com  
**OFFICE MANAGER** Juliana Cheang juliana@macaudailytimes.com  
**ADDRESS** Av. da Praia Grande, 599, Edif. Comercial Rodrigues, 12 Floor C, MACAU SAR **Telephones:** +853 287 160 81/2 **Fax:** +853 287 160 84  
**Advertisement** advertising@macaudailytimes.com  
**For subscription and general issues:** general@macaudailytimes.com | Printed at Welfare Printing Ltd

HONEY TSANG

COVID-19

# Gov't mulls suspending AstraZeneca vaccines until next year

**T**HE government is now considering to push back the import of AstraZeneca Covid-19 vaccines until 2022, Dr Tai Wa Hou, coordinator of the Health Bureau's Covid-19 Vaccination Operation disclosed at yesterday's Covid-19 media briefing.

The importing of AstraZeneca Covid-19 vaccine from the manufacturer to Macau is confirmed to not be happening this year, he confirmed.

"The import suspension of AstraZeneca does not involve any cancellation nor violation against the procurement agreements," Tai stressed, adding that the SAR government has been maintaining discussions with the manufacturer to ensure a smooth operation.

In terms of BioNTech-produced mRNA vaccine, the government has administered around

7,000 doses so far, out of the 50,000 mRNA vaccines supplied which are valid until August 2021.

Considering that the average dose of mRNA vaccine administered daily stood at around 500, the remaining available 40,000 doses of mRNA vaccines are still considered sufficient for use in the coming months, he stressed.

When asked by the media about a possible large amount of unused and expired mRNA vaccine after August, Tai confirmed that the Health Bureau (SSM) is now liaising with the vaccine's



BLOOMBERG

manufacturer in order to come to an agreement to dispatch the mRNA vaccine in small batches in several phases to Macau.

This proposed move is to minimize the number of mRNA vaccines expiring without being used, he added.

Up to now, Macau had received three batches of BioNTech mRNA vaccines — the first, valid until June this year, was suspended for its use due to the packaging defects found on the bottle caps, whilst

the second and third batches, both due in August, amounted to a total of 50,000 doses.

Since yesterday, the SAR government has increased the days for mandatory quarantine for all arrivals from India, Pakistan and the Philippines from the original 21 days to 28 days.

Following that, the concerned individuals are not required to observe a seven-day self-health monitoring.

Leong Iek Hou, coordinator

at the Center for Disease Control and Prevention, emphasized that the stricter measures are intended to minimize the risk for the Covid-19 mutants spreading from these particular high-risk countries to Macau.

She also said the SSM will not rule out any possibility to tighten the anti-pandemic measures for arrivals from Hong Kong, which also reported cases of mutant coronavirus strains over the past few days.

## KIANG WU HOSPITAL TO OFFER SINOPHARM VACCINE STARTING TODAY

**STATING** from today, the Kiang Wu Hospital will offer inoculations of inactivated vaccine, developed by China's state-owned pharmaceutical company Sinopharm Group, for local residents and bluecard holders.

The hospital will be the city's 13th vaccination center. The registration for vaccination at Kiang Wu Hospital starts at 10 a.m. today and its inoculation is slated to be available after 11 a.m. today.

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### LAWMAKER CALLS FOR TIMELINE FOR CAPPING RESORT TNRS

In his recent written inquiry, lawmaker Ng Kuok Cheong requested that the government to ask gambling concessionaires to reduce non-resident workforce to below 20% within an institutionalized period. Ng explained that currently Macau still retains a non-resident workforce of more than 170,000 people. However, a significant number of local laborers are either unemployed or forced to furlough. He describes further acceptance of a resident workforce as reasonable and practical.

### GIRL INJURED BY FALLING FROM CHIMNEY WHILE PLAYING

A nine-year-old girl was injured when she fell from a concrete chimney while playing with another girl at the rooftop level of a residential building near Praça de Ponte e Horta on Sunday. The girl sustained bruises on her head and face. According to the Fire Services Bureau, she was conscious when sent to the Kiang Wu Hospital and was accompanied by her family members.

RENATO MARQUES



### NEW IMMIGRATION LAW

# GOV'T REAFFIRMS THE NEED TO COLLECT TRIPLE BIOMETRICAL DATA

RENATO MARQUES

**T**HE government has reaffirmed the need to collect three different types of biometrical data for border control. The measure, based upon the new immigration law and currently undergoing an analysis by the Third Standing Committee of the Legislative Assembly (AL), is justified due to the changes that can occur to the face and fingerprints. The committee added that enforcing a retinal scan and an iris recognition system can safeguard the public interests and security.

According to lawmaker and chairman of the Third Standing Committee, Vong Hin Fai, this was the explanation given by the security authorities during yesterday's meeting at the AL, where Wong Sio Chak, Secretary for Security, was to respond to a list of questions by com-

mittee members regarding the bill.

The topic follows the inclusion of Article 16 of the Second Chapter in the bill, which is dedicated to the border control movement. The article notes that besides fingerprints, hand prints and facial recognition, retinal scans or iris recognition will be also enforced.

"The government justifies [this inclusion] with changes that can occur to the face and to hand and finger prints, and that by adding this third category, it contributes to safeguarding public interests and public security since [iris and retina] cannot be [modified]," Vong said when questioned on the topic by the media.

The chairman also noted that the government has presented a detailed list of the countries and regions that also use these methods, although noting that the use of iris and re-

tina recognition is not as common as the use of fingerprints and facial recognition.

"Still, we saw places like Singapore are already using the retina and iris [as ways] to ensure the identity of a person," Vong said.

The committee members also raised further questions as none of the bill's legal provisions clearly states how long the biometric data will be stored.

Replying to one such question, the government explained that this matter will be regulated through an administrative guideline that will be produced at a later stage. As a general rule, information on all kinds of personal data is usually kept for a maximum of five years, Vong said. He remarked that there is an apparent intent from the government to create a regime of exception that allows them to keep data for over five

years in "some particular cases," but he did not mention the situations in which this occurs.

In the future, Vong also expects that the sharing of the biometric data between several governmental departments or bureaus will increase so as to facilitate certain procedures, explaining that it "is the sharing of the fingerprint data among services that allow us to use the automatic border passages."

At the start of the press briefing after the committee's meeting, the chairman also noted that the analysis of this bill is going at a good pace and the aim, as previously mentioned, is to have it finally approved at the plenary before September this year.

