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MGTO IS ANTICIPATING THE HIGHEST TALLY OF TOURIST ARRIVALS TO MACAU SINCE THE PANDEMIC IN THE COMING MAY GOLDEN WEEK HOLIDAY

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THE CITY'S BUDGET EXECUTION RATE HITS RECORD HIGH AT 96%

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MACAU REGISTERED LOWER TEMPERATURES THAN IN 2019 AS WELL AS A SIGNIFICANT DROP IN RAINFALL LEVELS, ENVIRONMENTAL STATISTICS REVEAL

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AP PHOTO



Japan Tokyo police are investigating cyberattacks on about 200 Japanese companies and research organizations, including the country's space agency, by a hacking group believed to be linked to the Chinese military, the government said yesterday. Police have forwarded the case involving attacks on the Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency to prosecutors for further investigation. Chief Cabinet Secretary Katsunobu Kato told reporters. More on p6

AP PHOTO



Syria A woman from the capital Damascus has applied to run for Syria's presidential elections, the parliament speaker said yesterday, becoming the first female to make a bid for the country's top job in a largely symbolic vote certain to be won by President Bashar Assad. Speaker Hammoud Sabbagh said Faten Ali Nahar, a 50-year-old resident of Damascus, has nominated herself for the post. Little is known about Nahar.

AP PHOTO



Egypt's transportation minister yesterday said he sacked the country's top railway official, following three train accidents in less than a month that left at least 29 people dead and some 320 injured. The firing of Asharf Raslan, head of the railway authority, was part of a wide ranging overhaul of the rundown railway system's leadership amid public outcry over repeated train crashes.

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A CALL FOR UNITY

President Xi Jinping has called for concerted effort from all countries in Asia and beyond to drive post-Covid economic recovery at the Boao Forum

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DOMESTIC VIOLENCE LAW

GOV'T: EVALUATION OF PROSECUTION EFFECTIVENESS DIFFICULT

ANTHONY LAM

MORE judicial prosecution is needed to determine whether the Domestic Violence Law has been effective in punishing lawbreakers, Hon Wai, president of the Social Welfare Bureau (IAS) has said in a reply to an inquiry from lawmaker Agnes Lam.

Lam described the law as ineffective, and painted a picture of a "high report rate, low investigation rate, even lower conviction rate" over the four years that the law has been in force.

In response, the president of the bureau remarked that the law has achieved much to prevent domestic violence and protect victims.

In addition, the official cited a statement from the Public Prosecutions Office explaining that there was no direct connection between the prosecution or conviction rate and the judicial actions against the crime.

Hon added that the conviction rate is also affected by the victims' commitment to prosecution.

However, Lam was also concerned about prosecutions that victims request to be withdrawn due to coercion from

the perpetrators.

The police replied that they have not received any report on such a situation of coercion since the enactment of the law. If a victim decides to drop prosecution proceedings, the police will ask for details about the decision, especially if it is a voluntary one. The details are then recorded in a written statement. The police added that if there is coercion, it may constitute a violation of the Criminal Code.

With regards to the collection of evidence, the police explained that each domestic violence case has its own complexities and timeline. The violence concerned can be physical, mental or sexual. Physical evidence must also be cross-referenced with forensic evidence and witness statements.

So far, the police have already established a fixed set of questions and procedures for use in the investigation of domestic violence cases. Investigators are provided with regular training on precedents, legal stipulations and investigation guidelines, in an effort to improve handling and investigative skills.

Concerning the provision of social support, the IAS said that it is designed to empower

victims by offering social services, assistance and protection. This empowerment aims to allow victims to face the aftermath of domestic violence with the support of government and community organizations.

The bureau also encourages perpetrators to make use of counseling services, hoping that they will see improvements in their behavior, emotional stability and cognition, so as to reduce the risk of them repeating their violent behavior.

The police will also notify prosecutors if any immediate danger is foreseen, or if the perpetrators and victims live in the same household, so that prosecutors can implement suitable mandatory measures in relation to the perpetrators.

The IAS recognizes domestic stresses and pressures due to the Covid-19 pandemic, as well as the isolation of the individual from the community. Besides the bureau itself, input from non-governmental organizations has played a crucial role in providing support to the public. These channels include websites, instant messaging platforms and telephones. Some 7,000 calls and 400 online contacts were recorded last year for counseling purposes.

EDUCATION

MUST RESEARCH ON SMART COVID DIAGNOSIS PUBLISHED IN RENOWNED JOURNAL

A research team at the Macau University of Science and Technology (MUST) has made significant progress on its research on smart diagnosis of Covid-19, and subsequently published the concerned paper in the international-level research journal Nature Biomedical Engineering.

The team, led by Chair Professor Zhang Kang, developed a smart system to diagnose Covid-19. The researchers studied 500,000 copies of chest computed tomography (CT) images and achieved last April over 90% success rate in diagnosing the disease. The system is ready to be in used in several international entities. According to Zhang, the chest X-ray system is both faster and more accessible than alternatives.

In addition, Zhang disclosed that the team studied a total of 145,000 copies of chest X-ray scans from 120,000 patients, all to develop a reliable artificial intelligence (AI) system to assist radiographers in differentiating more swiftly and accurately between Covid-19 and other types of pneumonia. The system can also help doctors diagnose other lung problems and evaluate the severity. He stressed that it can help identify diffuse pulmonary diseases, which are normally difficult to pinpoint by human eyes.

The automatic deep-learning system can be used for frontline diagnosis at A&E departments, outskirt areas or developing countries.



Chair Professor Zhang Kang

It will also help hasten early intervention and provide crucial support to clinical decision-making.

According to the MUST, the mobility of the system makes it important in solving public health problems. Moreover, the source code and images are open to the public, MUST noted. **AL**

REGISTERED SUBSTANCE TAKERS PLUNGE 36% LAST YEAR

A government database recorded 219 registered illicit substance users last year, a 36% drop from 2019, the Drug Control Committee announced yesterday.

Of the users, 70% generally engage in this behavior at their own or their friends' residences, or in hotels. Most users took these substances in Macau. The average sum spent by them on illicit substances was MOP3,331 per month.

Moreover, 16 out of the 219 were below 21 years of age, constituting 7.3% of total registrants: a 48% drop in registrants from this age group compared to 2019.

Methamphetamine, commonly

known as ice, was the most commonly consumed illicit substance, at 35% of users, followed by cocaine and marijuana.

The committee attributed the drop in the number of registrants to the pandemic.

"Considering the impact on facility closure and border restrictions in 2020 due to the Covid-19 pandemic, there was an obvious decrease in the number of illicit substance users registered in our central database," Cheang Io Tat, chief of the Department of Prevention and Treatment of Problem Gambling and Drug Dependence of the Social Welfare Bureau said. **AL**



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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

