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MACAU REGISTERED A TOTAL OF 362 REPORTS OF SUSPICIOUS TRANSACTIONS FROM THE CASINO OPERATORS IN THE FIRST QUARTER

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SSM TO LAUNCH VACCINATION OUTREACH AT LOCAL UNIVERSITIES

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A LOCAL RESIDENT IS ACCUSED OF ASSAULTING AND EXTORTING HIS GIRLFRIEND FOR A TOTAL OF HKD170,000: PJ

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AP PHOTO



Indonesia's navy is searching for a submarine that went missing north of the resort island of Bali with 53 people on board, the military said. Military chief Hadi Tjahjanto said the KRI Nanggala 402 was participating in a training exercise when it missed a scheduled reporting call. The submarine is believed to have disappeared in waters about 60 miles north of Bali, he said.

India Twenty-two Covid-19 patients on ventilators died in a hospital in western India yesterday when their oxygen supply was interrupted by a leak in a supply line, officials said. Suraj Mandhar, the district collector, said the supply of oxygen has since resumed to other patients. Fire officer Sanjay Bairagi said the leak was halted by the fire service within 15 minutes, but there was supply disruption in the Zakir Hussain Hospital in Nashik.

Australia yesterday canceled four bilateral deals with China, Iran and Syria under new laws that give the federal government power to overrule international agreements by lower-level administrations that violate the national interest. The canceled deals include Victoria state's two "Belt and Road" infrastructure building initiative deals with Beijing signed in 2018 and 2019. Foreign Minister Marise Payne said in a statement.

AP PHOTO



New Zealand announced yesterday it will consolidate its fragmented health care system into a national service similar to the one revered by many in Britain. New Zealand's government-run system is currently divided into 20 district health boards, each with their own budget. Some describe the system as a "postcode lottery" of different treatment depending on where people live.

More on backpage

CLIMATE SUMMIT

Dozens of foreign leaders are set to meet today in a two-day virtual summit meant to invigorate the global fight against climate change

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BLOOMBERG

LIVE ON TAobao
FIRST ONLINE COMMERCE CENTER OPENS IN TOWN

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BLOOMBERG





Ho Iat Seng and Edmund Ho pose for a group photograph with members of the Macau entrepreneur delegation attending the opening ceremony of the Boao Forum for Asia, Hainan Province

HO IAT SENG TO ATTEND GBA MEETING IN GUANGZHOU TODAY

THE Chief Executive Ho Iat Seng will attend a meeting of the Leading Group for the Development of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macau Greater Bay Area in Guangzhou today.

The director of the Policy Research and Regional Development Bureau, Cheong Chok Man, and deputy direc-

tor, Lin Yuan, will also travel to Guangzhou to attend the meeting.

The Secretary for Administration and Justice, Cheong Weng Chon, will be Acting Chief Executive.

At the recent Boao Forum for Asia, attendees from Hong Kong and Macau called for technological innovation to

spur the high-quality development of the city cluster in the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macau Greater Bay Area.

Each city should have a rational layout and division of labor and plan its own complementary development and mutually beneficial results, said Edmund Ho, vice chairman of the National Commi-

tee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference.

Ho called for the promotion of industrial innovation with technological innovation, the upgrading of the industrial chain, and the exploration of new models of cooperation between Guangdong, Hong Kong, and Macau to drive the Greater Bay Area's integrated development to a higher level.

Lei Wai Nong, Secretary for Economy and Finance of the SAR, said Macau can provide legal and commercial services for the trade of commodities, textiles, and mechanical and electrical products between China and Portuguese-speaking countries.

Meanwhile, Carrie Lam, Chief Executive of Hong Kong, said at a sub-forum of the annual meeting that the Hong Kong region has strong basic scientific research capabilities and sound financial services. After integrating into the development of the Greater Bay Area, Hong Kong can promote high-quality development throughout the region by giving full play to the region's manufacturing competitiveness and huge market potential, Lam said. **LV**

DSAL AND MGM CO-HOSTED JOB FAIR

THE Labour Affairs Bureau (DSAL) recently teamed up with MGM Group to jointly organize a recruitment fair.

The event was intended to facilitate the job-seeking process for local residents to secure a position. All of the participants for the fair were referred by the DSAL and interviewed by MGM.

The fair presented a total of 12 vacancies across several departments at MGM Group, including positions in information technology, business development, internal auditing, accounting, public affairs departments, and others.

The DSAL has deployed authorities to monitor the recruitment process at the fair, ensuring the salary packages offered by the firm meet the market standard.

Some recent graduates who attended the fair yesterday expressed concerns about difficulties in securing jobs during the pandemic, with many of their job applications being made fruitlessly.

The fair was the lead-off recruitment event between the DSAL and MGM. The second session, with a presentation of 172 vacancies, will take place on April 27.

The DSAL will collaborate with two other leisure enterprises to host four additional fairs in the future. **HT**

80% OCCUPANCY RATE EXPECTED BY HOTEL ASSOCIATION

ANTHONY LAM

THE overall local hotel occupancy rate is likely to surpass the 80% threshold during the seven-day May 1 holiday in mainland China, Cheung Kin Chung, president of the Macau Hoteliers & Innkeepers Association, has forecast.

Meanwhile, average room rates for the period have risen by just 10%, approximately, in order to maintain attractiveness to customers, the association president revealed.

On top of that, some days ago, the Macau Government Tourism Office announced that overall, the local hotel booking rate for the pe-

riod was on a trajectory to reach 80% from a previous level of only about half.

Commenting on this trend, the association head said he is satisfied.

Explaining the forecast popularity, Cheung reiterated that the holiday period is a traditional tourism season in mainland China. Also important is the fact that travelling between Macau and mainland China does not require quarantine.

He also expressed his confidence in the city's disease containment measures. This safety, according to him, is a number-one attractiveness for mainland residents to visit Macau. Most importantly, he

pointed out that the government and the business sector had cooperated in the hopes of reviving the economy through the provision of consumption promotions and privileges.

Cheung believes further growth in the hotel occupancy rate for the holiday period is possible. Citing the experience and data of previous years, he noted that individual travelers usually only make preparations for their trips about a week before holidays begin.

Concerning the prices of rooms, although they have risen slightly, they remain at a very attractive level, according to the association head.

11% OF LOCAL POPULATION AGED ABOVE 15 SMOKES

ANTHONY LAM

IN 2019, one in ten local Macau residents aged above 15 years was a smoker, a report by the Health Bureau (SSM) has recently pointed out.

The SSM has conducted follow-up studies and evaluations on the Law on Prevention and Control of Smoking, also known as the Smoking Control Law, and has compiled a report.

While one in five men smoke, only 2.4% of females (or one in 40) smoke.

The authority compared the size of the smoking population in 2011, which was before the enactment of the law, to that of 2019. In 2011, about 17% of the population aged above 15 years of age smoked. The absolute drop was about 5% and the relative drop was 33.7%.

It was noted that the local

relative drop fits the target set by the WHO for achieving a relative drop of 30% in smoking population by the year 2025.

However, certain areas remain of concern to the SSM, including young people smoking e-cigarettes, the online sale of cigarette products and smoking on sidewalks while walking, among other issues.

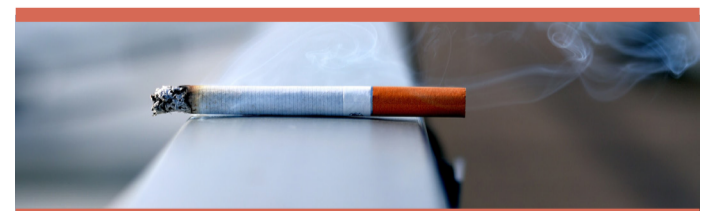
In order to combat these problems, the authority recommends that imports of e-cigarettes be banned, so as to further restrain the popularity of the product. An increase of the tobacco tax

has also been proposed to achieve proximity to the level proposed by the WHO, despite the causal economic relationship between taxation levels and rates of quitting smoking being unproven.