Ensuring that the focus remains on this goal, the meeting held yesterday morning was also attended by AL's vice president Chui Sai Cheong.

## Entry bans without restrictions

RENATO MARQUES

**T**HE new immigration law being analyzed by the Legislative Assembly's (AL) Third Standing Committee

does not establish time limits for the enforcement of entry bans over people caught in unlawful activities, although the government says it is willing to negotiate

with lawmakers on that matter.

This was one of the outcomes of yesterday's meeting at the AL between the members of the committee and go-

vernment representatives, said the committee chairman, Vong Hin Fai, in the press briefing that followed the meeting.

One of the articles analyzed yesterday morning was Article 8, which regulates the banning of entry into Macau. On the matter, lawmakers questioned the government on the absence of an upper limit for the bans.

According to Vong, the government explained that both the current and new laws do not establish a maximum period that one person can be prevented from entering Macau, a



fact that, in the words of Secretary for Security Wong Sio Chak as cited by Vong, was "never was a problem in the past."

Vong noted that in Macau's general laws enforced by the courts, there are cases where the courts issued legal opinions expressing that such bans should not exceed 10 years. He no-

ted that the 10 year time frame comes from a law that regulates the penalties to be imposed on such organized crime.

Nevertheless, Vong said that the government expresses that it is open to negotiating the inclusion of an upper limit, although a concrete number has not yet been mentioned.

### GOV'T DEFINES 'LIVELIHOOD RESOURCES' FOR VISITORS TO MOP500 PER DAY

**T**HE figure is not new, but the immigration authorities has defined what can be understood as "enough livelihood resources" when entering Macau. The authorities acknowledged that the amount in use is based on the calculation of MOP5,000 per person for a maximum of 10 days, equaling to MOP500 per day. This is the sum that visitors need to prove that they possess to be allowed to enter the Special Administrative Region, the Secretariat

for Security clarified in response to lawmakers' questions during the analysis of the new immigration law at the Legislative Assembly (AL).

To clarify on how the proof can be made, chairman of the Third Standing Committee Vong Hin Fai noted, "probably this can be done through a credit card or by presenting the mobile phone with an electronic payment application."

ANTHONY LAM

**I**F the proposed amendments to the local laws governing the use and protection of the national flag and emblem go through the parliament, contents on the Chinese flag will be added to the curriculum in foundational education levels.

Currently, teaching the national anthem is part of the local curriculum.

In addition, if the law amendments are passed, the media organizations, especially TV stations which have been assisting on the promotion and familiarization of the national anthem, shall be required to include contents on the national flag and emblem.

The information was announced at an Executive Council (ExCo) press conference yesterday.

The ExCo has concluded the discussion of several draft laws and regulations, with the law amendment related to the flag and emblem being a focus.

In the proposal, there are five main amendments or additions to the existing law, the Law 5/1999 – The Use and Protection of the National Flag, Emblem and Anthem, besides the inclusion of national flag and emblem in the curriculum.

It encourages local residents to use the

# Chinese flag part of mandatory curriculum after law review

flag on appropriate occasions. It also proposes the institutionalization of wearing the emblem in solemn occasions.

The size of the national flag and emblem has also been proposed. For example, the flag and the emblem must be resized following common ratios. When used, the size of the flag, post and the emblem must be in proportion.

The flag and the emblem will not be a registered trademark. Inversion and mis-disposal of the flag will also be forbidden.

Details will also be institutionalized when the flag is used to show condolences or at funerals.

The 13th Session of the National People's Congress's Standing Committee has made certain amendments to the National Flag Law and the National Emblem Law on national level. Hence, the local law should be reviewed to follow suit.

The amendments will only take effect if the Legislative Assembly passes them.

MACAU PHOTO AGENCY



## MOP9.11b to be used from reserves in reviewed budget

ANTHONY LAM

**T**HE government proposes to use MOP9.11 billion from its reserves to support this year's budget, the Executive Council (ExCo) announced yesterday.

In order to facilitate the proposed stimulus scheme, as well as other necessary government spending amid a less prosperous economy, the government has to amend the budget for this year. The amendments must be passed by the Legislative Assembly to take effect.

The new budget, if approved, will amount to MOP103.5 billion.

Among the MOP9.11 billion, MOP5.88 billion will be used to kick-off the consumption stimulation scheme. The government proposed to offer each registered resident MOP5,000 as a commencement fund for the scheme.

The government is also in touch with the eight mobile payment companies to remind them to finalize their respective privileges or promotions by the end of this month, so that residents will have enough time to choose which platform they want their commencement funds to be injected.

MACAU PHOTO AGENCY



Besides, the government also proposes to save funds for the Health Bureau for the purposes of Covid-19 containment and prevention, as well as funds for the construction of the Heng-qin Port at the Macau checkpoint.

In terms of income, the government proposes to implement further tax waiver, causing an extra decline to its expected income this year.

With regards to professional tax refund for the fiscal year 2019, the government proposes to raise the percentage from 60% to 70%. The monetary ceiling, meanwhile, will be raised from MOP14,000 to MOP20,000.

It means that a maximum of 70% paid professional tax by an individual, or MOP20,000, whichever lower, in 2019 will be returned to the taxpayer.

As for revenue supplementary tax, the government proposes to set

a deduction ceiling at MOP300,000.

Tourism tax will be waived between May 11 and December 31 on hotels, gyms, saunas, massage parlors, karaoke studios, as well as other tourism-related entertainment venues.

### SUBSIDIZED TRAINING SCHEME

The ExCo has also discussed some changes to the subsidized training scheme. When the Executive Regulations come into force, prospective applicants will have the chance to sign up for two programs from each of the two plans, namely the Vocationally Directed Plan and the Skill Improvement Plan.

Meanwhile, those who have already attended courses from the Skill Improvement and Vocational Training Program will have the chance to sign up for one program from the Vocationally Directed Plan.

GAMING

## VIP Q1 GGR OUTPERFORMS BROKERAGES' PROJECTIONS

HONEY TSANG

**T**HE VIP segment raked in approximately MOP9.13 billion in the first quarter (Q1) of 2021, up 19.7% quarter-to-quarter, the Gaming Inspection and Coordination Bureau revealed. The actual VIP performance surpassed projections by banking groups.

During the first three months of 2021, the VIP sector accounted for 38.6% of the aggregate casino gross gaming revenue (GGR), up 3.7 percentage points from the previous quarter, yet down 10.0 percentage points year-on-year.