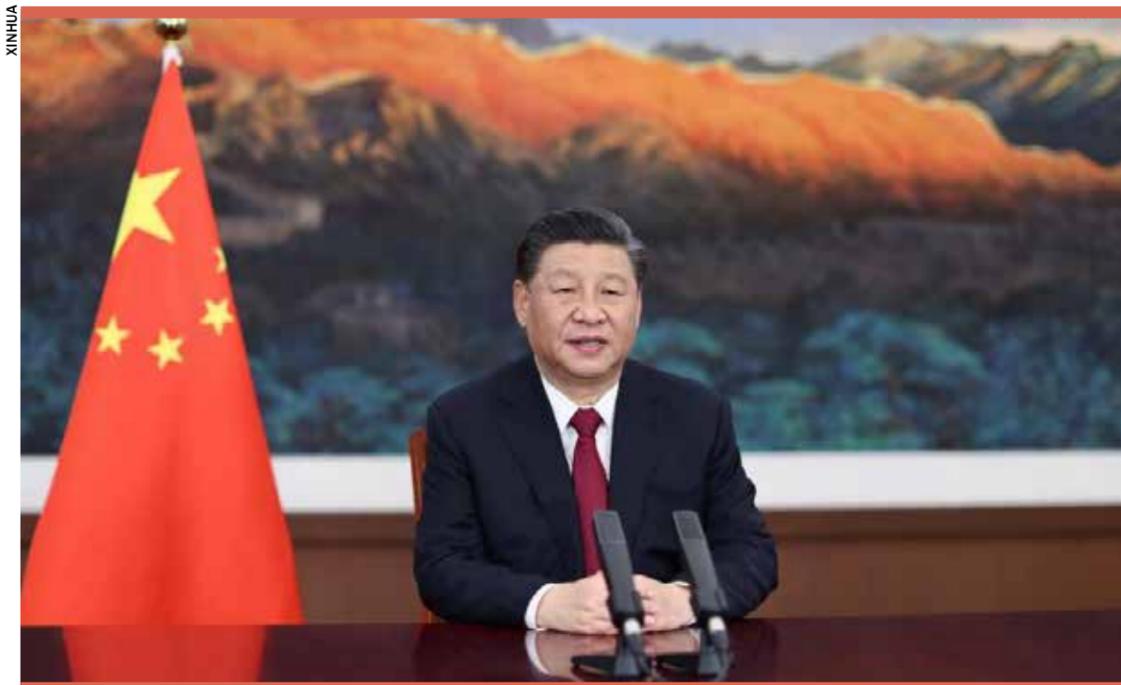
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DESIGNERS_Eva Bucho, Miguel Bandeira | ASSOCIATE CONTRIBUTORS_JML Property, MdME Lawyers, PokerStars, Ruan Du Toit Bester | NEWS AGENCIES_Associated Press, Bloomberg, MacauHub, MacauNews, Xinhua
SECRETARY_Yang Dongxiao amy@macaudailytimes.com

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
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President Xi urged unity and denounced 'decoupling' at Boao Forum

HONEY TSANG

CHINESE President Xi Jinping has called for a concerted effort from all countries in Asia and beyond to combat the pandemic and drive post-Covid economic recovery, and also warned against any decoupling moves that may be made by some countries.

Xi delivered the remarks yesterday in his opening speech via a pre-recorded video message to more than 2,000 officials and commercial luminaries who attended the high-profile Boao Forum in Hainan.

Xi warned that "attempts to 'erect walls' or 'decouple' run counter to the law of economics and market principles. They

would hurt others' interests without benefiting oneself."

"We must not let the rules set by one or a few countries be imposed on others, or allow unilateralism pursued by certain countries to set the pace for the whole world," Xi stressed.

For international relations, Xi called for "equality, mutual respect and mutual trust," and urged some countries to stop "bossing others around or meddling in others' internal affairs."

Many believe that Xi's thought-provoking speech was alluding to the U.S. and its allies.

Before the release of Xi's statement, the U.S. President Joe Biden and Japanese Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga jointly issued a statement after their meeting at

the White House last Friday, stating that they both "shared their concerns over Chinese activities that are inconsistent with the international rules-based order, including the use of economic and other forms of coercion."

The Chinese government later retaliated and denounced the move as "harmful" and "stoking division," and said it had "gone far beyond the scope of [the] normal development of bilateral relations."

Earlier, at the opening ceremony of Macau's fourth National Security Education Exhibition on April 15, Fu Ziyang, director of Liaison Office of the Central People's Government in the Macau SAR, said that the world is facing unprecedented changes this century. The intensified moves by the U.S. and some Western countries to hinder China's development are among them.

This year's Boao Forum for Asia Annual Conference 2021 in Hainan lasts four days from April 18 to 21, and is themed "A World in Change: Join Hands to Strengthen Global Governance and Advance Belt and Road Cooperation."

Macau's Chief Executive Ho Iat Seng led a delegation to participate in the Boao Forum in Hainan, which took place for part of the conference, from April 19 to 20.

Since its founding in 2001, the annual Boao Forum for Asia has been a high-profile event, bringing together international political and economic elites to examine harmonious approaches to driving global development.

HO IAT SENG AND HAINAN OFFICIALS TO FORGE CLOSER PARTNERSHIP

MACAU'S Chief Executive (CE) Ho Iat Seng and key officials of Hainan Province met on April 19 at the Boao Forum to discuss opportunities to pursue a closer partnership between the two cities in several areas.

During the meeting with Shen Xiaoming, the Secretary of the Hainan Provincial Committee of the Communist Party of China (CPC), Ho affirmed that there is "[significant] room for cooperation" between Macau and Hainan in industries such as tourism, education, and science and technology. Tourism should be a key point of future collaboration, since the flight time between the two places is

relatively short, Ho stressed. Furthermore, Ho reaffirmed his commitment to advancing Macau's economic diversification by concentrating on the cultivation of four major sectors, namely traditional Chinese medicine; modern financial and insurance services; advanced and new technology development; and culture-related sectors.

In response to Ho's suggestion, Shen pledged to work more closely with Macau, in a bid to bolster cooperation with Portuguese-speaking countries, governmental and people-to-people exchanges, and promoting multi-destination tourism.

TOURISM

MGTO EXPECTS A RECORD HIGH TOURIST ARRIVALS IN GOLDEN WEEK

HONEY TSANG

THE Macao Government Tourism Office (MGTO) is anticipating a the highest tally of tourist arrivals to Macau since the pandemic in the coming May Golden Week Holiday (also known as the May Day Holiday), Cheng Wai Tong, MGTO sub-director, revealed yesterday.

"We are expecting that, after considering the accommodation booking volumes, which also reached the highest figures [since the pandemic] for the holiday," Cheng said on the sidelines of an event yesterday.

After examining the booking data provided by local accommodation venues, the MGTO is expecting the city's overall hotel occupancy rate to hit 70-80% during the May Golden Week.

The MGTO will continue to step up promotion efforts via mainland media platforms to encourage visits from

mainland cities.

On April 16, Macau saw the highest daily record of visitor arrivals since the start of the pandemic, at 34,252.

From April 9 to 15, the city's occupancy rate averaged around 61.0%, up 12.7% from 48.3% at the Spring Festival Golden Week.

INCREASED QUOTA MULLED FOR HELICOPTER TOUR

Cheng revealed that the authorities are now considering increasing the quota for the highly sought-after helicopter tour.

The MGTO is set to liaise with the flight provider to discuss the possibilities of extending the weekly flight frequency to accommodate the 15,552 people who have applied so far: a number that far exceeds the present quota of 1,512 seats.

Meanwhile, around 800 staycation packages have been sold under the "Stay, Dine and See Macao" domestic travel scheme.

NO APPROVED RESIDENCY APPLICATIONS FOR 'MAJOR INVESTMENT' CATEGORY IN 2020

LYNZY VALLES

THE Macao Trade and Investment Promotion Institute (IPIM) has not approved any residence applications based on the 'major investment' category last year.

According to a statement, citing temporary residency statistics for approved investors, managers and technical personnel in 2020, the IPIM received a total of six new residence applications based on the "major investment" category and a total of 88 new applications based on 'management and technical personnel.'

Among the cases handled in 2020, including the applications which were received in previous years, there was no application approved under the category of "major investment" while five were rejected or cancelled; three applications under the category of "management and technical personnel" were approved,

while six were rejected or cancelled.

According to the statistics and industry classification of approved applications in 2020, all cases involved were in the medical and healthcare industry.

The IPIM's February data shows that it has approved a total of 2,084 temporary residency applications for technicians with special qualifications over a period of 15 years.

Also in February, the IPIM said there were a total of 211 temporary residency renewal applications made by technicians with special qualifications, involving a total of 403 people. The IPIM justified the delay in the processing of the requests by referring to the "government's respect [for] the adjudication of the court, abiding by the law to administer the city, and, jointly with different sectors, upholding the rule of law, which is the core value of the SAR society."

CRIME

YOUNG COUPLE DETAINED OVER DOCUMENT FORGERY, FRAUD

RENATO MARQUES

A young local couple was yesterday detained by police on suspicion of having committed multiple crimes including document forgery and fraud, the Judiciary Police (PJ) revealed yesterday at a specially-called press conference.