The SSM has also interviewed an undisclosed number of casino workers about their perception of air quality in casinos. The report pointed out that more than 90% of the interviewees rated the air quality as good, very good or excellent.

As for air quality in VIP casinos or junkets, nearly 70% of the interviewees gave the same rating.

All air samples collected by the SSM have met standards for government air quality in general public venues, the SSM added.



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Times
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

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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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Macau's first live-streaming center opens

HONEY TSANG

THE Live-streaming Commerce center, the first-of-its-kind in Macau, was opened yesterday. The institution will enable local retailers to showcase Macau's products to consumers on China's biggest e-commerce platform Taobao through live shows.

The center was jointly established by China's e-commerce giant Alibaba Group and two local conglomerates, including Multi-national Holdings Group.

At the opening ceremony yesterday, Tai Kin Ip, director of the Economic and Technological Development Bureau said that the trend of live-streaming e-commerce in China is set to continue.

The center will help local merchants to take advantage of growing demand. In addition, it will help reduce the operational cost for budding entrepreneurs, who can then use the platform to promote their brands and products to boost sales, Tai stressed.

He also vowed that the authorities would continue to support va-



rious kinds of cross-border e-commerce activities and closely collaborate with local businesses to help Macau's small-and-medium enterprise (SMEs) to shine on the mainland business stage.

The support measures are designed to nurture local business and drive economic diversification, he said.

According to People's Daily, the live-streaming e-commerce industry in China was forecast to generate 1.05 trillion yuan in 2020, up 210% year on year, whilst the penetration rate of live-streaming sessions in China's e-commerce

market hit 4.1% last year.

The surging sales data for Taobao Live, a live-streaming platform for merchants on the Taobao marketplace, is a testament to the surging popularity of live-streaming e-commerce.

As stated in a report by Alibaba, Taobao Live raked in USD7.5 billion just within the first 30 minutes of the presales campaign for China's annual Singles' Day shopping festival on November 11 last year.

One merchant, a member in Macau's first live-streaming center, told the press yesterday that the

live-streaming sessions can help boost consumption intention, as merchants are able to give a more detailed and interactive description of products to attract prospective buyers.

The center will operate on a membership basis. It will offer broadcast rooms and technical gears for local enterprises to host live-streaming shows. It can accommodate a total of over 50 live anchors at any one time.

Alex Lao, chairman of Multinational Holdings Group, also presided at yesterday's ceremony. He said that the center would not only fill the void in Macau's live-streaming commerce market, but also provides much-needed momentum to help cultivate new and innovative industries.

In the first stage, the center will feature products with local characteristics, such as Macau's souvenirs, local clothing and jewelry brands.

The organizers will announce the details regarding the center's training scheme for live-streaming skills in May.

SSM ORDERS RECALL FOR BATCH OF CHOLESTEROL PILLS

The Health Bureau has ordered the recall of a brand of medication mainly used to treat cholesterol issues, branded "Cholesterol Balance F.C. Tablets 10mg" and manufactured by Yusheng Pharmaceutical Co. Ltd., with batch number I016, due to the level of impurities missing the relevant quality threshold. The bureau, citing the importer, remarked that the medicine is only sold at community pharmacies.

PUBLIC TENDER FOR FOURTH BRIDGE COMMENCES

The public tender process for the construction of the road that will connect the Fourth Macau-Taipa Bridge with the artificial border island of the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macau Bridge and New Area Zone A has commenced. Construction should start in the fourth quarter of this year and take 640 days to complete. The results of the public tender will be announced on May 13.

AD



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COVID-19

SINOPHARM VACCINE REINSTATED FOR ELDERLY: SSM

HONEY TSANG

THE Health Bureau (SSM) has reinstated the administration of Sinopharm's inactivated vaccine for people aged 60 or above, Tai Wa Hou, coordinator of the Health Bureau's (SSM) Covid-19 Vaccination Operation, confirmed yesterday at the TDM Macau Forum.

Tai's announcement came following the statement released on April 1 by the National Health Commission of the People's Republic of China (NHC), which clarified that the elderly aged 60 or above are also eligible for receiving the vaccines.

The only prerequisite for Macau's senior residents to receive Sinopharm vaccines now is to be in a condition of good health, Tai stressed.

Senior residents interested in taking the Sinopharm vaccine are required to fill out a questionnaire. The medical staff will use the survey to assess the participant's health status and determine whether they are physically fit for vaccination.

Tai said that several more



MACAU PHOTO AGENCY

questions are incorporated into the survey for the Sinopharm vaccines than for those relating to BioNTech vaccines.

But he emphasized that senior individuals undergoing acute bouts of serious and chronic illnesses are not recommended to receive the vaccinations.

However, those with diabetes and high blood pressure are also entitled to take the Sinopharm vaccines, provided that they keep the blood pressure and blood su-

gar levels in check, he clarified.

The inactivated vaccine developed by the Chinese state-owned pharmaceutical company Sinopharm Group was originally made available for the city's elderly until February 24, when the SAR government suspended its registration and use on those aged 60 or above.

Such a moratorium, the SSM officials claimed, was to ensure the vaccination program "runs smoothly," after seeing some re-

gistered seniors fail to meet the two requirements for receiving the inactivated vaccines: firstly, bearing a high risk of exposure to Covid-19, and secondly, experiencing a health condition.

Leong Iek Hou, coordinator at the Center for Disease Control and Prevention, who also attended the forum yesterday, explai-

ned the SSM decided to halt the vaccination of the elderly as there was not sufficient data at the time to verify whether Sinopharm had a high prevention efficiency for them against the coronavirus.

Following the latest advice by the SHC and after evaluating the gains and risks, the SSM decided to restore Sinopharm inoculation for the city's elderly, Leong added.

The preconditions for elderly residents to be inoculated with Sinopharm vaccines are reduced from two to one.

"They [elderly] no longer need to be [those] with high risks of exposure. The only requirement is to be physically fit," Tai said.

VACCINATION OUTREACH ALREADY UNDERWAY

THE Health Bureau (SSM) has already commenced its earlier promised vaccination outreach activities to boost the city's vaccination rate, Tai Wa Hou, coordinator of the Covid-19 Vaccination Operation, revealed yesterday. The authorities have contacted around 60 associations in Macau to discuss the inoculation arrangements for their members. The SSM will also embark on outreach vaccination program at local universities and corporations, and will consider extending the program to high schools and elderly care centers, he said.

The plan for the vaccination outreach program was first mentioned to the public by Tai at a Covid-19 media briefing on March 23. "[SSM] will allocate locations and time slots for [groups] of people who hail from the same alliances, organizations, departments and so on, to receive their jabs together at the time," he said earlier. The tactic is intended to extend the vaccination service beyond the city's current 13 designated centers, to drive up the inoculation rate and help Macau achieve herd immunity as quickly as possible.

ELECTIONS 2021

CAEAL MEETS EDUCATION SECTOR, CLARIFIES RULES AND ROLES

THE Electoral Affairs Commission for the Legislative Assembly Election (CAEAL) met yesterday with representatives from Macau's education sector to remind representatives of the rules and regulations governing the election procedure.

In his opening speech, the president of the CAEAL, Tong Hio Fong noted the importance of the role of the education sector in ensuring a fair and impartial election process, since most of the polling stations for the voting day are located in schools.

Tong urged school representatives to be attentive and ensure that no unlawful activities occur during the campaign or on voting day, and called on the school institutions to take this opportunity to "deepen students' know-

ledge about the election laws and strengthen the promotion of the concept of clean elections," he said.

Regarding teaching staff and other staff members from schools and higher education institutions, Tong reminded them that they should maintain neutral behavior regarding candidates and lists, and warned the private institutions particularly of the need to ensure that any campaign or advertising events are conducted in accordance with the law.