The VIP GGR in this quarter is equivalent to 24.5% of 2019, totaling to MOP37.2 billion — which fares slightly better than the forecast by the international investment banking group JP Morgan, of around 19% of pre-Covid level.

The 19.7% quarterly increase in VIP GGR in Q1 2021 also bucked the projection of another separate banking enterprise, Morgan Stanley, which stated earlier that the VIP revenue would decline by "3% quarter-on-quarter to USD0.6 billion."

Prior to the release of

BLOOMBERG



VIP gaming statistics, JP Morgan issued a statement on April 14, in which it regarded Macau's VIP casino sector as "bad," since it "showed little sign of improvement despite border opening last year."

The growth of VIP GGR has been suppressed by "supply-side issues", including a series of reforms and clamp-downs imposed by the Chinese government that have been hamstringing "junkets' ability to engage with players and provide liquidity," JP Morgan explained.

Whilst the VIP segment has been sluggish since the Covid-19 outbreak, the mass GGR has gained much momentum.

According to the official data, the mass market generated MOP14.5 billion during Q1 2021, climbing modestly by 2.15% from the last quarter.

In terms of proportion,

the mass share segment accounted for 61.4% of total casino GGR, which showed a 10 percentage points increase year-over-year, yet down 3.7 percentage points from the previous quarter.

The mass GGR stood at 37.3% of the barometer in Q1 2019 — approximating pre-pandemic levels.

JP Morgan has been sanguine about the mass market. It is anticipating a greater momentum in rebounding into the second quarter and beyond, driven by several favorable factors such as a rapid revival of China's outbound tourism market during the Ching Ming Festival, and a "stabilizing Covid-19 situation in Hong Kong."

Overall, Macau registered MOP23.6 billion in total GGR in the first quarter, up 8.3% quarter-over-quarter, yet down 22.5% compared to the same period last year.

BLOOMBERG

TECHNOLOGY

# TENCENT'S MA DANGLES BILLIONS IN AID AS ANTITRUST SCRUTINY GROWS



ZHEPING HUANG & COCO LIU

**T**ENCENT Holdings Ltd. founder Pony Ma pledged \$7.7 billion toward curing societal ills and lifting China's countryside out of poverty, echoing Xi Jinping's priorities at a time Beijing is tightening its grip on internet giants.

The billionaire chief executive officer yesterday pledged to set aside 50 billion yuan for a "sustainable social values" program, in what would be one of China's largest corporate charity initiatives. Tencent promised to tackle a ple-

thora of issues from renewable energy and scientific education to health care and rural revitalization - a centerpiece of Xi's overarching policy framework. The gaming and social media giant intends to fold its existing foundation and philanthropic activity into a new unit to oversee the initiative, which also encompasses carbon neutrality, the provision of food, water and energy, and general public welfare.

The program coincides with a period of intensified scrutiny over the growing power and influence of China's largest corporations

from Tencent to Alibaba Group Holding Ltd., which received a \$2.8 billion fine for allegedly abusing its market dominance. Regulators are now said to be eyeing Tencent, China's largest publisher of games and content for a billion-plus people on WeChat. Last week, the Shenzhen-based company pledged to comply with antitrust laws and eradicate monopolistic practices.

"Tencent should continue to respond to the ever-changing needs of the public and of the era, so as to develop and prosper together with society as a whole,"

Ma said in a memo to employees published online.

Tencent's ear-marked budget could rank among the world's largest corporate philanthropic endeavors - total U.S. charitable giving from individuals, non-profits and corporations surpassed \$449 billion in 2019, according to the Giving USA foundation. The Chinese company has only just completed one of the year's biggest Asian dollar-bond deals and had about \$23 billion of cash and equivalents at the end of December.

Corporations around the wor-

ld have in recent years stepped up philanthropy and so-called ESG or environmental, social and governance efforts, in part because investors are paying more attention to this area. China itself has launched campaigns to clean up the environment, worried about the toll pollution could take on the economy as well as its people. Ahead of an annual meeting of top officials this year, Ma led research into low-carbon industries and submitted a proposal to lawmakers regarding carbon neutrality for tech companies. **BLOOMBERG**

COVID-19

## Hong Kong to ban flights from the Philippines, India, Pakistan

FELIX TAM & NATALIE LUNG

**H**ONG KONG will ban flights from India, Pakistan and the Philippines for 14 days starting from today as the city reported the first two cases with highly transmissible virus variant in the community over the weekend.

Visitors who have stayed in the three countries for more than two hours in the past 21 days will also be restricted from boarding any passenger flights to Hong Kong, the government said on Sunday, adding the countries are now classified as areas of "extremely high risk."

The bans stem from a circuit breaker arrangement that Hong Kong has instituted, which was triggered for each of the countries as there had been five or more arrivals with the N501Y mutant coronavirus strain within seven days, it said. The strain was first detected in South Africa.

The moves come after

Hong Kong reported the first two cases of a mutant coronavirus strain in the community over the weekend, another hurdle in the city's efforts to bring ongoing waves of Covid cases fully under control. Officials are trying to convince skeptical residents to get vaccinated - seen as key to

re-opening the economy and reviving travel.

Neighboring Macau will also require visitors who have been to the three countries to quarantine for 28 days at a designated place upon arrival, according to a government statement.

COMPULSORY TESTING

Hong Kong quarantined 81 residents of a building in a densely populated Kowloon neighborhood on Saturday, after a man who had traveled to Hong Kong from Dubai initially tested positive for a mutant strain of Covid-19.

Hong Kong has im-



posed a compulsory testing order to people who visited places that had been patronized by the two people infected with the strain at any time on April 11, including parts of the massive Harbour City shopping complex in

Tsim Sha Tsui. "As one of the local cases with unknown sources announced yesterday involved the N501Y mutant strain, we have to conduct more extensive compulsory testing," the government said. **MDT/BLOOMBERG**

**The moves come after Hong Kong reported the first two cases of a mutant coronavirus strain in the community over the weekend**

MACAU'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

**C**HINA hit back at the U.S.-Japan show of alliance during talks between President Joe Biden and Japan Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga, calling it an "ironic attempt of stoking division."

China said Suga and Biden's news conference Friday, in which they issued a joint statement on shared values in democracy and human rights and aired concerns about China's activities in the Indo-Pacific region, had gone "far beyond the scope of normal development of bilateral relations."