According to a PJ spokesperson, the case was opened after a Hong Kong woman filed a complaint against a 25-year-old man to the Commission Against Corruption (CCAC).

The woman, who drove from the neighboring region and underwent a 14-day quarantine period in Macau in order to file the report, said that the man showed her documents in which he claimed to be a high-ranking civil servant in Macau. The CCAC then referred the case to the PJ for investigation.

Upon being detained for questioning, the man, who is said to be a chauffeur, admitted that to earn the trust of women in Hong Kong he forged several documents, including name cards from public



entities in Macau, in order to pose as a high-ranking official.

He also forged other valuable documents such as university diplomas and other documents pertaining to academic qualifications.

The PJ spokesperson said that the force is not yet certain of the man's motives for attempting to

entrap women in the neighboring region, but according to information collected so far, he attempted to attract at least 30 women and has maintained a relationship with at least four of them.

Local police also found, using the man's computer and mobile phone records, that he has previously pretended to be a fema-

le from Hong Kong, and, while supposedly maintaining a long-distance relationship, deceived at least one local man into giving him money, ostensibly to meet the healthcare expenses of sick relatives.

According to these records, this local man was defrauded of at least 300,000 patacas over

five years.

As the case is still under investigation, the PJ has not so far disclosed whether the man defrauded any of the Hong Kong women, or whether he used their information to impersonate them while attempting to defraud other men.

The accused man's wife, a 23-year-old, who is said by the PJ to be unemployed, was found to have three forged identity documents from the mainland in her possession, which she admitted to having bought on the mainland.

The woman said that she dedicated herself to parallel imports over the border from Zhuhai to Macau and that she had purchased the false documents in order to present them from registration while unloading the items at a collection point in Macau.

While the man has been charged with six offences – document forgery, special value document forgery, the unlawful practice of a profession, fraud, computer fraud, and scamming – the woman is currently only accused of special value document forgery. Both suspects have admitted to the crimes.

The PJ will continue to investigate the case to discover whether there are additional crimes, as well as any other victims or suspects.

BUDGET EXECUTION RATE HITS RECORD HIGH

THE budgetary execution rate of the Macau government's Investment and Development Expenditure Plan (PIDDA) for the fourth quarter of 2020 reached nearly 96%, hitting record high.

The committee for the Follow-up of Public Finance Affairs discussed the matter yesterday in a plenary session. At the post-meeting press conference, president Mak Soi Kun and vice president Leong Sun Lok of the committee revealed that the government achieved a 95.8% execution rate and a 97.5% utilization rate in the budget for the quarter.

These levels are, according to the two lawmakers, the highest in history. They attributed the figures to the government's proactive administration. They said the committee is satisfied with the achievements.

Nonetheless, the government should pay attention to certain points, according to Mak. He re-



ferred to the 21 projects originally planned for the quarter that were scrapped after final approval was withheld.

The committee thought that if the relevant bureaus conformed more strictly to the regulations governing project proposals, the situation concerning delayed or scrapped projects would be improved.

The scrapped projects amounted to about 8% of the projects over the course of the year. They included public housing projects on two land plots on the New Urban Zone A, the Golden Statue Adven-

ture Village and the West-wing office of the Sports Bureau, and others.

There is an ongoing lawsuit over the office extension of the Sports Bureau and the reserved funds could not be used for other purposes. Moreover, it is still unclear whether the lawsuit will conclude in 2021, with the consequence that a portion of the bureau's budget will be earmarked for the lawsuit.

The committee has suggested the government consider other methods for annually allocating funds to the lawsuit. **AL**

CLIMATE

2020 A COOLER, DRYER YEAR IN TOWN, STATISTICS SHOW

RENATO MARQUES

LAST year, Macau registered lower temperatures than in 2019 as well as a significant drop in rainfall levels, environmental statistics released by the Statistics and Census Service (DSEC) reveal.

According to the release, the annual mean air temperature in Macau in 2020 dropped by 0.3 degrees Celsius year-on-year to 23.3 degrees Celsius.

Both the highest and lowest temperatures of the year are lower: the highest, 35.5 degrees Celsius, recorded in July, is down 0.2 degrees Celsius, and the lowest, 6.7 degrees Celsius, recorded in December, is down 1.7 degrees Celsius, making 2020 a cooler year than 2019.

Meanwhile, total precipitation decreased by 534.8 mm year-on-year to 1,713.2 mm, representing 23.8% less rainfall registered throughout the year.



The air quality improved, with monitoring stations recording a higher number of "Good" air quality days compared to 2019; moreover, the number of days in which the air quality was classified as "Poor" also notably dropped.

According to the statement of the DSEC, there were no days in 2020 on which the air quality stations registered above healthy limits for respirable suspended particulates (PM10) or fine suspended particulates (PM2.5).

Further, the Refuse Incineration Plant treated almost 20% less municipal solid waste in 2020 (437,592 tons).

However, 974,000 cubic meters of construction waste was sent to landfill, a significant increase of 66.0% from 2019.

There were also more people living in the same space in 2020, with the population density increasing from 20,400 persons per square kilometer in 2019 to 20,800 persons per km2 in 2020.

GAMING

Mid-month GGR projected to hit 35% of pre-pandemic levels

HONEY TSANG

MACAU'S gross gaming revenue (GGR) for the first 18 days of April is forecast to hit MOP5.5 billion, or MOP280 million per day, according to the latest prognosis released by JP Morgan on April 19.

The projected month-to-date GGR had already returned to over 35% of pre-pandemic levels in 2019. Broken down into segments, the GGR generated by the mass market fared better, standing at around 40-45% of levels in 2019, whilst VIP recovered to 20%.

Last week's run-rate stood at around MOP300 million per day: one of the highest non-holiday readings since the outbreak of coronavirus, the brokerage confirmed.

The strong performance last week was partly buoyed by "VIP luck," and indicates a "gradual yet consistent improvements in gambler [or] travel sentiment,"



JP Morgan said.

Because the May Golden Week Holiday, also known as May Day Holiday, from May 1 to 5, is around the corner, JP Morgan's analysts DS Kim, Derek Choi and Livy Lyu remain sanguine about their earlier forecast of a rapidly surging GGR run-rate over the period.

They regard a GGR rate of MOP400 to 500 million per day as a "strong success" for the May Day holiday.

"This, if it happens, would probably imply mass demand will have recovered to 70 to 80% of 2019 average levels (or, 55 to 60% of pre-Covid peaks) despite on-

going travel frictions, hence very promising for full normalization into 2022," the analyst observed.

Before the pandemic, the GGR during Golden Weeks in 2019, including Chinese New Year, May Day and National Day, averaged at around MOP1.0 to 1.1 billion per day.

According to the latest data provided by the Gaming Inspection and Coordination Bureau, Macau received MOP23.6 billion in GGR in the first quarter (Q1) of 2021, up 8.3% quarter-on-quarter, but down 22.5% compared to the same period last year.

By segment, the mass market

generated MOP14.5 billion during Q1 2021, up 2.15% from the last quarter. Meanwhile, the VIP segment generated around MOP9.13 billion in Q1, up 19.7% quarter-on-quarter, which has surpassed projections by banking groups.

Trip.com, the largest online travel agency in China, earlier released its bullish booking volumes to Macau for the upcoming May Day Holiday, heralding a surge in travel plans to the city.

As of April 8, the total number of bookings for Macau travel products during the May Day holiday through the Trip.com platform has risen by 20% compared to 2019. The search volume for flights in and out of Macau also climbed over 140%, the group said.

Cheng Wai Tong, sub-director of the Macao Government Tourism Office (MGTO), yesterday also stated that the authorities are now expecting tourist arrivals to hit a record high since the outbreak during the May Golden Week Holiday.

POLICE DETECT 79 SUSPECTED ILLEGAL WORKERS

THE Public Security Police Force (PSP) detected a total of 79 people suspected of working illegally in Macau last month, according to statistics just released.