At the meeting, the CAEAL explained to all the representatives from the education sector the institutions' obligations during the election process in detail, as well as the assistance that institutions can provide when the polling station is located on school premises. **RM**

UM-CO-DEVELOPED AUTONOMOUS DRIVING TECHNOLOGY WINS PRIZE AT INTERNATIONAL COMPETITION

RENATO MARQUES

A technology developed cooperatively between the University of Macau (UM) and the Shenzhen Institutes of Advanced Technology of the Chinese Academy of Sciences (SIAT) has been awarded second prize in an international algorithm competition titled "CVPR Security AI Challenger."

The UM-SIAT project was part of a competition of 1,681 projects from teams around the world, with the UM-SIAT team the only one from Macau to win an award at the competition, which was jointly organized by the University of Illinois, Tsinghua University, and Ali Security.

According to a statement from the university, the UM-SIAT project tested a new algorithm that can achieve better results than any other model robustness evaluation method



MACAU PHOTO AGENCY

that has emerged in recent years.

While the model of deep learning has been integrated into the fields of perception, decision-making, and the control of autonomous driving, previously presented deep learning models have presented severe problems concerning robustness. Among these is the vulnerability of self-

-driving visual perception systems to malicious attacks on adversarial samples, additions to image data, and subtle disturbances that are difficult for humans to recognize through their senses, all of which can cause models to make incorrect judgments.

The new model from UM-SIAT establishes an effective model robustness

evaluation mechanism, ensuring a safe and viable autonomous driving system that fixes many of the misperceptions occurring in other models that pose a significant safety risk to operational self-driving vehicles.

Accompanying the competition entry, the UM-SIAT has presented a paper further explaining the new model to the international conference dedicated to the field of artificial intelligence.

The academic paper is authored by a student, Yu Yunrui, under the guidance of Professor Xu Cheng-Zhong, dean of the Faculty of Science and Technology of the UM and the academic leader of the State Key Laboratory of Smart City Internet of Things. The paper is co-authored by Dr. Gao Xitong, an assistant researcher of SIAT, also under the guidance of Professor Xu.

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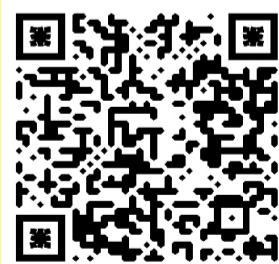
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CRIME

MAN ACCUSED OF ASSAULTING, EXTORTING, AND ILLEGALLY RECORDING HIS GIRLFRIEND

RENATO MARQUES

A male resident from the mainland in his 30s is suspected of having committed several crimes against his girlfriend, a 31-year-old woman, a resident from Macau.

The case was revealed yesterday by the Judiciary Police (PJ) during the regular joint press conference of the police forces.

According to the victim's report, she met the man in December 2018 through a mobile dating application and the pair maintained a long-distance relationship for a period until they finally met in February 2020 and formally began a relationship.

About one month later, they had arranged to meet, as they had done often before, in a hotel in the neighboring city of Zhuhai; but they argued during that meeting, and the woman said that the man physically attacked her, slapping her face and injuring one of her arms.

Even so, she agreed to a "peace-making" meeting with him on the following day at the same place.

On that day, the victim said that the man took several photos of her naked and also filmed several videos of her containing sexual content without her consent.

She said that he then began using this content to pressure her to disclose her bank

balance, forcing her to log in to the account via online banking to check that she was speaking the truth.

Upon realizing that she had about HKD70,000 in the bank account, the man forced her to give him this cash, threatening her with public humiliation if she did not comply.

They met again on April 7 this year, and he once more inspected her bank account, realizing that she had some HKD160,000 worth of stocks.

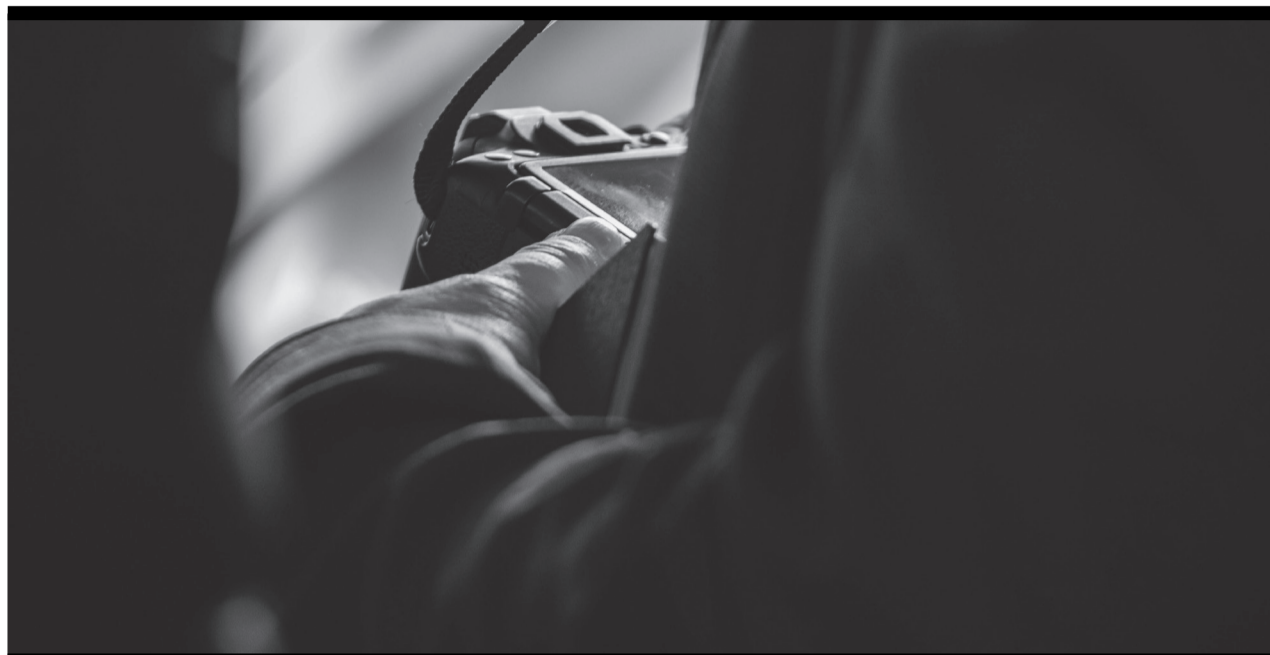
The man then threatened the woman again, calling on her to give him HKD100,000 of these savings.

A few days later, on April 16, he again called for a new meeting and attempted to repeat the extortion scheme, but the woman this time resisted the threat and pressed charges against him with the police in Zhuhai and then with the PJ on arriving in Macau.

Three days later, on April 19, the suspect was intercepted at the Border Gate while attempting to enter Macau, it being alleged that he wanted to reconcile with the woman.

He only had HKD24,000 in his possession, it being so far unclear for what he used the HKD170,000 that the local woman claims to have lost.

The suspect was presented to the Public Prosecutions Office on April 20 to be charged with bodily harm, extortion, and illegal recording.



LOCAL CONTRACTOR SUSPECTED OF EMPLOYING ILLEGAL WORKER

A 52-year-old resident and owner of a civil construction company is accused of employing an illegal worker from the mainland, the Public Security Police Force (PSP) informed media yesterday during the police forces' joint press conference.

The case was revealed by a complaint made to the PSP indicating that illegal workers were being used in the renovation an apartment located in a building at Rua Central.

The PSP dispatched officers to the location, who discovered three men in the apartment. While conducting identification checks, the police realized that one of the men was a resident of Macau and the owner of the apartment. The other two were a non-resident worker from the mainland, who was lawfully employed by the contractor, and his son, a man without documents allowing him to work in Macau, who had entered the region on a tourist visa.

On investigation, the man suspected of being an illegal worker told the police that he had followed his father to Macau for work, intending to learn how to carry out wall painting. He also told the police that he was earning 400 patacas per day for this work.