"It cannot be more ironic that such attempt of stoking division and building blocs against other countries is put under the banner of 'free and open,'" the spokesperson for the Chinese Embassy in Washington said in a statement.

The statement by the Japanese and U.S. leaders also mentioned the importance of "peace and stability" in the Taiwan Strait, marking the first time a Japanese prime minister had spoken out in a communique with the United States on Taiwan since 1969 talks between Richard Nixon and Eisaku Sato.

Japan, long cautious in managing relations with its neighbor, has beco-



President Joe Biden and Japanese Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga leave after a news conference in the Rose Garden of the White House, Friday

## Gov't says US-Japan actions are stoking division

me more outspoken with Suga.

The U.S. and China have clashed over a wide range of issues in the last few years, including human rights in Tibet and the Xinjiang region, a crackdown on protests 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.

China claims self-go-

verning 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 Yucheng, China's vice foreign minister, said in an interview with The Associated Press in Beijing on Friday. "It is very dangerous. This is our red line. The U.S. should never try to cross it."

The U.S.-Japan joint statement also expressed concern over human rights in Hong Kong and for

China's ethnic Muslim minority. Both leaders declared they planned to work with China "on areas of common interest."

China again reiterated its stance on Xinjiang, Taiwan and Hong Kong, all of which it considers domestic matters.

"These matters bear on China's fundamental interests and allow no interference. We express strong concern and firm opposition to relevant comments in the Joint Leaders' Statement," it said. AP

## BOAO FORUM RETURNS WITH INVESTMENT IN FOCUS

**C**HINA is signaling it's open for business with the resumption of its high-profile Boao Forum for Asia, an opportunity for the government to make a renewed effort to lure foreign investors in a post-pandemic world.

The annual conference bringing together government leaders, senior officials and business executives kicked off Sunday in the tropical island of Hainan and will run through Wednesday. Described by some as China's version of the World Economic Forum in Davos, the Boao event was canceled last year due to the Covid-19 outbreak.

Over 2,000 people will be attending in person, making it the first major meeting

to be held offline this year in the world. A Chinese state leader will address the conference virtually this morning, while another leader will physically attend and participate in a meeting with domestic and American entrepreneurs.

"China will use this opportunity to improve the understanding of its position, that China is friendly, and it welcomes all investment into the country," said Chris Leung, chief China economist at DBS Group Holdings Ltd. in Hong Kong. Leaders will downplay competition with the U.S. and emphasize cooperation opportunities in areas from climate change to overcoming the pandemic, he added.

A slew of U.S. business leaders will be participating in the conference, including Apple Inc.'s Tim Cook, Tesla Inc.'s Elon Musk, Blackstone Group Inc.'s Stephen Schwarzman and Bridgewater Associates' Ray Dalio. The event is another opportunity for the Chinese government to help mend ties with American investors amid heightened economic tensions between the two countries.

Inbound investment is already booming this year, rising almost 40% to \$45 billion in the first three months of 2021, according to data from the Ministry of Commerce released last week. That was the highest for that pe-

riod in comparable data back to 2002.

### SPECIAL ROLE

The Boao forum has "played a special role" in pushing for dialog and cooperation among Asian countries, Foreign Ministry Spokesman Zhao Lijian, said in a press briefing earlier this month.

Investors will be keen to learn about any new action plans from China to open up its economy and financial markets to attract foreign investment, given its promise to promote integration into the world under a "dual circulation" strategy. Officials in the past have announced major opening-up measures during the Boao conference, including the establishment and expansion

of the stock connect program that links mainland exchanges with Hong Kong.

Another focus will be on any new climate goals from Beijing, following promises from the U.S. and China to work together to tackle climate change after a visit by U.S. global climate envoy John Kerry to Shanghai last week to meet with his Chinese counterpart Xie Zhenhua. Experts close to the climate diplomacy said China may announce new targets to reduce greenhouse gas emissions during the tropical forum, in a response to the climate summit that President Joe Biden will host with 40 world leaders later this week. **MDT/BLOOMBERG**

### ADVERTORIAL

# GREAT TIMES

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AP PHOTO

AEROSPACE

# NASA's Mars helicopter takes flight, first for another planet

MARCIA DUNN, CAPE CANAVERAL

**N**ASA'S experimental helicopter Ingenuity rose into the thin air above the dusty red surface of Mars yesterday, achieving the first powered flight by an aircraft on another planet.

The triumph was hailed as a Wright Brothers moment. The mini 4-pound copter even carried a bit of wing fabric from the 1903 Wright Flyer, which made similar history at Kitty Hawk, North Carolina.

"Altimeter data confirms that Ingenuity has performed its first flight, the first flight of a powered aircraft on another planet," said the helicopter's chief pilot back on Earth, Harvard Grip, his voice breaking as his teammates erupted in applause.

It was a brief hop — just 39 seconds — but accomplished all the major milestones.

Project manager MiMi Aung was jubilant as she ripped up the papers holding the plan in case the flight had failed. "We've been talking so long about our Wright Brothers moment, and here it is," she said.

Flight controllers at NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory in California declared success after receiving the data and images via the Perseverance rover, which

stood watch more than 200 feet away. Ingenuity hitched a ride to Mars on Perseverance, clinging to the rover's belly upon their arrival in an ancient river delta in February.

The \$85 million helicopter demo was considered high risk, yet high reward. "Each world gets only one first flight," Aung observed earlier this month.

Scientists cheered the news from around the world, and even from space: "The shadow of greatness, #MarsHelicopter first flight on another world complete!" NASA astronaut Victor Glover tweeted from the International Space Station.

"A whole new way to explore the alien terrain in our solar system is now at our disposal," said Nottingham Trent University astronomer Daniel Brown.

This first test flight — with more to come by Ingenuity — holds great promise, Brown noted. Future helicopters could serve as otherworldly scouts for rovers and, eventually, astronauts in difficult, dangerous locales.

Ground controllers had to wait more than three excruciating hours before learning whether the pre-programmed flight had succeeded more than 170 million miles away. Adding to their anxiety: A software error prevented the helicopter from lifting off a week earlier and had engi-

neers scrambling to come up with a fix.

When the news finally came, the operations center filled with applause, cheers and laughter. More followed when the first black and white photo from Ingenuity appeared on the Mission Control screens, showing the helicopter's shadow as it hovered above the surface of Mars. Next came the stunning color images of the copter descending back to the surface, taken by Perseverance, "the best host little Ingenuity could ever hope for," Aung said in thanking everyone.