This represents a significant increase from the previous month when the PSP detected a total of only 19 people suspected of the same offense.

According to the PSP, the 79 suspects were detected as a result of both joint and independent operations against illegal workers launched by the PSP, the Labour Affairs Bureau, and other authorities at construction sites, private flats and commercial and industrial establishments, among others.

The same press release also reveals that authorities significantly increased the number of inspections in March this year, conducting them in a total of 530 locations. This figure represents an increase of 42% from the previous month, when authorities only inspected 373 locations. **RM**

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GOV'T REJECTS ACCUSATIONS OF ABUSES IN XINJIANG

CHINA'S government yesterday rejected accusations of abuses in the Xinjiang region after a human rights group appealed for a U.N. investigation into possible crimes against humanity.

Accusations of forced labor or detentions in the northwestern region are "lies and false information concocted by anti-China forces," said a foreign ministry spokesman, Wang Wenbin. He accused critics of trying to "undermine Xinjiang's stability and security and curb China's development."

On Monday, Human Rights Watch appealed to the U.N. Human Rights Commission to investigate reports of mass detention of Muslims, a crackdown on religious practices and other measures against minorities. It said they amount to crimes against humanity as defined by the treaty that established the International Criminal Court.

More than 1 million people have been confined to

camp in Xinjiang, according to foreign governments and researchers. Authorities there are accused of imposing forced labor and birth controls.

Beijing rejects complaints of abuses and says the camps are for job training to support economic development and combat Islamic radicalism. The government is pressing foreign clothing and shoe brands to reverse decisions to stop using cotton from Xinjiang due to reports of possible forced labor.

Wang accused news outlets of acting as a "loudspeaker of lies and disinformation."

China has denied the United Nations unfettered access to the region to investigate.

Wang called on foreign observers to "respect facts and truth" and to "stop the wrong practice of spreading disinformation about Xinjiang and making false statements at every turn."

MDT/AP

SPAIN DISMANTLES CHINESE GANG SELLING CANNABIS ACROSS EUROPE

POLICE in Spain said yesterday they have dismantled one of the largest criminal gangs growing cannabis in the country and trafficking it across Europe.

At least 65 people, most of them Chinese nationals, were arrested in several Spanish cities, Portugal and the Netherlands, according to a joint statement from the national and Catalan regional police bodies.

Police identified the gang as "Bang of Fujian," in reference to the eastern Chinese province where the two main families that formed it originated. The group operated mainly from its Barcelona base, in northeastern Spain.

Over 350 law enforcement agents, assisted by Europol, searched 29 large warehouses and other locations in Barcelona, Tarragona, Oviedo, Gijón and Bilbao, as well as private residences in Portugal and the Netherlands.

Police said officers dismantled 13 indoor plantations with nearly 40,000 marijuana plants whose harvested buds could have fetched 6 million euros (\$7.2 million) in European markets.

The sites were illegally connected to the power



grid to provide artificial light to the plants. Combined, the 13 warehouses used the equivalent of the average consumption of 1,177 homes, police said.

The investigation began in 2019 when the first parcels containing packaged marijuana were detected. Investigators found that the gang recruited shareholders with an angel investment of 100,000 euros (\$120,000), allowing the

group to quickly expand its chain of warehouses.

The gang had a "well-defined criminal structure" and a "high-degree of specialization" for operating internationally, said Inspector Toni Salleras of the Catalan Mossos d'Esquadra police.

Salleras said that the group is also being investigated for kidnappings and other crimes committed in the competition with other

homegrown and foreign criminal groups for control of the production and sales of marijuana.

He said Chinese authorities were assisting in investigating possible human trafficking and money laundering crimes connected to the gang's operation.

The group is accused of making over 700 shipments of parcels to France, Portugal, Netherlands, Germany, Romania and Britain. AP

Chinese military seen behind Japan cyberattacks, NHK Says

ISABEL REYNOLDS

CHINA'S military is thought to have instructed a hacker group to conduct cyberattacks on nearly 200 Japanese research institutions and firms, public broadcaster NHK reported, citing unidentified people in a police investigation.

The investigators found a member of China's Communist Party made contracts under a false name for rental servers in Japan that were used in the attacks on the Japanese space agency JAXA in 2016, the broadcaster said yesterday.

Investigators believe the cyberattacks were carried out by a group known as Tick under the instruction

of the People's Liberation Army. Two men involved with contracts for the servers have left Japan, NHK said.

A Chinese systems engineer in his 30s, who is a Chinese Communist Party member, was referred to prosecutors over his alleged involvement in the attacks, Kyodo News reported, citing unnamed investigative sources.

The reported allegations, the latest in a series of similar incidents, come amid increasingly difficult relations between Japan and its biggest trading partner. The topic of ties with China dominated the agenda at Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga's summit with U.S. President Joe Biden in Washington last week.

Japan's Chief Cabinet

Secretary Katsunobu Kato declined to comment on the investigation. He told a regular news briefing yesterday cyberattacks on infrastructure were becoming more organized and the government saw responding to such incidents as an important issue.

Responding to a question on the NHK report about the alleged suspect at a regular news briefing in Beijing, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Wang Wenbin said he wasn't aware of the case. Wang later added cyberspace is made up of many actors whose origins are difficult to trace and warned against making accusations in cybersecurity cases.

"In designating an inci-



dent, there must be ample evidence. It cannot be based on presumption," he said. "We are against other countries smearing us on cybersecurity or using this issue to serve its despicable political agenda." Cyberattacks are a common threat to all countries and China too was a

victim, he added.

A JAXA spokesperson confirmed it was the subject of an unauthorized access that seemed to be a cyberattack, but suffered no damage, according to NHK. Japan has been seeking to beef up its cyber defenses in recent months. BLOOMBERG

Investigators believe the cyberattacks were carried out by a group known as Tick under the instruction of the People's Liberation Army

CHINA is expected to approve BioNTech SE's Covid-19 vaccine in June, according to the head of American Chamber of Commerce in Shanghai, Ker Gibbs.

The Shanghai government has told the group, known as AmCham, that it expects the shot to be approved "somewhere in the June time frame," he said, citing a direct conversation with the Vice Mayor Zong Ming. "We think before July," Gibbs said. "We're not going to hold her to June 1 or June 30, but in that time frame is what we're expecting."

The shot, which will be rolled out by Shanghai Fosun Pharmaceutical Group Co., is likely to be the first of the highly effective mRNA vaccines approved in mainland China. Its availability will help alleviate supply shortages currently faced by the world's most populous country, which has set a target of vaccinating 40% of the nation, or some 560 million people, by the end of June.

LIMITED SUPPLY

Supply shortfalls recently slowed the pace of China's immunization push, following an acceleration in late March that was spurred by Vice Premier Sun Chunlan's call to ramp up a nationwide vaccination campaign. An average of 3.5

COVID-19

Gov't expected to approve BioNTech vaccine in June, AmCham says

million shots a day have been given for the past week, according to data released by the National Health Commission, while the country needs to administer more than 5.3 million doses a day to meet its the June target.

needed to achieve full immunization.

Fosun secured the rights from BioNTech SE to exclusively develop and market the shot in mainland China, Hong Kong, Macau, and Taiwan. Pfizer Inc.

The shot, which will be rolled out by Shanghai Fosun Pharmaceutical Group Co., is likely to be the first of the highly effective mRNA vaccines approved in mainland China

With the supply bottleneck remaining a pressure point, authorities have devised several ways to make vaccinations available to more people. Those measures include prioritizing distribution in densely populated and developed cities, and extending the interval between the two doses

sells the vaccine in other places. The messenger RNA vaccine works by delivering genetic instructions for making the virus's spike protein inside healthy cells, which spurs an immune response. The mRNA shots have higher effectiveness rates than immunization from domestic



makers, including those from Sinovac Biotech Ltd. and Sinopharm Group Co.

PRE-REGISTERING

Fosun indicated a price of roughly 1000 yuan (\$154) for two doses in December, according to Gibbs, and they haven't had further talks about costs since then.