In the course of police questioning, the company owner denied that the man was employed by him. He said that he was aware that the father had the intention of bringing his son to observe the work and learning how to perform it only. He also claimed not to be paying any salary or compensation for the man's work.

According to the PSP spokesperson, and despite the contradictory statements, the force claims to have gathered enough evidence to show that the man found in the apartment was working and had been hired for paid work.

Following this evidence, the PSP decided to refer the case to the Public Prosecutions Office with the owner of the apartment accused of employing an illegal worker. **RM**

1.7% INCREASE IN SUSPICIOUS CASINO TRANSACTION REPORTS IN Q1

MACAU registered a total of 362 reports of suspicious transactions from the casino operators in the first quarter (Q1) of 2021, up 1.7% from 356 in the same period last year, according to data provided by the Financial Intelligence Office.

The suspicious transactions filed by the local casino industry amounted to around 55.3% of Macau's total dubious transactions from January to March this year.

This figure was followed by 30.0% from financial institutions and insurance companies, and 14.7% from other institutions, the Office revealed.



The aggregate tally of suspicious transaction reports received by the office in Q1 2021 totaled 654: an increase of 7.92% year-on-year.

The yearly uptick, the Office said, was predominantly driven by the increase in the number of suspicious transactions reported by other institutions. **HT**

FSS: HONEST DECLARATION IS A LEGAL REQUIREMENT

THE Social Security Fund (FSS) has reminded employers and residents that they must provide information honestly when making contributions; otherwise it may constitute a basis for criminal liability.

The bureau stressed that employers must honestly provide the employment details of their employees to the FSS, and pay contributions for them. Macau residents who have reached the age of 18 may apply for enrolment in the arbitrary system

and make contributions to the system.

One of the requirements is that the person must have been in Macau for at least 183 days in the 12 months before filing the application. The FSS noted that it has a mechanism for conducting verifications. If a person is found to have falsely provided information or used false statements with the intent of obtaining improper benefits for themselves or for others, the case will be referred to the Public

Prosecutions Office.

According to the bureau, a culprit was recently sentenced following convictions concerning a dishonest declaration.

In addition, the FSS cited Law No. 4/2010 to explain the necessity of the social security installment. It stipulates that employers must make obligatory system contributions for their local employees, while other adult Macau residents can pay contributions by enrolling in the arbitrary system. **AL**



Putin, Xi, Pope join 40 leaders at Biden's climate summit

JENNIFER A. DLOUHY
& JENNIFER EPSTEIN

PRESIDENT Joe Biden is bringing together dozens of foreign leaders along with corporate executives, union heads and Pope Francis in a two-day virtual summit meant to invigorate the global fight against climate change and restore U.S. credibility on the issue.

The heads of state of all 40 nations invited have agreed to attend the event, which begins on Earth Day, today, as Biden seeks to prove the U.S. is committed to making deep greenhouse gas emissions cuts needed to avert the most catastrophic consequences of climate change.

The gathering is aimed at driving more aggressive climate action that can keep average temperatures from rising more than 1.5 degrees Celsius, a key tipping point.

The leaders of some of the world's top-emitting countries will appear alongside officials from smaller, island nations that are already dealing with the consequences of a warming planet. Chinese President Xi Jinping is slated to appear during the conference and Russian President Vladimir Putin is set to make live remarks.

About 18 top executives from the U.S. government, including Secretary of State Antony Blinken and Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen, also will participate, as will

executives from Citigroup Inc., Bank of America Corp., electric vehicle maker Proterra Inc. and other companies.

Biden administration officials said they are "upping the ante" on climate change ambition and intend to utilize all the tools available to confront the crisis, including finance, which will be in focus on the first day. While many recent international climate change discussions have focused on the role of multilateral development banks and formal climate assistance programs, the conversation at this week's summit will include a more expansive look at the role of private capital in propelling clean energy and building resilience, the administration officials said.

The agenda also includes a session today on nature-based solutions to climate change, such as reducing deforestation, promoting sustainable agricultural practices and conserving wetlands.

Tomorrow's summit will focus on unleashing technological innovation necessary to curb emissions and the economic opportunities of climate action.

The administration officials plan to point to sustained climate action by corporations and state governments as a sign of enduring U.S. progress, even as former President Donald Trump withdrew the U.S. from the Paris climate

accord and dismantled domestic policies key to driving emissions cuts.

Biden has made combating climate change a priority. He's launched an interagency task force, deputized a White House climate czar to coordinate action and directed agencies to consider a suite of new rules meant to spur clean energy. This week's summit marks his first big step to address climate on the global stage.

In the weeks leading up to the summit, Special Presidential Envoy for Climate John Kerry has been traveling the globe, working to coax stronger emissions-cutting pledges from U.S. allies. Some of those efforts have borne

Chinese President Xi Jinping is slated to appear during the conference and Russian President Vladimir Putin is set to make live remarks

fruit, as Japan, Canada, the U.K. and other nations are expected to outline more aggressive targets for paring planet-warming greenhouse gases.

The administration officials, noting that the U.S. is responsible for 13% of global greenhouse gas emissions, said they anticipate

participating nations will use the forum to make announcements about their own plans for combating climate change.

On Wednesday, Kerry said he expects Xi to "to make some announcements" about what China plans to do to address emissions between now and 2030. The next nine years, Kerry said, are critical for putting the Earth on a path to slow global warming.

"If we don't have people signing on to raise ambitions by 2020 to 2030, we don't get to where we need to go by 2050," Kerry said during a Washington Post interview streamed online. "And there is no holding the Earth's temperature increase to 1.5 degrees Centigrade."

Even before it starts, the U.S. climate summit is helping galvanize greater ambition, said David Waskow, director of the World Resources Institute's International Climate Initiative. Still, a key test will be how much funding the Biden administration dedicates to aiding developing nations in adapting to climate change and pursuing clean energy projects, Waskow said.

"Clearly the summit has propelled action in the early part of the year," Waskow said. "There's much more to be done, but this does give the traction that we need."

Kerry's push so far has not

prompted India, the world's third-biggest emitter, to declare a target for achieving net-zero emissions domestically. And other nations, such as Brazil, are seeking more financial support to curb deforestation in the Amazon rainforest.

Other challenges surround negotiations with China, as the U.S. seeks to compartmentalize talks on climate amid concerns around trade, intellectual property and human rights. Secretary of State Antony Blinken warned Monday that the U.S. won't let other countries use climate progress as a chip "to excuse bad behavior in other areas."

Xi, meanwhile, issued a veiled critique of his own on Tuesday, as he urged other nations to avoid "bossing others around," and insisted that "the future destiny of the world should be decided by all countries."

The U.S. pledge would require dramatic changes in the U.S. energy landscape, from the way electricity is generated to the cars traversing the nation's highways. The U.S. would also need to curtail emissions from the industrial sector, with carbon-capture technology deployed at ethanol factories, cement makers and petrochemical plants.

Ahead of the summit, Biden is set to announce a U.S. vow to at least halve domestic greenhouse gas emissions from 2005 levels by the end of the decade, according to people familiar with the matter.

The Biden administration also is advancing a slate of policies meant to buttress that carbon-cutting pledge - including work to marshal U.S. government spending on electric vehicles and devote more money to helping other nations pursue clean energy. **MDT/BLOOMBERG**

RUSSIA

Over 180 reported arrested in Navalny demonstrations

JIM HEINTZ & DARIA LITNOVA, MOSCOW

POLICE across Russia have arrested more than 180 people in connection with demonstrations yesterday in support of imprisoned opposition leader Alexei Navalny, a human rights group said. Many were seized before protests even began, including two top Navalny associates in Moscow.

Navalny's team called the unsanctioned demonstrations after reports that his health is deteriorating while on hunger strike, which he began March 31.