The helicopter achieved its planned altitude of 10 feet, according to the altimeter data, and hovered for a full 30 seconds, appearing stable. The touchdown looked just as clean. More details were expected in the coming hours and days.

To accomplish all this, the helicopter's twin, counter-rotating rotor blades needed to spin at 2,500 revolutions per minute — five times faster than on Earth. With an atmosphere just 1 percent the thickness of Earth's, engineers had to build a helicopter light enough — with blades spinning fast enough — to generate this otherworldly lift. At the same time, it had to be sturdy enough to withstand the Martian wind and extreme cold.

More than six years in the making, Ingenuity is a bare-bones 19 inches tall, a spindly four-legged chopper. Its fuselage, containing all the batteries, heaters and sensors, is the size of a tissue box. The carbon-fiber, foam-filled rotors are the biggest pieces: Each pair stretches 4 feet tip to tip.

The helicopter is topped with a solar panel for recharging the batteries, crucial for its survival during the minus-130 degree Fahrenheit Martian nights.

NASA chose a flat, relatively rock-free patch for Ingenuity's airfield, measuring 33 feet by 33 feet. It turned out to be less than 100 feet from the original landing site in Jezero Crater. The helicopter was released from the rover onto the airfield on April 3. Flight commands were sent Sunday, after controllers sent up a software correction for the rotor blade spin-up.

Following yesterday's success, NASA named the Martian airfield "Wright Brothers Field."

"While these two iconic moments in aviation history may be separated by time and 173 million miles of space, they now will forever be linked," NASA's science missions chief Thomas Zurbuchen announced.

The little chopper with a giant job attracted attention from around the world, from the moment it launched with Perseverance last July. Even Arnold Schwarzenegger joined in the fun, rooting for Ingenuity over the weekend via Twitter. "Get to the chopper!" he shouted, re-enacting a line from his 1987 sci-fi film "Predator."

Up to five helicopter flights are planned, each one increasingly ambitious. If successful, the demo could lead the way to a fleet of Martian drones in decades to come, providing aerial views, transporting packages and serving as lookouts for human crews. On Earth, the technology could enable helicopters to reach new heights, doing things like more easily navigating the Himalayas.

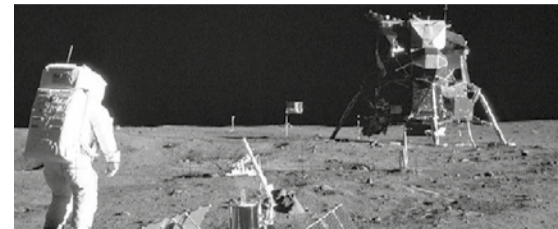
"This gives us amazing hope for all of humanity," Zurbuchen tweeted. Indeed, JPL's mantra, "Dare Mighty Things," was printed on a wall of the control room.

Ingenuity's team has until the beginning of May to complete the test flights. That's because the rover needs to get on with its main mission: collecting rock samples that could hold evidence of past Martian life, for return to Earth a decade from now. **MDT/AP**

## this day in history



### 1972 APOLLO 16 SAFELY ON MOON AFTER ENGINE CRISIS



The Apollo 16 mission has landed on the Moon after a seven-hour crisis that nearly aborted the mission altogether.

Astronauts John Young and Charles Duke became the fifth team to step down onto the Moon at 0324 BST (0224 GMT). They landed in the Descartes crater region of the lunar highlands.

A delighted Charles Duke exclaimed, "Contact!" as the lunar module, Orion, touched down.

His first comment on looking around him was, "We're not going to have to walk far to pick up rocks."

It was the end of a seven-hour drama which began at 2036 BST (1936 GMT) the previous evening, when an engine on the command module, Casper, malfunctioned after it had separated from the lunar module.

If the engine had been fired at this point, the craft could have veered out of control or far off course, with disastrous consequences.

The command module has to place itself in a precise orbit above the Moon to be in the right place to pick up the lunar module for the journey home.

As the engine could not be fired, Orion could not be cleared for the landing, and there were serious doubts at mission control that it would be possible to make a landing at all.

Although the astronauts were not believed to be in personal danger, there were fears of another expensive failure like Apollo 13 two years ago, when an explosion on board crippled the spacecraft, aborting the mission and putting its crew at serious risk.

The two Apollo 16 astronauts on the lunar module were told to halt their landing attempt and keep Orion close to Casper in a "station keeping position" in which it would be possible quickly to link the two craft if necessary.

Mission control issued an 0814 BST (0714 GMT) deadline to fix the problem or abandon the mission and return to Earth.

Then shortly before 0300 BST (0200 GMT) the command module pilot, Thomas Mattingly, managed to fire the engine while on the far side of the Moon, out of radio contact.

The command module smoothly moved to the right point orbiting between 60 and 70 miles above the lunar surface.

That cleared the way for the lunar module to begin making its descent.

The delay meant Young and Duke have had to cancel one of their three excursions on the moon buggy they have brought with them, but they should still be able to complete most of the mission as planned.

Courtesy BBC News

## IN CONTEXT

The command module pilot who dealt with the engine crisis, Thomas Mattingly, was the astronaut who was taken off the disastrous Apollo 13 mission at the last minute. The Apollo 16 mission was dogged by major and minor setbacks, but scientifically it was a great success. It brought back more data than ever before, including 212lbs of moon rock. The two astronauts took two long drives into the lunar highlands, going higher above the lunar plain and into more rugged terrain than other expeditions. Their findings challenged the geologists' view that volcanic activity had formed the Moon's features. Instead, they found evidence that the impact of meteorites may have played a larger part than previously thought. The Apollo programme had already been cut back severely by the time of Apollo 16, and there was only one more manned mission to the Moon, in December 1972. However, in January 2004 the US President, George Bush, said American astronauts would return to the Moon by 2020 as the launching point for missions further into space.



MACAU'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

**YOUR STARS**

**ARIES**  
 Mar. 21-Apr. 19  
 Get into some activities that will help you in making new friends. A friendship might suffer if money becomes an issue. Don't let emotional upset force you into the poorhouse.

**TAURUS**  
 Apr. 20-May. 20  
 You will be able to communicate well today. Uncertainties regarding relatives will make situations uncomfortable if you attend a family function.

**GEMINI**  
 May. 21-Jun. 21  
 Visitors are likely to drop by and may even stay a little longer than you want them to. Your passionate nature may make you jealous if your mate has been too busy to take care of your needs.