Some 40,000 people have ex-

pressed an interest in getting the BioNTech shot in an AmCham Shanghai survey, conducted to help Fosun pre-register people in the community.

"We're having ongoing conversations with Fosun and we have high confidence in their ability to efficiently distribute the vaccine once it's approved," Gibbs said. **BLOOMBERG**

AD

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TICM



Military says that Chad's president killed on battlefield

EDOUARD TAKADJI & KRISTA LARSON, N'DJAMENA

CHADIAN President Idriss Deby Itno, who ruled the central African nation for more than three decades, died yesterday of wounds suffered on the battlefield during a fight against rebels, the military announced on national television and radio.

The stunning announcement came just hours after electoral officials had declared Deby, 68, the winner of the April 11 presidential election, paving the way for him to stay in power for six more years.

An 18-month transitional council will be led by Deby's 37-year-old son, Mahamat Idriss Deby Itno, the military said, also imposing a nightly curfew of 6 p.m.

"In the face of this worrying situation, the people of Chad must show their attachment to peace, to stability, and to national cohesion," Gen. Azem Berman-doa Agouma said.

The circumstances of Deby's death could not immediately be independently confirmed due to the remote location of the fighting.

The military said Deby had taken "the heroic lead in combat operations against terrorists who had come

from Libya." After being wounded in battle, he then was taken to the capital, the general announced.

However, some foreign observers questioned how a head of state could have been killed, saying it cast doubt on his protective guard. The Chadian military had only acknowledged five deaths in weekend fighting in which it said it had killed 300 rebels.

"We still don't have the whole story," Laith Alkhouri, a global intelligence adviser, told The Associated Press. "It raises concerns regarding the security forces' assessment of the clashes and their intelligence regarding

the severity of the situation."

Other analysts pointed to Deby's long history of visiting the battlefield as a former army commander-in-chief himself.

"There's no evidence to suggest this was a coup committed by his troops. Anyone who follows Deby knows he used to say 'to lead troops you have to smell the gunpowder,'" tweeted Cameron Hudson with the Atlantic Council's Africa Center.

Deby first came to power in 1990 when his rebel forces overthrew then-President Hissene Habre, who was later convicted of human rights abuses at an international tribunal in Senegal.

Over the years Deby had survived numerous armed rebellions and managed to stay in power until this latest insurgency led by a group calling itself the Front for Change and Concord in Chad.

The rebels are believed to have armed and trained in neighboring Libya before crossing into northern Chad on April 11. Their arrival came on the same day that Chad's president sought a sixth term on election day, which several top opposition candidates boycotted.

Deby was a major French ally in the fight against Islamic extremism in Africa, hosting the base for the French military's Operation Barkhane and supplying critical troops to the peacekeeping effort in northern Mali.

Deby's son, Mahamat, has served as a top commander for Chadian forces taking part in that effort. **AP**

this day in history



1945 RED ARMY ENTERS OUTSKIRTS OF BERLIN

Russian troops have captured some outlying suburbs of Berlin at the beginning of what promises to be a bitter battle for control of the city.

The Red Army approached the German capital from three directions, north, east and south-

east. The northeastern suburb of Weissensee is the closest to the centre being only three miles away.

The Nazi minister of propaganda, Josef Goebbels, has issued a statement saying Berlin will be defended to the last.

He said anyone who showed cowardice, hoisted the white flag or attempted sabotage would be treated as outlaws.

The Germans are understood to be terrified of what might happen to them if Berlin falls into Soviet hands. Since 1941 Nazi forces have laid waste to large parts of the Soviet Union.

The Soviet troops under Marshal Georgi Zhukov are pushing towards Berlin from the north and east and Marshal Ivan Konev and his forces from the south. They are both keen to achieve the honour of capturing Berlin, the heart of the Nazi movement.

American forces are also pushing towards Berlin from the west and are now said to be only hours away from joining up with Russian troops.

Reports from Berlin say shells have begun to fall in the centre of the city. Correspondents say they have been fired from southern positions taking the Germans by surprise. They had been expecting Marshal Konev's forces to press on towards Prague and Dresden.

The Russian advance has been supported by its air force. Although the weather has been poor it has not stopped its low-level attack aircraft, the Stormoviks, sweeping the enemy lines and the improved Soviet dive-bombers are also halting counter-attacks.

The final assault on Berlin began on the night of 15/16 April when Soviet forces launched a powerful artillery barrage against the German forces dug in west of the Oder River and to the east of the city in an area known as the Seelow Heights.

A German military spokesman said they were attacking under what he called a permanent "air umbrella" with "fresh Soviet troops coming forward as though on a conveyor belt."

After two days of fighting and failing to make any significant breakthrough at Seelow, however, Marshal Konev's forces were ordered south and Marshal Zhukov's to the north thus bypassing the German 9th Army at Seelow and surrounding Berlin.

Hitler is reported to have celebrated his birthday yesterday in his underground bunker in the city, cut off from the reality of the fighting above his head.

Reports say Marshal Konev's forces to the south of Berlin have taken more than 10,000 prisoners in the past four days. They also claim to have captured 96 aircraft and more than 150 tanks and self-propelled guns.

Marshal Zhukov's troops, heading from the north and east, claim to have taken more than 13,000 prisoners. They have captured 60 aircraft and more than 100 tanks and self-propelled guns.

But in their haste to capture Berlin many Soviet soldiers have also been killed and tanks lost.

Courtesy BBC News

Italy targets mid-May opening for tourism in bid to save sector

JOHN FOLLAIN & FLAVIA ROTONDI

ITALY is aiming to open the country to tourists in mid-May, pledging a range of measures to protect visitors from the coronavirus as it scrambles to rescue a sector devastated by lockdowns and restrictions on movement.

As part of the race to get the industry back on its feet, the Rome-based government will introduce so-called vaccine passports earlier than the rest of the

European Union, Tourism Minister Massimo Garavaglia said in an interview. "Conditions are right to start the summer season on May 15," said Garavaglia, a 53-year-old lawmaker from the rightist League, Italy's most popular party.

Prime Minister Mario Draghi is under pressure to salvage tourism, which accounts for 13% of Italy's economic output. Tourist arrivals plunged globally by three quarters last year, generating losses worth 2% of GDP and putting 100

million jobs at risk, according to a report earlier this month.

The Draghi government hopes to introduce its version of the EU's planned "digital green certificates" through a decree as early as this week, Garavaglia said, and is planning "Covid-free" rail service to some 90 destinations, with mandatory pre-boarding swabs for passengers.

Checkpoints at popular tourist spots are another option. "In Venice they're studying solutions to help

tourists enter, perhaps through checks, at the few entry points to the city," Garavaglia said.

The government is also planning to earmark more than 1.7 billion euros (\$2.1 billion) in support for businesses and workers who've lost revenue because of the pandemic, Garavaglia said, and foresees financial tools including mini-bonds to allow businesses to group together to seek funding for structural works on hotels and restaurants. **BLOOMBERG**

IN CONTEXT

Hitler ordered a counter attack. But the Wehrmacht's 9th Army was cut off by Marshall Konev's forces in the forest south of Berlin, near the small town of Halbe. Over 50,000 soldiers and civilians died. Their bodies were left piled high beside the narrow paths in the forest. The Red Army meanwhile pressed on into the heart of Berlin. Zhukov's and Konev's troops were still racing to be first to capture the city and in their haste many lives appear to have been needlessly lost. Figures vary but one source says the battle for Berlin cost the Red Army some 70,000 troops. Hitler and his mistress Eva Braun committed suicide in his bunker on 30 April only hours after they were married.

MACAU'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

YOUR STARS



ARIES

Mar. 21-Apr. 19

How often does the universe give you a day off, Aries? Wednesday's skies are notably absent of cosmic action - giving you full permission to make it what you will.



TAURUS

Apr. 20-May. 20

The lack of cosmic connections renders a low activity day all around, so use this energy to catch up on rest and refresh your living space. You're likely to be in a homebody, family-focused...