"The situation with Alexei is indeed critical, and so we moved up the day of the mass protests," Vladimir Ashurkov, a close Navalny ally and executive director of the Foundation for Fighting Corruption, told The Associated Press. "Alexei's health has sharply deteriorated, and he is in a rather critical condition. Doctors are saying that judging by his test (results), he should be admitted into intensive care."

His organization had said protests would take place in more than 180 cities, but it was not immediately clear if they would match the massive turnout for protests in



January that were the largest in Russia in a decade.

Protests in support of Navalny, who is President Vladimir Putin's biggest foe, began in each city around 7 p.m. and moved west across the sprawling country. The largest turnouts were expected in Moscow, where demonstrators were called to gather in a square adjacent to the Kremlin, and in St. Petersburg.

His team called the nationwide protests for the same day that Putin gave his annual state-of-the-nation address. In his speech, he denounced foreign governments' alleged attempts to impose their will on Russia. Putin, who never publicly uses Navalny's name, did not specify to whom the denunciation referred, but Western governments have been

harshly critical of Navalny's treatment and have called for his release.

In Moscow, Navalny spokeswoman Kira Yarmysh and Lyubov Sobol, one of his most prominent associates, were detained by police in the morning.

Yarmysh, who was put under house arrest after the January protests, was detained outside her apartment building when she went out during the one hour she is allowed to leave, said her lawyer, Veronika Polyakova. She was taken to a police station and charged with organizing an illegal gathering.

Sobol was removed from a taxi by uniformed police, said her lawyer, Vladimir Voronin.

OVD-Info, a group that monitors political arrests and offers aid to detainees,

said at least 182 people had been arrested. It also reported that police searched the offices of Navalny's organization in Yekaterinburg and detained a Navalny-affiliated journalist in Khabarovsk.

In St. Petersburg, the State University of Aerospace Instrumentation posted a notice warning that students participating in unauthorized demonstrations could be expelled.

The 44-year-old Navalny, who is President Vladimir Putin's most prominent opponent, was arrested in January upon his return from Germany, where he had spent five months recovering from a nerve agent poisoning he blames on the Kremlin. Russian officials have rejected the accusation.

Soon after, a court found that Navalny's long stay in Germany violated the terms of a suspended sentence he was handed for a 2014 embezzlement conviction and ordered him to serve 2 and a half years in prison.

Navalny began the hunger strike to protest prison officials' refusal to let his doctors visit when he began experiencing severe back pain and a loss of feeling in his legs. The penitentiary service has said Navalny was getting all the medical help he needs. **MDT/AP**

COVID-19

Hitting latest vaccine milestone, Biden pushes shots for all

ZEKE MILLER, WASHINGTON

THE U.S. is set to meet President Joe Biden's latest vaccine goal of administering 200 million coronavirus shots in his first 100 days in office, as the White House steps up its efforts to inoculate the rest of the public.

With more than 50% of adults at least partially vaccinated, Biden yesterday will reflect on his efforts to

expand vaccine distribution and access in his first three months in the White House. But with all those 16 and older now eligible for shots, the president is expected to outline his administration's plans to drive up the vaccination rate even further.

With roughly 28 million vaccine doses being delivered each week, demand has eclipsed supply as the constraining fac-

tor to vaccinations in much of the country. While surveys have shown that vaccine hesitancy has declined since the rollout of the shots, administration officials believe they have to make getting vaccinated easier and more appealing.

Maximizing the number of Americans vaccinated in the coming months is critical for the White House, which is aiming to

restore a semblance of normalcy around the July Fourth holiday and even more so by the beginning of the next school year.

Biden was not expected to set new public targets for vaccinations, and administration officials have been careful to avoid predicting when the country will have vaccinated enough people to reach herd immunity. The U.S. is on track to have enough

vaccine supply for every adult by the end of May and for every American by July, but administering the shots will be another matter.

In recent weeks the White House has launched a massive outreach campaign to Americans to get vaccinated, relying on funding from the \$1.9 trillion virus relief package passed last month to launch ads and fund direct community engagement to under-vaccinated constituencies.

Biden set his goal of 200 million shots last month after meeting his 100 million-in-100 days goal just over a month ago. **MDT/AP**

this day in history

1980 DEPOSED MINISTERS EXECUTED IN LIBERIA



Thirteen leading officials of the ousted government in Liberia have been publicly executed on the orders of the new military regime.

The dead men included several former cabinet ministers and the elder brother of William Tolbert, the assassinated president of the west African state.

They were tied to stakes on a beach next to the army barracks in the capital, Monrovia, and shot.

Journalists who had been taken to the barracks to watch the executions said they were cruel and messy.

They said four men were forced to watch the others die before being shot themselves as there were only nine stakes.

The 13 men had been accused of treason, corruption and violation of human rights.

However, only four were condemned to death after their trial by a military tribunal.

But the tribunal's verdicts were overruled by the so-called "Redemption Council", headed by Sergeant Samuel Doe.

Sergeant Doe seized power 10 days ago in a coup during which President Tolbert was shot dead.

Since then Sergeant Doe has since been trying to rally support for his regime with promises of economic recovery.

He has already doubled civil service and army salaries and announced free tuition for students.

Another 80 people associated with the deposed government are awaiting trial by the tribunal.

Most of the deposed Tolbert government belonged to Liberia's elite - the descendants of freed slaves from the United States who founded the country 133 years ago.

However, the so-called "Americo-Liberians" now make up only 5% of the population and resentment has built up over the years at their dominant social and economic position.

Last year riots occurred when the government proposed sharply increasing the price of rice, the nation's staple food.

Courtesy BBC News

IN CONTEXT

By the late 1980s economic collapse in Liberia culminated in civil war when dissidents of Charles Taylor's National Patriotic Front overran much of the countryside and executed Samuel Doe.

Fighting intensified as the rebels splintered and fought each other, the Liberian army and West African peacekeepers.

In 1995 a peace agreement was signed, eventually leading to the election of Charles Taylor as president.

But by October 2000 Liberian forces were engaged in battles with rebels based in neighbouring Guinea. There were also border skirmishes with Guinean forces, resulting in the displacement of thousands of people.

A power-sharing government was set up in 2003 to end 14 years of civil war.

MACAU'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

YOUR STARS

ARIES
Mar. 21-Apr. 19
Romantic relationships may also experience a sudden breakthrough or need for freedom. Meanwhile, the Virgo moon stabilizes your ability to stay productive on the work front.

TAURUS
Apr. 20-May. 20
This energy creates a strong urge for freedom and asks you to present your most authentic self. Health revelations may make themselves known under this revealing connection.

GEMINI
May. 21-Jun. 21
Lover Venus spends the day alongside eye-opening Uranus - a pairing that helps you break through old blockages around love. Elsewhere, the Virgo moon calls you homeward to focus on family matters.

CANCER
Jun. 22-Jul. 22
Magnetic Venus cuddles up next to breakthrough Uranus today - bringing an electric energy that welcomes new friends, brings changes to your community, or ushers in new approaches to old goals.

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
You're building the vision, Virgo. Now, all you need is faith and follow-through to see it all come to life. Thursday's skies help you do just that, so long as you're willing to lean into the new.

LIBRA
Sep. 23-Oct. 22
Today's skies may not be the most comfortable for you to navigate, Libra. Important realizations are working to break through around your individuality and intimate relationship matters.

SCORPIO
Oct. 23-Nov. 21
Lover Venus spends the day merged with revolutionizing Uranus, prompting breakthroughs, news, or changes taking place in your intimate one-on-ones.