**CANCER**  
 Jun. 22-Jul. 22  
 You can meet interesting new friends if you join worthwhile groups. You might find group functions tiring. Don't draw too much attention to yourself at work.

**LEO**  
 Jul. 23-Aug. 22  
 You need to be active and spend time with friends you enjoy. Keep your feet on the ground, if you can. Opportunities to expand your circle of friends will result in possible new romantic encounters.

**VIRGO**  
 Aug. 23-Sep. 22  
 Secret enemies will be eager to spread rumors about you. Your mind is on moneymaking ventures. You will benefit through hidden assets and property investments.

**LIBRA**  
 Sep. 23-Oct. 22  
 Communications with loved ones may be strained. You will be relentless when it comes to getting yourself back into shape. You will need to spend extra time sorting through your work.

**SCORPIO**  
 Oct. 23-Nov. 21  
 Don't press your luck with your loved ones. Children may be demanding, and entertainment could cost a lot more than you can really afford. You will be prone to carelessness that could result in accidents.

**SAGITTARIUS**  
 Nov. 22-Dec. 21  
 Toning, fitness, pampering should all be scheduled. Your home environment appears to be a little shaky. Talk to your mate about a vacation and discuss the expectations of your relationship.

**CAPRICORN**  
 Dec. 22-Jan. 19  
 You may be in love today, but who knows what tomorrow may bring. You will reach the most people if you speak out at an organizational function. Plan a day of enjoyment with them.

**AQUARIUS**  
 Jan. 20-Feb. 18  
 You may be looking at some difficulty with your family today. Don't get upset. Disputes on the home front may be hard to avoid. Socially, you need a fast paced form of entertainment.

**PISCES**  
 Feb. 19-Mar. 20  
 Any renovation or decorating to your home should include the whole family. Delve a little deeper if you really want to know the score. You can come into money that you don't necessarily work for.

**The Born Loser by Chip Sansom**



**SUDOKU**

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

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

**WEATHER**

	MIN	MAX	CONDITION
<b>CHINA</b>			
Beijing	15	25	cloudy
Harbin	-3	14	clear
Tianjin	16	23	cloudy
Urumqi	9	22	clear
Xi'an	13	17	drizzle
Lhasa	3	16	clear
Chengdu	15	20	overcast
Chongqing	16	21	drizzle
Kunming	13	26	clear
Nanjing	14	20	cloudy
Shanghai	14	22	cloudy
Wuhan	16	22	moderate rain
Hangzhou	19	24	clear
Taipei	19	27	shower
Guangzhou	21	25	cloudy
Hong Kong	21	25	cloudy
<b>WORLD</b>			
Moscow	3	11	sleet
Frankfurt	4	11	cloudy
Paris	6	14	cloudy
London	3	15	clear
New York	8	14	clear

**CROSSWORDS**

ACROSS 1-Baby powder; 5- Prince Valiant's wife; 10- Editor Wintour; 14- Burn soother; 15- Shinto temple gateway; 16- Sign of healing; 17- Beethoven's birthplace; 18- Schleppe; 19- Hourly rate; 20- Piece of luggage; 22- Sumptuous meal; 23- Hibernia; 24- Think (over); 26- To the left, at sea; 29- Entirety; 33- Home on the range; 34- Frog sound; 35- Actress Zadora; 36- Sour; 37- Newly made; 38- Boxer Max; 39- Sprinted; 40- Singer Frankie; 41- Pine sap; 42- Unpublished; 44- Orgs.; 45- "\_\_\_ Tu"; 1974 hit; 46- Lady's man; 48- Entire; 51- Educate; 55- Island dance; 56- Fortune-telling cards; 58- Archipelago part; 59- Richard of "A Summer Place"; 60- Make \_\_\_ for oneself; 61- Barely passing grades; 62- \_\_\_ avail; 63- Languishes with longing; 64- Winged god;

DOWN: 1- Bar bills; 2- Baseball family name; 3- Burt's ex; 4- In the middle; 5- Fragrant oil; 6- Unfettered; 7- Art Deco artist; 8- Bind; 9- Helping hand; 10- Also; 11- Final Four org.; 12- Badgers; 13- Assist, often in a criminal act; 21- Quote; 22- Strong criticism; 24- Bullwinkle, e.g.; 25- Mormon state of western USA; 26- Maker of Pong; 27- Hickory-nut; 28- Suppose; 29- Tendency; 30- Bridge declaration; 31- Connection; 32- Tall tales; 34- Weeps; 37- Destiny; 38- Straddle; 40- Italian bread?; 41- Tirade; 43- Presidential middle name; 46- Garden figure; 47- Adlai's running mate; 48- Stimulate; 49- Quasimodo's creator; 50- Pearl Buck heroine; 51- Neighbor of Turkey; 52- Consumer; 53- Jazz singer Laine; 54- Dick Tracy's love; 56- Light touch; 57- Singer DiFranco;

**Yesterday's solution**

C	A	L	L	A	S		A	L	A	R	I	P	S
O	R	I	E	N	T		N	O	S	E	S	A	I
E	N	T	I	C	E		D	O	T	S	E	E	D
S		S		S		S		S		S		S	
A	B	O	U	T		K	E	S		A	L	E	N
H	O	U	R		P	O	W	E	R		I	T	
E	N	T	E	R	E	D		S	E	W		A	A
A	E	R		I	C	U		P	O	A		S	D
D	R	E		S	A	S		H	A	L	K	I	E
A	R	S		I	N		H	A	L		I	D	L
E	R	I	N		A	R	P		S	A	H	A	R
L	I	T	E		O	D	E		I	R	I	S	E
A	G	E	R		S	Y	N		N	E	P	A	L

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PJ (Open line) 993	Telephone – Report 1000
PJ (Picket) 28 557 775	Electricity – Report 28 339 922
PSP 28 573 333	Macau Daily Times 28 716 081
Customs 28 559 944	
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Commission Against Corruption (CCAC) 28326 300	
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# BAHAMAS TOPS CHINA IN RANKING OF CENTRAL BANK DIGITAL CURRENCIES

JOANNA OSSINGER

**M**AINLAND China is third behind the Bahamas and Cambodia in a ranking of the maturity of central banks' retail digital currency projects, according to a report from PwC.