GEMINI

May. 21-Jun. 21

As a Gemini, you were born to share your perspective. That concept of communication is key today, as the theatrical Leo moon urges you to express yourself in some shape or form.



CANCER

Jun. 22-Jul. 22

The moon floats through ambitious Leo, lacking connection to any other planets. Thus, it's a great day to focus on small efforts, maintenance, and projects that are already under way.



LEO

Jul. 23-Aug. 22

You deserve the pampering you crave, Leo. The moon meanders through your sign all day, making no cosmic connections to other planets. This creates a low energy, low activity sort of day.



VIRGO

Aug. 23-Sep. 22

Take the day off from any major responsibilities in whatever way feels feasible and try to focus on activities that rejuvenate you. The following days will demand ample energy, so let yourself peacefully recover today.



LIBRA

Sep. 23-Oct. 22

Luna finds herself lacking any real cosmic connection, making it a low-activity day all around. Focus on your inner circle and let the rest fall into place!



SCORPIO

Oct. 23-Nov. 21

Luna finds herself without any cosmic connections, which renders the day as one with low energy and low activity. It's best to stick to small efforts or maintenance on projects that are already underway.



SAGITTARIUS

Nov. 22-Dec. 21

The moon floats through enthusiastic Leo all day, pointing your focus towards the big-picture perspective of your life while simultaneously stirring your need for refreshing travel and education opportunities.



CAPRICORN

Dec. 22-Jan. 19

The moon floats through self-aware Leo, helping you tap into the deepest parts of your psyche to address untold relationship stories. Aim to confide in someone you trust today.



AQUARIUS

Jan. 20-Feb. 18

The cosmos is working to point your attention towards those special one-on-one today, as the moon floats through your opposite sign of dramatic Leo. Luna's lack of cosmic connections makes for a low-key day all around.



PISCES

Feb. 19-Mar. 20

There's work to be tackled under Wednesday's skies, Pisces. Yet, the low energy atmosphere offered up today's cosmic landscape makes it difficult to plow ahead with your initial plans.

The Born Loser by Chip Sansom



SUDOKU

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

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

WEATHER

| | MIN | MAX | CONDITION |
|--------------|-----|-----|---------------|
| CHINA | | | |
| Beijing | 13 | 20 | cloudy |
| Harbin | 3 | 22 | cloudy |
| Tianjin | 14 | 19 | overcast |
| Urumqi | 9 | 19 | cloudy |
| Xi'an | 12 | 22 | cloudy |
| Lhasa | 4 | 18 | cloudy |
| Chengdu | 15 | 23 | cloudy |
| Chongqing | 16 | 23 | cloudy |
| Kunming | 12 | 26 | clear |
| Nanjing | 17 | 22 | thundershower |
| Shanghai | 15 | 22 | clear |
| Wuhan | 17 | 23 | drizzle |
| Hangzhou | 14 | 28 | cloudy |
| Taipei | 20 | 26 | drizzle |
| Guangzhou | 20 | 28 | cloudy |
| Hong Kong | 21 | 29 | cloudy |
| WORLD | | | |
| Moscow | 3 | 7 | sleet |
| Frankfurt | 4 | 14 | clear |
| Paris | 6 | 15 | clear |
| London | 7 | 16 | drizzle |
| New York | 11 | 20 | cloudy |

CROSSWORDS

ACROSS 1- Honshu port; 6- Balls; 11- Kung ___ chicken; 14- Well-known; 15- Low life?; 16- Richards of Texas; 17- Money spent; 18- ___, I'm Adam; 19- Actress Ruby; 20- Lens holders; 22- Everyday; 24- Roof item; 28- Debt that remains unpaid; 30- Eye membrane; 31- Sigh; 32- Fiddled; 33- Crackle; 37- Self starter?; 38- Ostentatious; 39- It's for two, in song; 40- Sleuth; 43- Ascends; 45- Glove material; 46- Give in; 47- Ostrich or emu; 49- Male donkey; 50- Dimensions; 51- Jury member; 52- Frequently; 53- Like helium; 56- Turn over; 61- Bar order; 62- Tag line?; 63- Inuit dwelling; 64- VCR button; 65- Plant problem; 66- Spoil;

DOWN: 1- Lennon's lady; 2- Former coin of France; 3- ABA member; 4- Frat party staple; 5- Decked out; 6- Type of ray; 7- Latin lesson word; 8- Spearheaded; 9- Attorney's org.; 10- Warrior of feudal Japan; 11- "The Taming of the Shrew" setting; 12- Lend ___; 13- Like Nash's lama; 21- One ___ million; 23- Posted; 24- Was Hamlet; 25- Snare; 26- Rendezvous; 27- Hydrocarbon ending; 28- ___ having fun yet?; 29- Fibrous; 31- Orchard; 33- Reproach; 34- Puzzled; 35- Mall frequenters; 36- Bridge positions; 38- Keep it, to an editor; 41- Ferrara family; 42- Style of cooking; 43- New member; 44- Class; 46- ___ Dawn Chong; 47- Long arm; 48- Nahuatl speaker; 49- Volkswagen model; 50- Go sky-high; 51- Prissy; 54- Silent assent; 55- Hot time in Paris; 57- Links org.; 58- Biblical high priest; 59- Tours turndown; 60- Speck;



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
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AUTOMOBILE

TESLA DISQUIET IN CHINA MOUNTS AFTER EMBARRASSING DRIVER PROTEST

TESLA INC. looks to be coming under increasing pressure in China with two government entities firing off missives about the company's behavior and treatment of its customers in a single day.

The trouble started early yesterday when China's state-run Xinhua news agency released a piece that said the quality of Tesla's electric vehicles must meet market expectations in order to win consumers' trust. The Palo Alto, California-based company should address consumer hesitation over purchasing its cars after issues ranging from malfunctioning brakes to blazes during the vehicles' charging emerged, the article said.

A few hours later, the Commission for Political and Legal Affairs of the Communist Party of China Central Committee weighed in, posting a commentary on its WeChat account that said the automaker should respect Chinese consumers and comply with local laws and regulations. Making an effort to find the cause of problems and improve features is something any responsible business should do, and Tesla hasn't done that, the Communist Party body that oversees China's police, prosecutors and courts said.

The blowback would appear to stem from an embarrassing incident Tesla faced on Monday at the Shanghai Auto Show, one of the world's premier car events. An angry protester climbed on top of one of its display vehicles shouting that her car's brakes had lost control. She was live-streaming earlier from near Tesla's booth before staging her



BLOOMBERG

protest, which was captured by scores of onlookers who then uploaded the footage to the internet, helping it to go viral on social media. Tesla's booth at the show yesterday had a noticeably increased security presence.

The woman, a Tesla owner from Henan, "is widely known for having repeatedly protested against Tesla's brake issue," the company said on Monday, adding that it will work on solutions but "never compromise against unreasonable demands." She will be detained for five days, local police said.

Tesla didn't immediately respond to a request for comment yesterday.

A female Tesla owner climbed on top of a car's roof at the Tesla booth to protest her car's brake

malfunction at the Shanghai auto show Monday. The booth beefed up its security after the incident.

The unwanted publicity comes at an uncomfortable time for Tesla, which since it broke ground on its Gigafactory in Shanghai in early 2019 has enjoyed a dream run in China, receiving all-important support from the government and appearing to skirt the tensions between Washington D.C. and Beijing. The world's biggest maker of EVs has extracted perks other international companies have struggled to obtain in China, the No. 1 global EV market, including tax breaks, cheap loans and permission to wholly own its domestic operations.

But over the past month, Tes-

la has had to defend the way it handles data in China and had its cars banned from military complexes because of concerns about sensitive information being collected by cameras built into the vehicles. After that order, Chief Executive Officer Elon Musk strenuously denied the company would ever use a car's technology for spying and Tesla's Beijing unit said cameras that are built into its EVs aren't activated outside of North America.