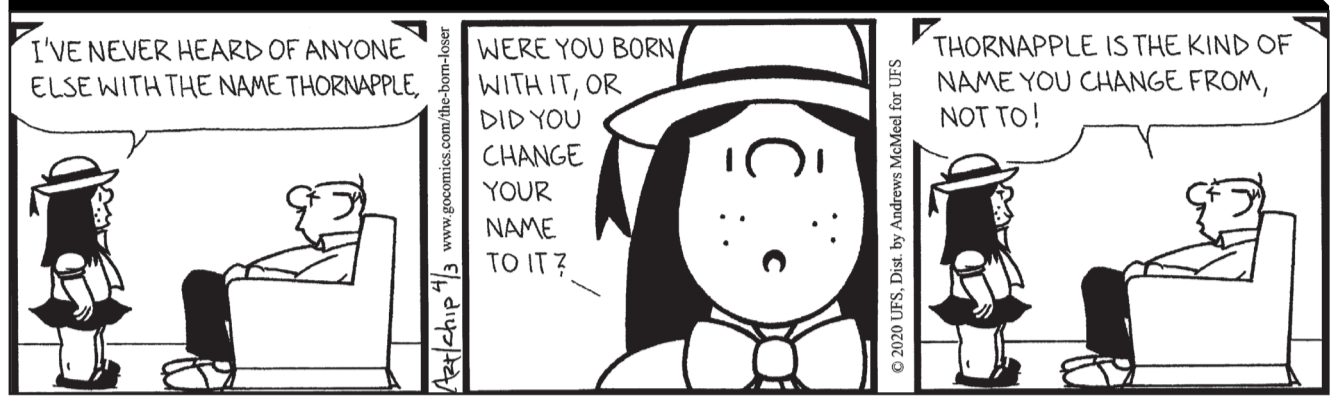
SAGITTARIUS
Nov. 22-Dec. 21
That grouchy person who tries to steal your parking space, the overbearing boss who spends more time breathing down your neck than doing their own job, the roommate who never cleans up their messes.

CAPRICORN
Dec. 22-Jan. 19
Use this energy to go over what's practical and what's excessive. This aspect can also manifest as difficult moments in relationships; serious conversations around forward movement present themselves.

AQUARIUS
Jan. 20-Feb. 18
Magnetic Venus spends the day merged with insightful Uranus, bringing important revelations or news around your closest of kin. It's an ideal day for a therapeutic release.

PISCES
Feb. 19-Mar. 20
Lover Venus finds herself entangled in a union with breakthrough Uranus. This energy has an exciting, electric feel, but one that also can burn bridges when it feels like its freedom is hindered.

The Born Loser by Chip Sansom



SUDOKU

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

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

WEATHER

	MIN	MAX	CONDITION
CHINA			
Beijing	12	18	drizzle
Harbin	11	22	cloudy
Tianjin	12	15	drizzle
Urumqi	0	12	sleet
Xi'an	10	26	clear
Lhasa	4	17	cloudy
Chengdu	16	23	overcast
Chongqing	16	28	cloudy
Kunming	14	27	clear
Nanjing	17	21	moderate rain
Shanghai	17	23	drizzle
Wuhan	16	25	cloudy
Hangzhou	17	25	drizzle
Taipei	22	27	drizzle
Guangzhou	21	30	cloudy
Hong Kong	23	29	clear
WORLD			
Moscow	4	9	cloudy
Frankfurt	2	12	cloudy
Paris	7	15	clear
London	3	13	cloudy
New York	3	10	drizzle

CROSSWORDS

ACROSS 1- Sewing case; 5- Attention; 9- Damage; 13- Toe woe; 14- Paradises; 16- "On the Waterfront" director Kazan; 17- It's linked to mighty; 18- Uruguayan friend; 19- Bandage; 20- Olive genus; 21- Sloth, for one; 22- Optical phenomenon; 24- Editor's note; 26- Smooth sailing; 27- Satisfies; 29- Illegal; 33- Lost; 34- Against; 35- Indifferent; 36- ___-tzu; 37- Extreme; 38- Automobile; 39- Skin disorder; 41- Ballet bend; 42- Picture; 44- Bare; 46- Holmes's creator; 47- North Carolina university; 48- ___ ex machina; 49- Cossack chief; 52- Baseball club; 53- Dosage abbr.; 57- Quote; 58- Chicago's airport; 60- Like ___ not; 61- Small gull; 62- Declines; 63- ___ song (cheaply); 64- The wolf ___ the door; 65- Nudnik; 66- Tibetan oxen;

DOWN: 1- Reflected sound; 2- Labor; 3- Advocate forcefully; 4- Rashly; 5- Stops; 6- Allow to enter; 7- Bride; 8- Chang's twin; 9- Book of the New Testament; 10- Inter ___; 11- Circular band; 12- Created; 15- East African nation; 23- This ___ stickup!; 25- Beverage commonly drunk in England; 26- ___ nous; 27- Pile; 28- In agreement; 29- Before; 30- ___ point: where it all becomes clear; 31- Grammarian's concern; 32- Learning; 33- Woeful word; 34- Detective Pinkerton; 37- So far; 40- Rudimentary component; 42- Chit; 43- Bewilder; 45- Guido's high note; 46- Hate; 48- Challenges; 49- Broadway opening; 50- Rail supports; 51- Gillette brand; 52- Ruin; 54- Greek portico; 55- Flesh of a hog; 56- Ladies of Sp.; 59- Occurrence;;

Yesterday's solution

O	S	A	K	A	G	A	L	A	S	P	A	O
N	O	T	E	D	A	M	E	B	A	A	N	N
O	U	T	G	O	M	A	D	A	M	D	E	E
R	I	M	S	U	S	U	A	L				
A	N	T	E	N	N	A	A	R	R	E	A	R
C	O	R	N	E	A	G	R	O	A	N		
T	O	Y	E	D	C	R	E	P	I	T	A	T
E	S	S	H	O	W	E	R	T	E	A		
D	E	T	E	C	T	I	V	E	R	I	S	E
R	S	U	E	D	E	R	E	L	I	S	E	S
R	A	T	I	T	E	J	A	C	K	A	S	
S	I	Z	E	S	P	E	E	R				
O	F	T	I	N	E	R	T	U	P	E	N	D
A	L	E	N	O	T	I	T	I	G	L	O	O
R	E	C	E	D	E	M	A	T	A	I	N	T

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

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



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APPLE TARGETED IN USD50 MILLION RANSOMWARE HACK OF SUPPLIER QUANTA

KARTIKAY MEHROTRA

AS Apple Inc. was revealing its newest line of iPads and flashy new iMacs yesterday (local time), one of its primary suppliers was enduring a ransomware attack from a Russian operator claiming to have stolen blueprints of the U.S. company's latest products.

The ransomware group REvil, also known as Sodinokibi, published a blog on its darkweb site early yesterday in which it claimed to have infiltrated the computer network of Quanta Computer Inc. The Taiwan-based company is a key supplier to Apple, manufacturing mostly Macbooks. It similarly produces goods for the likes of HP Inc., Facebook Inc. and Alphabet Inc.'s Google.

REvil's public face on the darkweb, a user on the cyber-crime forum XSS who goes by the name 'Unknown', announced Sunday that the ransomware group was on the cusp of declaring its "largest attack ever," in a post reviewed by Bloomberg News. The post was made in Russian on a channel where the REvil group recruits new affiliates, according to a person familiar with Unknown's history on the XSS forum who sought anonymity for fear of retaliation.

By early on April 20, REvil's 'Happy Blog' - a site where the cartel publicly names and shames victims in hopes of coaxing ransom payment - declared Quanta its latest victim. In their post, also reviewed by Bloomberg, the hackers claim they'd waited to disclose the Quanta



compromise until the date of Apple's latest big reveal, contending the parts supplier had expressed no interest in paying to recover the stolen data.

Quanta acknowledged an attack without explaining if or how much of its data was stolen.

"Quanta Computer's information security team has worked with external IT experts in response to cyber attacks on a small number of Quanta servers," the company said in a statement. "We've reported to and kept seamless communications with the relevant law enforcement and data protection authorities concerning re-

cent abnormal activities observed. There's no material impact on the company's business operation."