More than 60 central banks are now exploring digital currencies, with retail projects more active in emerging economies given the importance of financial inclusion, while inter-bank or wholesale applications tend to be more predominant in advanced economies, the report said.

The Bahamas and Cambodia take top marks in retail because their projects are already live, while China is still in the test phase. Only 23% of retail projects have reached implementation stage, while nearly 70% of wholesale projects are running pilot programs, according to the report.

"CBDCs will contribute significantly to the modernization of the international monetary landscape, hand-in-hand with reconfiguration in both payment and financial infrastruc-



ture," PwC said. "They will generate numerous opportunities for further digitization in both corporates and financial institutions, as their integration in payment and financial infrastructure progresses."

Central bank efforts at digital currencies accelerated first after Bitcoin became more popular

and then once the Facebook Inc.-backed Libra project, now named Diem, was announced.

With China in the testing phase on its digital yuan, other countries have accelerated

their efforts. Jurisdictions like Sweden and the European Union are starting to make some headway. The Federal Reserve, though, has signaled it's in little rush to get a digital dollar off the ground.

## DIGITAL YUAN

China's efforts to create a digital yuan are aimed at domestic use and its goal for internationalizing its currency is not to replace the dollar, a senior official from its central bank said Sunday.

As for interbank or wholesale projects, Thailand and Hong Kong SAR tied for the top ranking, according to the PwC report. They're followed by Singapore, Canada and the U.K.

The report also said more than 88% of CBDC projects at pilot or production phase use blockchain as the underlying technology. While it isn't always necessary for such projects, it helps offer secure transfer of ownership, transparent audit trails and increasing interoperability with other digital assets, the report said.

"The general public will be one of the biggest beneficiaries of CBDCs as it will give them access for the first time to a digital form of central bank money," said Henri Arslanian, global crypto leader at PwC. "And that is a big milestone in the evolution of money." **BLOOMBERG**

### China's efforts to create a digital yuan are aimed at domestic use and its goal for internationalizing its currency is not to replace the dollar

AD

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MACAU'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

**D**E'AARON FOX had 30 points and 12 rebounds, Harrison Barnes scored 24 and Terence Davis II added 23 as the Sacramento Kings snapped a nine-game losing streak with a 121-107 victory over the Dallas Mavericks on yesterday (local time).

Barnes scored 11 in the third quarter as the Kings built a 21-point lead midway through the period. Sacramento, which never trailed, held off a late Dallas run that cut the lead to six with 3½ minutes left.

"Our communication was better, our rebounding was better, our shot challenging was better," Kings coach Luke Walton said.

Luka Doncic scored 37 points, 22 in the fourth quarter, for the Mavericks, who dropped their fourth straight home game. Dorian Finney-Smith scored 22 points, one short of his season high, and Jalen Brunson added 20 off the bench.

"Give Sacramento credit," Mavericks coach Rick Carlisle said. "They came in here on a long losing streak. They decided they were going to throw their best game at us. They did, and they ended up getting the win."

"That was fun," Walton said of watching Fox and Doncic trading baskets for much of the fourth quarter. "It probably would have

## BASKETBALL

# Kings snap 9-game losing streak, beat Mavericks 121-107

been a little more fun if we weren't fighting a nine-game losing streak."

The Kings ran off the game's first eight points and led by 12 late in the first quarter before Dallas settled down and tied the score 25-all 3½ minutes into the second period. Davis scored 15 points in the second quarter, including all three of his 3-pointers, helping the Kings take a 67-50 lead at half-time.

The Mavericks hit only one of their first 11 from behind the arc and hit six of 24 in the half. Doncic missed all four of his shots from long range and shot 3 for 11 in the half, scoring six points.

### GETTING A BIG LIFT

With Marvin Bagley III missing his 18th straight game (broken hand) and Richaun Holmes his third straight (hamstring strain), 31-year-old Hassan Whiteside, the team's oldest player, made his second start of the season at cen-



Sacramento Kings guard Delon Wright (center) Dallas Mavericks Jalen Brunson (left) and forward Tim Hardaway Jr.

ter. Whiteside responded with five points in the Kings' initial 8-0 run, closed the quarter with nine points and six rebounds and finished with 12 points and 10 rebounds in 18½ minutes due to early foul trouble.

"He's really helped us this year when he's been healthy, and it hasn't always been huge minu-

tes," Walton said. "He's helped anchor our defense."

### ANOTHER LATE START FOR MAVERICKS

Following Dallas' 12-point home loss to New York on Friday, Carlisle bemoaned the Knicks' nine-point lead after one quarter and looked for better early results

on Sunday. Instead, Sacramento scored the first eight points and, while, threatened later on, never trailed.

"We have to play harder; I have to play harder," said Doncic, who was 0 for 4 from the floor, 0 for 3 from behind the arc and 2-for-4 from the line in the first quarter. "It starts with me, so I have to play way better."

### TIP-INS

Davis was 5-for-5 on 3-pointers. [...] The Mavericks, seventh in the Western Conference, are 13-14 at home with four straight losses. [...] Sacramento's 45-point second quarter was its best scoring quarter of the season. [...] Walton said there's no timetable for Holmes' return. [...] Dallas' Kristaps Porzingis, averaging 20.8 points, was held to nine points, all in the first half. [...] This was the first of three meetings between Sacramento and Dallas in a 15-day span. **MDT/AP**

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Email: amy@ktranz.com.mo  
Tel: +853 2871 6081/2 Fax: +853 2871 6084

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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  
澳門展現真我協會  
合辦單位  
神農星星河增能公益聯盟  
澳門羽龍體育會  
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「展現真我」協會 Macau IC2 Association  
合辦單位 Partner's: 神農星星河增能公益聯盟  
支持單位 Supporting Unit: 澳門羽龍體育會  
媒體單位 Media Partner: ARTYZEN 綠色未來 Times

**OPINION**

**World Views**

Marcus Ashworth, MDT/Bloomberg



**EU'S BOND BONANZA  
 WILL RESHAPE THE  
 CAPITAL MARKETS**

The fixed-income landscape is set to be transformed as the European Union revs up to borrow \$1 trillion by selling bonds in its own right. While talk of creating a market to rival U.S. Treasuries is overblown, the forthcoming flood of securities will offer investors a genuine alternative to German bunds as the region's debt benchmark.

The EU will issue as much as 200 billion euros (\$240 billion) of bonds each year through 2026 under plans detailed last week, with maturities as long as 30 years. The first debt sale, aimed at funding emergency measures to alleviate the pandemic's economic wreckage, should be ready by July.

The prospect of increased supply would typically undermine the value of existing securities. But since the debt explosion was first mooted back in July, the yield premiums available on existing EU bonds compared with German bunds has shrunk, with demand boosted by the prospect of a bigger, more liquid market for the securities.

German debt sets the "risk-free rate" against which all other euro-denominated securities, including corporate bonds, are priced. It's the same function that U.S. Treasury bonds perform with regard to dollar debt. But there's a shortage of bunds, with less than 15% of the market available for investors to buy and sell. The remainder is locked away in central banks and other sovereign institutions, with the European Central Bank's quantitative easing program also sucking liquidity out of the market.

That poses a market risk if there's a sudden surge in demand for only the very best credit quality, as can happen in the derivatives market when there is a need for extra collateral. The forthcoming EU debt sales create a recognizable "common bond" for the bloc, and the initial syndicated sales of the debt have seen huge investor demand, often in excess of ten times the bonds on offer.

The EU will stoke demand even further with almost a third of the new debt green bonds, keeping Europe at the forefront of the hot market for environmentally friendly financing. It's a smart move not just for the planet. European investors, nudged by both their customers and regulators, have been more active than peers in allocating capital to securities deemed to meet environmental, social and governance standards.

With at least 50 billion euros of annual sales, the EU is set to become the world's benchmark green bond issuer. As demand for ecologically sound securities increases, that role will reinforce the bloc's emergence as a borrower to be reckoned with.

Of course Treasuries, at a total of \$21 trillion, will continue to set the pace for global debt markets. And Germany's 1.5 trillion euros of bonds outstanding will protect its standing as Europe's preeminent borrower for a while yet. But, as has been the way with all of the bloc's emergency financing measures in the past decade, the EU's borrowing program is more likely to expand than diminish.

The true capital markets transformation will come when there is sufficient liquidity in EU bonds for them to qualify not only as collateral for existing derivatives, but when there are futures and options contracts referencing specifically EU debt. That will be when the bund's crown really starts to wobble.

Pharmaceutical company BioNTech and its U.S. partner Pfizer say they will provide 100 million more doses of their coronavirus vaccine to the European Union this year.

The two companies said yesterday that the 27-nation group's executive Commission exercised an option to purchase the additional doses, bringing the total number of shots to be delivered to the EU in 2021 to 600 million.

The announcement offers a much-needed boost to the EU's sluggish and much-criticized vaccine rollout.

Sean Marett, the chief business officer of BioNTech, said deliveries of the company's mRNA-based vaccine this year will cover two-thirds of the EU population.

The bloc has so far administered about 105 million shots to its population of some 450 million. Most vaccines require two shots to provide full immunization.



**TOTTENHAM FIRES  
 MANAGER JOSE MOURINHO  
 AFTER 17 MONTHS**

ROB HARRIS, LONDON

TOTTENHAM fired Jose Mourinho yesterday after only 17 months in charge, and just as he was preparing to coach the club in the League Cup final.

Mourinho was hired in November 2019 to replace Mauricio Pochettino, who unexpectedly led the London club to the Champions League final before the team collapsed the following season.

Mourinho failed to get Tottenham back into the Champions League and has overseen another collapse this season. The team was in first place in December but a run of poor results has seen it fall to seventh place.

"Jose and his coaching staff have been with us through some of our most challenging times as a club," Tottenham chairman Daniel Levy said. "Jose is a true

professional who showed enormous resilience during the pandemic. On a personal level I have enjoyed working with him and regret that things have not worked out as we both had envisaged. He will always be welcome here and we should like to thank him and his coaching staff for their contribution."

Mourinho's exits comes two days before a Premier League game against Southampton and with the League Cup final on Sunday against Manchester City. Tottenham, which hasn't won a trophy since the 2008 League Cup, said youth coach Ryan Mason had been put in charge of training.

It is Mourinho's shortest spell at a club since breaking into the big time with Porto in 2004.

Disgruntlement over his tactics and methods have resurfaced in recent

months, with Tottenham slipping out of the Champions League places and getting eliminated from the Europa League in the round of 16 after a surprising 3-0 loss at Dinamo Zagreb.

Tottenham is five points behind fourth-place West Ham, which occupies the final Champions League qualification place. The club has won only one of its last five games.

The two teams above Tottenham — Chelsea and Liverpool — have games in hand.

Tottenham now heads into the League Cup final against City at Wembley Stadium without a manager and probably without its best player, with Harry Kane having hobbled off late in the 2-2 draw at Everton in the Premier League on Friday. That was Mourinho's last game in charge. **MDT/AP**

**THE DECISIVE MOMENT**

AP Photo/Aaron Favila



Community Pantry. A woman receives free food at a makeshift stall called "Community Pantry" beside a road in Quezon city yesterday. Donated food and other essential items from residents or volunteers are placed on makeshift stalls for people who need it as many have lost jobs in Covid year.



**Pakistan** An outlawed Pakistani Islamist political group freed 11 policemen almost a day after taking them hostage in Lahore amid violent clashes with security forces, the country's interior minister said yesterday. Supporters of the hardline Tehreek-e-Labaik Pakistan party attacked a police station near their rallying point and on Sunday took the policemen hostage. The group is protesting the arrest of their leader, Saad Rizvi.

**Pakistan's** minister for planning and development said yesterday that authorities are struggling to maintain the much-needed supply of oxygen to hospitals for COVID-19 patients. Asad Umar said on Twitter that hospitals were continuously receiving coronavirus patients amid a surge in new cases. He said currently more than 4,500 COVID-19 patients need critical care at hospitals, but many people are still violating social distancing rules.

**US** The Supreme Court will hear oral arguments in a case that will determine who is eligible to receive more than \$530 million in federal virus relief funding set aside for tribes more than a year ago. More than a dozen Native American tribes sued the U.S. Treasury Department to keep the money out of the hands of Alaska Native corporations, which provide services to Alaska Natives but do not have a government-to-government relationship with the United States.



**Football** The 12 European clubs planning to start a breakaway Super League have told the leaders of FIFA and UEFA that they have begun legal action aimed at fending off threats to block the competition. The letter was sent by the group of English, Spanish and Italian clubs to FIFA President Gianni Infantino and UEFA counterpart Aleksander Ceferin saying the Super League has already been underwritten by funding of 4 billion euros from a financial institution.