Tesla has been called out by Chinese regulators over quality and safety issues before, including battery fires and abnormal acceleration. In early February, it was forced into issuing a public apology to China's state grid after a video purportedly showed

staff blaming an overload in the national electricity network for damage to a customer's vehicle.

Tesla's China honeymoon appears to be coming to an end at a time the U.S. automaker is facing increasing competition from a slew of younger, cashed up local EV players like the U.S.-listed Nio Inc. and Xpeng Inc., which also enjoy the support of municipal governments. Their presence at this year's Shanghai Auto Show was telling, with their large, shiny booths overshadowing exhibits from some of the more traditional carmakers.

For all the hype over these newer entrants, however, Teslas remain hugely popular in China, the world's biggest car market for conventional automobiles as well. A record 34,714 China-built and imported Teslas were registered in the country in March, almost double the 18,155 registrations in February, when the week long Lunar New Year holiday slowed sales, and almost triple the number a year earlier, when the nation was in the grip of coronavirus lockdowns.

The pushback against Tesla comes as other Western brands also face greater scrutiny and become ensnared in geopolitics. Swedish clothing giant Hennes & Mauritz AB was earlier criticized by state entities for an old statement on its website about forced labor in the contentious Chinese region of Xinjiang, while there has been a marked increase in nationalism among some Chinese consumers, with campaigns to buy local brands gathering pace. **MDT/BLOOMBERG**

CORPORATE BITS

Sands China organises national security exhibition tour for staff



Nearly 40 Sands China team members, including senior management from various departments, recently participated in a tour of the 2021 National Security Education Exhibition at

the Complex of Commerce and Trade Co-operation Platform for China and Portuguese-speaking Countries.

The aims of the activities were to increase team

members' awareness of safeguarding national security and to cultivate the spirit of "Loving the Motherland and Loving Macau," according to a statement issued by the gaming operator.

"Sands China was very pleased to be able to arrange a visit to this exhibition for our team members for the third time, so that they could gain a more comprehensive understanding of the importance of national security," said Wilfred Wong, president of Sands China Ltd.

Sands China had also organised a team member visit to the first and second National Security Education Exhibitions in 2018 and 2019.

MGM holds the 11th 'Health Day for Senior Buddies'



MGM recently held the annual "Haircut and Health Day for Senior Buddies" at MGM Cotai's Ballroom, providing complimentary health consultation and haircut service to more than 300 senior citizens.

In addition to fulfilling its pledge to enhance physical and mental well-being of seniors, MGM put on a music and dance performance by MGM volunteers and students of Caritas de Macau School to

live out the message of social inclusion.

The philanthropic event has served a total of over 2,100 senior citizens in the past 11 years, MGM stated.

As in years past, the gaming operator invited medical practitioners from Chinese Medicine Association of Macau to introduce the basic techniques of Chinese massage for the senior citizens. They also gave away three different kinds of nutrient soup according to the physical condition of each individual.

MGM Golden Lion Hairdressing Team members on the other hand provided complimentary haircuts to about 100 senior citizens.

BASKETBALL

Curry hits 10 3s, scores 49 in Warriors' win in Philly

DAN GELSTON, PHILADELPHIA

STEPHEN Curry stripped off his No. 30 jersey and handed stuffed duffle bags full of memorabilia to a Delaware state trooper who stopped in full uniform to shoot hoops on the playground with neighborhood kids.

"That's Curry! That's Curry!" one kid yelled after Joshua Morris shot a long 3.

Curry put on a 3-point spectacle in Philly worthy of the trooper's own effort.

Curry hit 10 3-pointers and scored 49 points to extend his sizzling stretch, leading the Golden State Warriors to a 107-96 victory over the Philadelphia 76ers on Monday night.

Morris later gifted the kid on the video — he called him his "hype man" — a pair of Curry's basketball sneakers. The video caught Curry's attention and he invited Morris and guests to the game. Curry posed for pictures after the game and walked back to the locker room without a shirt.

"He's an amazing story [...] with the little kid that was hyping him up," Curry said. "I had to show him some love. The love he showed the young man and just the foundation of impact that he shared. It's pretty impressive."

Curry wasn't so bad himself. Curry's 3 that tied the game at 86-all gave him 11 straight games with 30 or more points, topping Kobe Bryant for the most by any player 33 or older. Curry, who turned 33 last month, also has the longest 30-point game streak by a Warriors player since Wilt Chamberlain in 1964.

Curry had his fifth 40-point game in April and topped Bryant and Michael Jordan for most 40-point games in a month by a player 33 or older.

He buried 3s late in the fourth to whisk the Warriors past the top team in the Eastern Conference. Joel Embiid, who scored 28 for the 76ers, threw the ball away late and Andrew Wiggins scored on the other end to

put away the game. The Sixers played without All-Star Ben Simmons (illness) and starting forward Tobias Harris (20.5 points; sore right knee).

The Curry brothers went head-to-head — yes, in the City of Brotherly Love — in a spirited showdown from the opening minutes when Seth buried a 3 over his sibling. Steph answered with a tough 3 at the end of the first quarter and had 20 points at the half.

Even for Curry, his recent stretch of sensational shooting ranked among the best of his career. He averaged 43.8 points (.573 FG%, .545 3P%, .906 FT%), 5.8 rebounds and 5.0 assists in four games last week. Curry even shook off an injured left ankle that he turned in Saturday's game against Boston to torch the 76ers.

"There's something beautiful about it. It really is an art," Warriors coach Steve Kerr said. "What he's doing is amazing to watch. Nobody in the history of this game has ever done what he's doing right now."



Golden State Warriors' Stephen Curry (left) goes up for a shot past Philadelphia 76ers' Seth Curry during the first half of an NBA basketball game

In the history of the game? Sixers coach Doc Rivers agreed, even insisting in an argument with his older brother in Chicago that Curry's season rivals anything Jordan ever accomplished.

"I don't know if I've ever seen anything like the run he's on," Rivers said. "I guarantee you there's no one that has scored [points] in the way he has."

Wiggins scored 16 points and Kevon Looney grabbed a career-high 15 rebounds.

Seth Curry scored 15 points and Danny Green hit four 3s for 12 points. Embiid had 13 rebounds and was 11 of 14 from the free throw line.

"He's really a unique force in

the league today," Kerr said. Curry showed he was still the best player on the court. Golden State's 29-29 record could keep Curry from MVP consideration but the franchise's career leading scorer — who hit at least 10 3s for the sixth time this season — is still one of the best in the league.

FAMILY AFFAIR

Doc Rivers is both coach and father-in-law to Seth Curry. Rivers laughed when he said that he sees retired NBA star Del Curry more than any other member of the family. Rivers said when he visited his granddaughter on Sunday, Steph Curry also was there to see his niece. **MDT/AP**

AD

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Inclusive healthy and sustainable lifestyle on World Earth Day

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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: 神星星河環能公益聯盟, 澳門足球總會, 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: 澳門「展現真我」協會 Macau IC2 Association
合辦單位: 神星星河環能公益聯盟, 澳門足球總會, 澳門綠色未來
支持單位: 澳門環境局, ARTYZEN
媒體單位: Media Partner Times

OPINION

World Views

David Fickling, MDT/Bloomberg



THE PANDEMIC WILL BE MORE DEADLY THIS YEAR

Covid-19 is going to kill more people in 2021 than it did last year. If you want to see why, look at what's happening in India.

Cases have been surging in the country of 1.37 billion people. On Sunday alone, 261,500 new infections were recorded. That's as bad as the U.S. during all but the worst five days of the pandemic in December and early January. Case counts are rising far more quickly, too. Average infection numbers over the past seven days have run at nearly three times the level two weeks ago, a pace of growth that the U.S. last saw in the early days of the outbreak a year ago.

The real numbers may be yet higher. The city of Bhopal used Covid-19 protocols to cremate or bury 84 people last Tuesday, according to the Hindustan Times, while declaring only five Covid deaths. The B.1.617 variant, which isn't well understood yet, has features associated with higher infection rates and lower antibody resistance. It's turning up in more than half of viral samples taken in India.