By the time Apple's product launch was over, REvil had posted schematics for a new laptop, including 15 images detailing the guts of what appears to be a Macbook designed as recently as March 2021, according to the documents reviewed by Bloomberg.

REvil is now attempting to shake-down Apple in its effort to profit off the stolen data. They've asked Apple to pay their ransom by May 1, as was first reported by Bleeping Computer. Until then, the hackers

will continue to post new files every day, REvil said on its blog.

An Apple spokesperson declined to comment on questions about the compromise.

Quanta added that its information security defense system was activated immediately, and it has resumed internal services affected by the incident. The company is upgrading its cybersecurity infrastructure to protect its data.

Ransomware is a type of malicious code that typically encrypts a victim's data or network of computers. The hackers then demand a ransom to decrypt the information, or a promise from the hackers not

to sell their secret documents. More recently, ransomware gangs have also stolen data and threatened to make it public unless the victim pays a fee. REvil's the same group that executed a ransomware attack in 2020 against a law firm they claimed once represented some of Donald Trump's television enterprises. In 2019, the group also attacked a group of Louisiana election clerks a week before Election Day.

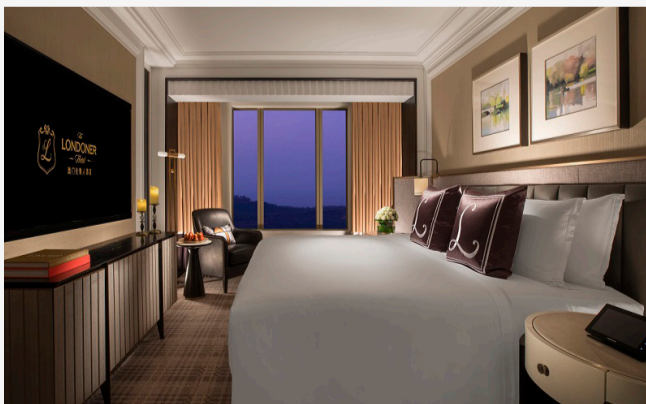
REvil attempted to engage Quanta in ransom negotiations last week inside a chat-room on the attacker's darkweb page, according to a transcript that's been reviewed by Bloomberg News. The REvil operator started the interaction by claiming to have stolen and encrypted "all local network data" while demanding \$50 million for the decryption key to unlock their systems.

A user responded two days later, stating they were "not the person in-charge of the company" but wanted clarity on the terms of engagement. The engagement caused confusion, and another two days later, REvil's operator threatened to publish Apple's data. It appears the conversation then moved to email.

REvil then delivered on its promise to publish data it believes to be Apple's proprietary blueprints for new devices. The images include specific component serial numbers, sizes and capacities detailing the many working parts inside of an Apple laptop. One of the images is signed by an Apple designer, John Andreadis and dated March 9, 2021. **BLOOMBERG**

CORPORATE BITS

Sands Resorts Macao presents spring promotions



Sands Resorts Macao is presenting the "Spring Getaway in Macao" promotion, which offers stays at eight hotels, retail promotions, a wide range of dining options, entertain-

ment and leisure activities for the whole family.

Guests can enjoy a selection of accommodation for two at Macau's premium integrated resort destination and will

also receive resort vouchers that can be used on designated dining, spa and recreation across the integrated resort. The package is already available for booking for stays from April 23 until June 30.

T Galleria By DFS Macau at Shoppes at Four Seasons is also now offering a "Limited Time Offer," where shoppers who spend over MOP3,000 or more in one day until April 27 can redeem a MOP150 e-coupon to use against the next purchase of MOP500 or more on full-price beauty and fragrances, fashion and accessories and watches and jewellery.

Wynn receives accolades in vocational skills competition



Wynn won a total of 10 awards in the recently held Macau Integrated Tourism and Leisure Enterprise Vocational Skills Competition co-organised by the Labour Affairs Bureau and the Macao

Federation of Trade Unions

Wynn has taken part in the competition since 2019, making this the third consecutive year. This year, 23 team members from gaming, F&B, housekeeping,

and facilities departments teamed up to take part, exchanging ideas and competing alongside more than 100 industry peers in three separate contests, namely "Gaming and Entertainment Professional Skills Competition", "Hotel Services Professional Skills Competition" and "Gastronomy Professional Skills Competition."

"Wynn has continued to make a concerted effort in cultivating local talents. Through a wide range of active training methods, the company is committed to nurturing future professionals for the industry," the gaming operator said in a statement.

ROB HARRIS, LONDON

Super League collapses after the six English clubs withdraw

THE Super League collapsed before a ball was kicked in the European breakaway competition after being abandoned by the six English clubs, leaving the Spanish and Italian participants stranded.

Arsenal, Chelsea, Liverpool, Manchester United, Manchester City and Tottenham throughout Tuesday evening deserted the proposal to launch a largely-closed midweek competition amid an escalating backlash from their supporters and warnings from the British government that legislation could be introduced to thwart it.

The Super League project was overseen by Real Madrid President Florentino Perez, who also signed up Barcelona and Atlético Madrid in Spain, and Juventus, AC Milan and Inter Milan from Italy. The rival for the UEFA-run Champions League became unviable without the six clubs from the world's richest league.

The remaining fledgling Super League organization was defiant, blaming "pressure" being applied for forcing out the English clubs and insisting the proposal complied with the law and could yet be revived in some form.

"Given the current circumstances," the Super League said in

a statement, "we shall reconsider the most appropriate steps to reshape the project, always having in mind our goals of offering fans the best experience possible while enhancing solidarity payments for the entire football community."

The English clubs heeded the appeals from UEFA President Aleksander Ceferin to remain part of the Champions League, which has a qualification criteria based on a team's performance in the domestic league.

"I said yesterday that it is admirable to admit a mistake and these clubs made a big mistake," he said. "But they are back in the fold now and I know they have a lot to offer not just to our competitions but to the whole of the European game."

"The important thing now is that we move on, rebuild the unity that the game enjoyed before this and move forward together."

As it became clear Chelsea and City were quitting the Super League on Tuesday evening, Liver-



pool captain Jordan Henderson and his teammates posted a message advocating staying within the open European competitions.

Liverpool, which is owned by the Boston Red Sox investment group, eventually issued a statement thanking those inside and outside the club for "valuable contributions" before making the decision to stick within existing structures.

Manchester United defender Luke Shaw also went against his club by tweeting his backing of the existing Champions League minutes before his club's about-turn.

"We have listened carefully to the reaction from our fans, the UK government and other key stakeholders," said the club owned by the American Glazer family and listed on the New York Stock Exchange. "We remain committed to working with others across the football community to come up with sustainable solutions to the long-term challenges facing the game."

Just as the Glazers also own the Tampa Bay Buccaneers, Stan Kroenke has the NFL's Los Angeles Rams in his portfolio along with Arsenal. It is the closed mo-

dels of American sports that were believed to be so appealing to the U.S. owners by offering financial certainty.

But they were resisted by fans of English clubs.

"It was never our intention to cause such distress, however, when the invitation to join the Super League came, while knowing there were no guarantees, we did not want to be left behind to ensure we protected Arsenal and its future," the north London club said. "As a result of listening to you and the wider football community over recent days we are withdrawing from the proposed Super League. We made a mistake, and we apologize for it."

"We know it will take time to restore your faith in what we are trying to achieve here at Arsenal but let us be clear that the decision to be part of the Super League was driven by our desire to protect Arsenal, the club you love, and to support the game you love through greater solidarity and financial stability." **MDT/AP**



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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

22nd April 2021
Artyzen Grand Lapa Macau



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: 神聖望望河地龍聯盟
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



合辦單位
Partners




支持單位
Supporting Unit




媒體單位
Media Partner



OPINION

World Views

Daniel Moss, MDT/Bloomberg



HOW MUCH OF CHINA'S GDP WAS MADE IN AMERICA?

China kicked off the year with a record expansion that even surpassed the glory days of the 1990s, when manufacturing and export stardom beckoned. The first-quarter performance — stellar as the headlines are — masks shortcomings and vulnerabilities that will likely constrain the economy in coming months.

Gross domestic product jumped 18.3% in the first quarter from a year earlier, the National Bureau of Statistics said Friday. That's an impressive performance, albeit one flattered by comparisons with the first three months of 2020, when Covid-19 first hit. Compared with the fourth quarter, growth was less stratospheric — just 0.6%, down from a previously reported 2.6%. Retail sales, considered a soft spot in the recovery, soared by more than a third in March from a year earlier, according to monthly data released simultaneously.

Overall, the figures support projections of a bumper year for the world economy after the disastrous contraction of 2020. The U.S.'s powerful rebound backs this optimism, too, with growth projected at 6.4% in 2021, compared with China's 8.4%, according to International Monetary Fund estimates last week. Notwithstanding critiques about widening inequality between the best and the rest, we would all be considerably poorer without fine report cards from Washington and Beijing.

But is China really so far ahead, and is the future as rosy as it seemed decades ago, when it catapulted past one Group of Seven economy after another? Some imperfections suggest a tougher road. A decent chunk of this expansion is attributed to the surge in exports generated by American stimulus. Its own central bank is wary of exuberance and inclined to tap the brakes. With the pandemic now under control and growth looking hale, Beijing can return to one of its main pre-Covid preoccupations: avoiding buildups of risk and excessive debt accumulation borne of loose financial conditions.

To that end, the central bank withdrew funds from the financial system last quarter. Authorities are trying to rein in leverage, while doing just enough to support the economy and ensure liquidity. For all the anxiety about the Federal Reserve scaling back bond buying, the real taper tantrum may emanate from Beijing, as I've written. This stance also suggests monetary officials aren't overly bothered by possible contagion from the recent stress engulfing China Huarong Asset Management Co., one of the nation's largest distressed-debt managers. With the Fed and Congress juicing global growth, China can afford to be prudent. The heavy lifting is being done elsewhere.

America's boom, while it lasts, is great news for exporters — and China is the biggest. Shipments to the U.S. jumped by more than half in March, compared with a year earlier. That bounty isn't restricted to Beijing. South Korean exports rose 16.5% over the same period. Purchasing managers' indexes across Asia, a barometer of manufacturing, are climbing. Barring a setback to the global economy, Singapore's GDP growth is likely to exceed the upper end of the official 4% to 6% forecast range, the city-state's central bank said this week.

The past 20 years have been dominated by a narrative that China drives the world, while the West settles into a funk where GDP moves ahead by 1% or 2% annually. But the U.S. is catching a wave, too. Growth may be 7.7% this year, according to Bloomberg Economics. A number in excess of 7% in America hasn't been seen since 1984. Strong readings Thursday on retail sales — the second-biggest rise since 1992 — and an important factory gauge turning in the best result since 1973 only strengthen a bullish scenario.

Given the cataclysm wrought by the pandemic, it would be churlish not to welcome the vigorous first-quarter numbers from China. Bear in mind, though, Beijing didn't build this recovery all by itself.

COLUMBUS POLICE OFFICER FATALLY SHOOTS GIRL SWINGING KNIFE

THE BUZZ

Columbus police shot and killed a teenage girl who swung at two other people with a knife yesterday (local time), according to bodycam footage from the officer who fired the shots just minutes before the verdict in George Floyd's killing was read.

Officials with the Columbus Division of Police showed a segment of the footage just hours after the shooting took place in a neighborhood on the city's east side. The decision to swiftly release the video was a departure from protocol as the force faces immense scrutiny from the public following a series of recent

high-profile police killings that have led to clashes.

The 10-second clip begins with the officer getting out of his car at a house where police had been dispatched after someone called 911 saying they were being physically threatened, Interim Police Chief Michael Woods said at the news conference. The officer takes a few steps toward a group of people in the driveway when the girl, who was Black, starts swinging a knife wildly at another girl or woman, who falls backward. The officer shouts several times to get down.

CHINA SAYS 200 MILLION CITIZENS HAVE BEEN VACCINATED

AROUND 200 million Chinese, or 14.29% of the population, have been vaccinated for COVID-19 so far, with an emphasis on front-line workers, university students and people living in border areas, a health official said yesterday.

China is ramping up vaccination efforts after a slow start, prompted in part by the virtual elimination of domestic transmission. Just two local cases were reported on Wednesday, both in the city of Ruili, which borders on Myanmar.

Center of Disease Control official Cui Gang told a news conference that key areas and members of the population were being prioritized for vaccines. China has approved five domestically produced vaccines and exported millions of doses, although some scientists believe they provide less protection than those by Pfizer, Moderna and AstraZeneca.

The Chinese vaccines have an efficacy range of 50.7% to 79.3%, based on company data, lower than their foreign peers but still effective.

China is now giving millions of shots a day and a top government doctor, Zhong Nanshan, has announced a goal of vacci-



Masked residents lining up for COVID-19 vaccine at a vaccination site with a board displaying the slogan, "Timely vaccination to build the Great Wall of Immunity together" in Beijing, yesterday

nating 560 million of the country's 1.4 billion people by mid-June.

China locked down the city of Wuhan for more than two months starting in January 2020 after the coronavirus was first detected in late 2019. Wuhan became known as the epicenter of the pandemic, although Beijing has suggested the virus might have been circulating earlier and possibly brought to China from abroad.

Since then, China has controlled the virus through stringent border controls and quick lockdowns whenever new outbreaks crop up. Mask wearing indoors remains almost universal and health tracing applications must be shown at most shops, offices and pu-

blic buildings.

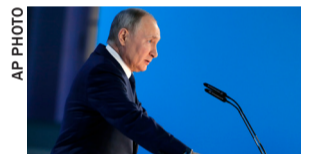
While China was the first major economy to throw off the effects of the virus, the restrictions are seen as limiting its further growth, particularly as Beijing readies to welcome tens of thousands of visitors as host of the Winter Olympics in February 2022.

Along with the sheer scale of the vaccination effort, authorities need to convince a population that largely no longer feels threatened by infection.

"At present, vaccination efforts in key areas and key population groups are progressing smoothly overall," Cui told reporters at Wednesday's briefing. Already, 80% of workers in the health sector have received the jab, Cui said. MDT/AP



EU officials unveiled proposals yesterday for reining in high-risk uses of artificial intelligence such as live facial scanning that could threaten people's safety or rights. The draft regulations from the EU's executive commission include rules on the use of the rapidly expanding technology in systems that filter out school, job or loan applicants. They also would ban artificial intelligence outright in a few cases considered too risky, such as "social scoring" systems that judge people based on their behavior and physical traits.



Russia President Vladimir Putin yesterday sternly warned the West against further encroachment on Russia's security interests, saying Moscow's response will be "quick and tough." Putin's warning during his annual state-of-the-nation address came amid a massive Russian military buildup near Ukraine, where cease-fire violations in the seven-year conflict between Russia-backed separatists and Ukrainian forces have escalated in recent weeks.

Germany Discussions are underway among military planners with the NATO-led Resolute Support Mission in Kabul for a possible withdrawal of international troops from Afghanistan as early as July 4, Germany's Defense Ministry said yesterday. If agreed, the date would move up by more than two months the timeline to bring international troops home.



Chad Rebels in Chad threatened to depose the son of the country's slain president after he was named interim leader of the strategic central African nation, raising the specter yesterday of a potentially violent power struggle. It was not certain how close the rebel column was to N'Djamena, the capital city of 1 million people, or whether the military would remain loyal to Mahamat Idriss Deby following his father's sudden death after three decades in power.

THE DECISIVE MOMENT

AP Photo/John Minchillo



Demonstrators gather outside Cup Foods to celebrate the murder conviction of former Minneapolis police officer Derek Chauvin in the killing of George Floyd, yesterday (local time)