As caseloads push medical facilities toward capacity, the health system itself is starting to crack. Vaccine stocks, hospital beds and even oxygen supplies are running short, leading to bitter arguments between the states and the federal government. In some places, the dead are being transported by truck because cities have run out of hearses. Elsewhere, crematoria have started to break down because of the sheer number of bodies being burned. The government Monday promised to open up vaccines to all people over the age of 18.

If things don't change soon, the country will be facing 3,000 deaths a day — twice its current level, and 10 times what was being seen through most of this year — Bhramar Mukherjee, a biostatistician at the University of Michigan, wrote last week.

Worse may be to come. The Kumbh Mela, a Hindu pilgrimage festival that's normally the largest mass gathering on earth, is now underway on the banks of the Ganges, attended by an estimated 3.5 million people. That's well down on the numbers in a normal year, and even Modi, far too late, urged over the weekend that the event be purely "symbolic" rather than physical. Still, it's far above the mere thousands allowed to other mass events like last year's Hajj in Saudi Arabia and Arbaeen pilgrimage in Iraq.

Even held outdoors, such events carry a profound risk of spreading the most infectious variants to every corner of the country.

Hitherto, the coronavirus has mostly hit the relatively affluent, urbanized parts of the country that are best able to cope with it, such as the southern states of Kerala and Karnataka, the capital Delhi, and Maharashtra, home to Mumbai. If the Kumbh Mela seeds it in rural districts, where the majority of India's population lives, the death toll could be higher still.

There's a lesson in this for the world. The 1.2 million people who've died from Covid so far this year already represent about two-thirds of the 1.8 million fatalities in 2020. Yet people are behaving as if it's already over. That's removing the sense of unified urgency that led many nations to make such strides in turning around the pandemic last year.

Vaccine supplies for the richest (and, thanks to global initiatives, poorest) countries are relatively ample. Yet those for middle-income nations, where the majority of the planet's population lives, are grossly inadequate, blocked by restrictive patent rules. India, with one of the world's largest pharmaceutical industries, is far better placed than most midsize economies to cope, but even it is crumbling under the strain.

The more people infected in emerging countries while the rest of the world looks away, the more opportunities Covid-19 will have to develop into fresh strains and prolong this death and misery. We must do better. The globe is still under attack, but our defenses are in disarray.

[Abridged]

Several doctors were prevented yesterday from seeing Russian opposition leader Alexei Navalny in a prison hospital after his three-week hunger strike and prosecutors detailed a sweeping, new case against his organization.

Navalny was transferred Sunday from a penal colony east of Moscow to a prison hospital in Vladimir, a city 180 kilometers east of the capital after his lawyers and associates said his condition has dramatically worsened.

Reports about Navalny's rapidly deteriorating health have drawn

international outrage.

His personal physician, Dr. Anastasia Vasilyeva, led three other medical experts to try to visit Navalny at the prison clinic and the IK-3 prison in the city of Vladimir. They were denied entry after waiting for hours outside the gates.

Navalny, who is Russian President Vladimir Putin's most adamant opponent, has been on a hunger strike since March 31 to protest the prison officials' refusal to let his doctors visit him and provide adequate treatment for his back pains and numbness in his legs.

AP PHOTO



QUEEN ENTERS 'TWILIGHT' OF REIGN AFTER FAREWELL TO PHILIP

DANICA KIRKA, LONDON

NOW that the Royal Family has said farewell to Prince Philip, attention will turn to Queen Elizabeth II's 95th birthday today and, in coming months, the celebrations marking her 70 years on the throne.

This combination of events is reminding the United Kingdom that the reign of the queen, the only monarch most of her subjects have ever known, is finite. That has triggered speculation about how long she will remain on the throne, what the monarchy will look like in the future and, for some, even whether it should continue to exist.

"The queen is certainly moving now into the twilight of her reign and a new phase of her reign," said Anna Whitelock, director of the Centre for the Study of Modern Monarchy at Royal Holloway, University of London. "She now is a widow, and it remains to be seen how she's going to respond to that."

While most observers say the queen is unlikely to abdicate given her lifelong commitment to public service, she has already started to turn over more responsibilities to Prince Charles, 72, her eldest son. That process is likely to accelerate following Philip's death.

Charles' increased role began gradually, when the queen began cutting back on long-haul flights, resulting in Charles taking her place at a 2013 Commonwealth Heads of Govern-

ment meeting in Sri Lanka.

Then in 2017, he represented the queen at the annual Remembrance Day ceremony marking the end of World War I, laying the monarch's wreath at the foot of the Cenotaph in London. It was the first time the queen hadn't performed the solemn ritual, other than when she was pregnant or out of the country.

Since then, Charles has taken on an increasing number of public engagements and been named the queen's designated successor as head of the Commonwealth, a voluntary association of 54 nations with links to the British Empire.

"Symbolically, the transition towards the succession is already underway," said Ed Owens, a historian and author of "The Family Firm, Monarchy, Mass Media and the British Public 1932-53."

"I anticipate that we're going to see a lot more of Prince Charles in the next couple of years so that we, as a people, start to see him in his future role as king."

For now, the longest serving monarch in British history continues to reign. But she will do so without Philip, the man the queen called her "strength and stay," a source of emotional support in her often lonely job.

Her loss was underscored by Saturday's funeral at St. George's Chapel on the grounds of Windsor Castle, where the figure of a widow in black sitting alone offered a glimpse of the next solitary phase of the queen's reign.

"Constitutionally, Prin-

ce Philip's death doesn't change anything. But, of course, at a time when the queen is approaching her 95th birthday, she's vulnerable and aging," Whitelock said. "Clearly, Prince Philip's death has begun this transition to the future and the beginning of the end of this phase of monarchy."

Questions about the end of the queen's reign will also fuel the debate over the long-term future of the monarchy, seen by many as a symbol of national unity but by others as an obsolete vestige of the nation's feudal history.

The BBC received more than 100,000 complaints about its decision to pre-empt popular TV programs for round-the-clock coverage of Prince Philip's death, the most it has ever received about a single programming decision.

And while there is enormous respect for the queen, the same isn't necessarily true for Charles and other members of the royal family, said Graham Smith, chief executive of Republic, which campaigns to replace the monarchy with an elected head of state.

Philip's death "serves as a reminder to an awful lot of people, who on the whole don't think much about the monarchy from one day to the next, that change is coming," Smith told the Express newspaper.

The queen's reign began with the death of her father, King George VI, on Feb. 6, 1952. She was formally crowned on June 2, 1953. **MDT/AP**

EU Experts at the European Medicines Agency are preparing to present the conclusions of their investigation into possible links between the Johnson & Johnson coronavirus vaccine and very rare cases of unusual clotting disorders detected in the U.S. Last week, J&J halted its European rollout of its one-dose vaccine after the U.S. Food and Drug Administration recommended officials pause its use while the rare blood clot cases are examined.

AP PHOTO



Greece has vowed to expand military cooperation with traditional NATO allies as well as Middle Eastern powers in a race to modernize its armed forces and face its militarily assertive neighbor Turkey. Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis visited an air base in southern Greece to attend multinational military exercises joined by fighter jets from the United States, France, Israel, Spain and the United Arab Emirates.

AP PHOTO



Germany Armin Laschet, the governor of the country's most populous state, emerged victorious yesterday from a bruising power struggle and became the candidate of Angela Merkel's center-right bloc to succeed the longtime chancellor in the country's September election. Laschet, 60, now faces another big battle: to connect with voters and win over frustrated fellow conservatives who backed his more popular rival, Markus Soeder.

AP PHOTO



Netherlands A group of 46 nations called yesterday on member states of the global chemical weapons watchdog to diplomatically rebuke Syria for using toxic gas and nerve agents in the country's decade-long civil war. French Ambassador Luis Vassy proposed stripping Syria of its voting rights at the annual meeting of members of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons.