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**MGTO DIRECTOR EXPRESSED HER CONFIDENCE IN TOURISM PERFORMANCE FOR THE UPCOMING SUMMER HOLIDAYS**

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**SSM TARGETED WITH CYBERATTACKS OVER THE WEEKEND**

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**OVER HALF OF THE 83,000 REGISTRANTS PREFER TO RECEIVE THE GOVERNMENT'S THIRD STIMULUS VIA ELECTRONIC CONSUMPTION CARD**

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**Syria** Firefighters extinguished a blaze yesterday in a distillation unit at one of Syria's two oil refineries, Syrian state TV reported. No one was hurt, but the fire caused some damage to the facility, a refinery official said. The TV named the cause of the fire as crude oil leakage from one of the pumping stations at the Homs Oil Refinery in the central province of Homs. The fire came amid a series of mysterious attacks on vessels and oil facilities in Syria over the past months.

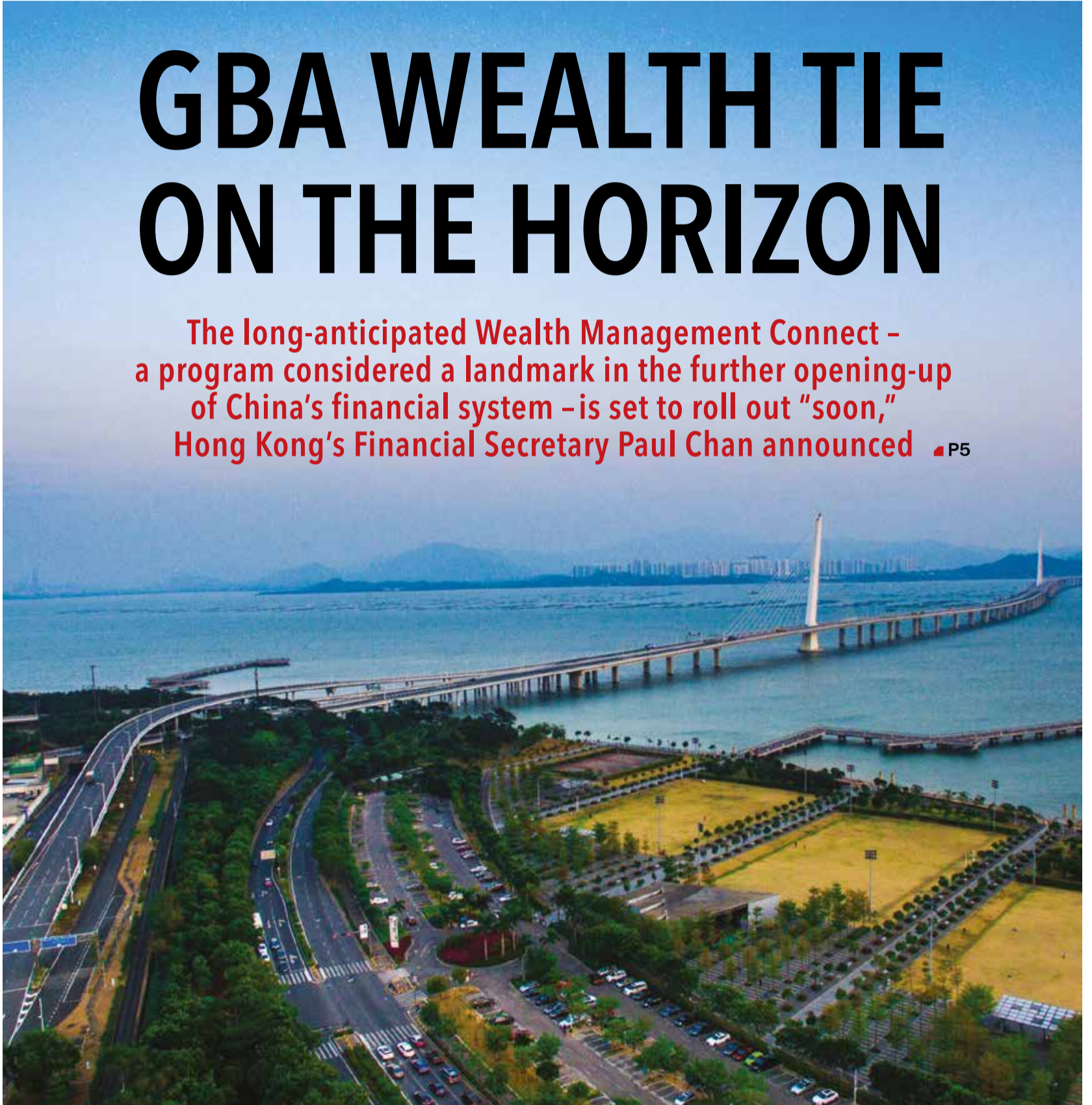


**Emirates** Dubai's long-haul carrier Emirates will begin shipping aid from the World Health Organization and other groups into India for free to help fight a crushing outbreak of the coronavirus, the airline said yesterday. The offer by Emirates, which has some 95 flights weekly to nine cities in India, initially involves aid already in Dubai but may expand across the carrier's network as time goes on. That could mean major savings for aid groups as airfreight costs have skyrocketed amid the pandemic. Demand for flown cargo stands at record levels worldwide.



**U.S.** Navy announced yesterday it seized an arms shipment of thousands of assault weapons, machine guns and sniper rifles hidden aboard a ship in the Arabian Sea, apparently bound for Yemen to support the country's Houthi rebels. An American defense official told The Associated Press that the Navy's initial investigation found the vessel came from Iran, again tying the Islamic Republic to arming the Houthis despite a United Nations arms embargo.

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# GBA WEALTH TIE ON THE HORIZON

The long-anticipated Wealth Management Connect - a program considered a landmark in the further opening-up of China's financial system - is set to roll out "soon," Hong Kong's Financial Secretary Paul Chan announced P5

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GAMING

# MAY DAY GGR EXPECTED TO BE AT 40-50% OF PRE-PANDEMIC LEVELS: JP MORGAN

HONEY TSANG

**T**HE gross gaming revenue (GGR) during the five-day May Day holiday from May 1 to 5 is expected to reach 40% to 50% of 2019 levels, also considered as pre-pandemic levels, according to the latest prognosis released on May 6 by JP Morgan.

The GGR daily run-rate is projected by the brokerage to stand at around MOP400 million to MOP500 million during the holiday, when compared to over MOP 1 billion during the same period in 2019.

The figure also represents a sharp advancement of 50% to 80% from the GGR run-rates in the previous months, MOP270 million to MOP 280 million per day in March or April. This performance is "well above the 30%

to 50% uptick that we typically see for May Golden Week reflecting pent-up demand," JP Morgan said.

According to the statistics compiled by the Macao Government Tourism Office (MGTO), Macau registered a total of 167,000 tourists during the five-day May Day holiday, or the average daily tourist tally of up to 33,000.

The fresh arrival data provides compelling evidence to earlier remarks made by Lam Tong Hou, representative of the MGTO during the media brief last Tuesday, saying that she is anticipating the aggregate tourist arrivals to Macau during the five-day May Day holiday to exceed that of the previous Golden Weeks.

According to the data compiled by the MGTO, the seven-day Spring Festival Golden Week from February 11 to

17 this year saw a total of 90,615 tourists or 12,945 daily visitors on average.

During the October Golden Week from October 1 to 8, 2020, there were 156,000 holidaymakers, equivalent to 19,500 daily holidaymakers.

Despite the noticeable improvement from the previous two Golden Weeks, JP Morgan stated the visitation during this May Golden Week is expected to only reach around 25% of that of the 2019 May Golden Week.

According to MGTO, the actual average daily visitor during this May Day holiday reached 21.1% of the 2019 May Day holiday levels, around four percentage points lower than the brokerage's estimate.

The official GGR for the holiday is believed to be unveiled today, suggests the brokerage.



MAY GOLDEN WEEK

## 167,000 TRAVELERS RECORDED WITH TOURISM SECTOR UPBEAT FOR STRONG RECOVERY

HONEY TSANG

**M**ACAU had welcome a total of 167,000 visitors during the five-day May Day holiday — with the average daily tourist tally standing high at 33,000 — representing a promising rebound, the Macao Government Tourism Office (MGTO) unveiled the preliminary data on Friday.

There were 45,000 holidaymakers entering Macau on May 1, hitting a new single-day record high since the Covid-19 outbreak.

The average tourist arrival per day during the holiday outperforms the earlier prognosis by the MGTO of 30,000 only, Maria Helena de Senna Fernandes, director of MGTO, told TDM in an earlier interview.

"The statistics have been a huge encouragement for the city's tourism industry," and it anchors tourism practitioners' confidence toward prospects for the city's tou-

rism market and economy, she added.

Fernandes said she was told by many tourism practitioners that their businesses had seen a sharp turnaround during the holiday.

In comparison, the daily traveler number was 158.2% higher than that during the Spring Festival Golden Week holiday this year and 25.4% more than that in April.

Overall, the daily tourist number during this May Day holiday reached 21.1% of pre-pandemic levels or the 2019 May Day holiday levels.

A fresh influx of tourists during the holiday drove the city's occupancy rate as well.

According to the booking data offered by local accommodation, MGTO estimated that the city's average occupancy rate during the May Golden Week was at 83.2% — a rate Fernandes said, "is inching closer to the 96.6% in 2019."

Whilst stacked against the Chinese New Year (CNY)

holiday this year, the occupancy rate of the May Day holiday was 34.6 percentage points higher.

In terms of segment, the average occupancy rate of 5-star hotels stood at 84.8%, surging by 33.8 percentage points from the CNY holiday.

The rate for 4-star, 3-star and 2-star hotels was 79.6%, 86.6% and 74.9%, up by 29.7, 41.4 and 50.3 percentage points, respectively.

The average room price during the holiday was approximately 1,263.7 patacas, representing a modest increase of 1.7% from the previous CNY holiday.

Fernandes vows to continue launching promotional activities, both online and offline, in different Mainland cities.

The MGTO will also gear itself up for future reopening between Hong Kong and Macau and will continue to beef up efforts in promoting Macau to Hong Kong visitors.

## MGTO DIRECTOR CONFIDENT IN SUMMER HOLIDAY PERFORMANCE

ANTHONY LAM

**C**ONSIDERING the tourism heat during the past May 1 long holiday period, Maria Helena de Senna Fernandes, director of the Macao Government Tourism Office (MGTO) expressed her confidence in tourism performance during the coming summer holidays.

Speaking at a sideline of a public event yesterday, the MGTO director compared the city's tourism performance this past holiday period with several holiday periods pre-last year, highlighting the improvements recorded.

"I guess the entire industry is very confident that the coming summer could be a very good period," Fernandes said. She stressed that a lot of promotions are being or will be run in mainland China to familiarize people there of Macau's position as a



safe city for travel.

She also noted that during the holiday period starting from May 1, tourists stayed for more nights than pre-Covid-19 times. She disclosed that some tourists even stayed for five nights, compared to a night or so normally.

Fernandes attributed that to cheaper rooms, dining and shopping options. In addition, she noted that the authority was inspired to think that the city needs more attractions to cater to tourists who stay longer

than normal.

Previous news reports have pointed out that Grand Lisboa Palace is gearing up to open in the first half of the year. When questioned about that, the MGTO director said she had no update to provide.

However, she admitted that applications for licenses have been received from the resort owner. Normal procedures must be carried out and the MGTO will ensure all requirements are met before a license is issued to the resort.

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# IC defends initial green light for antique customs tear-down

ANTHONY LAM

**W**ITH an antique customs facility described as representing high national education value saved from danger at the last minute, Mok Ian Ian, president of the Cultural Affairs Bureau (IC) insisted that no direct link to its historic values was found in the first place.

She reiterated that the IC had commissioned a team of archeologists to survey the site. The team did not find any specific value supporting the preservation of the site in part or in full.

In 2017, the Macau University of Science and Technology purchased an old map that identified the site as an aged customs facility. Although the map was kept privately by the institution, cultural heritage architect André Lui Chak Keong wrote in 2018 two major articles on Chinese paper Macao Daily News to emphasize the findings.

After the Urban Planning Committee Plenary last month, the IC announced the suspension of the proposed demolition of the facility. At the plenary, the IC's vice president even defended the bureau's decision.

When asked for the reason why the bureau did not reevaluate the value of the site, given the map and the articles, the IC president bypassed the question. She reiterated that initial archeological findings did not provide a direct link to the



values of the site.

The archeological work was concluded before the purchase of the map by the university and the articles by Lui.

When questioned if the IC has committed negligence when insisting the green light, she declined to comment.

She repeatedly noted that she was aware several articles have been written with mixed conclusions on the values of the site.

On the topic of an IC employee allegedly violating duty of confidentiality, Mok expressed regret about the case. She said she had reiterated to her team the ethics, professional morality and duty of a civil servant.

Although stressing the parallel importance of safeguarding public interests and legality, she refrained from engaging in further disclosure, citing the on-going legal procedure.

When questioned about the tender review procedure for the New Central Library project, which is suspected to be the epicenter of the case, Mok said the decision was completely justified, adding that each piece of work had run through thorough internal discussions.

While discussing the proposed provisional car tire park in Taipa, Mok noted that the IC suggested preservation of the existing old factory building "appropriately", with the inclusion as parts that can "create collective memories."

## SMG FORECASTS 'VERY HOT' WEATHER TODAY

The Meteorological and Geophysical Bureau (SMG) warned that it is expected to be "very hot" in the city today, and that the maximum temperature will be 33 degrees Celsius or above. The public is advised to beware of heatstroke and to stay hydrated. SMG has two hot weather alerts: orange, which is considered as "extremely hot" and yellow as "very hot."

## OVER 118,600 RESIDENTS VACCINATED

The Health Bureau (SSM) has administered a total of 118,687 vaccines, of which 77,597 have been inoculated. Of the figure, 36,356 received the first dose, while 41,241 have completed their jabs. Adverse events totaled to 542 reports with 540 mild adverse events, and two serious adverse events. The SSM continues to encourage the public to get vaccinated.

## MUSEUM DAY CARNIVAL OPENS

**MACAU** International Museum Day Carnival 2021 opened yesterday at the Macao Science Center as part of the city's celebrations for International Museum Day, which falls on May 18 each year. The theme set by the International Council of Museums for this year's International Museum Day is "The Future of Museums: Recover and Reimagine."

At yesterday's event, the 14 participating museums in the city, such as the Macau Grand Prix Museum, the Pawn Shop Gallery, the First Services Museum and the Communi-

cations Museum, hosted activities and DIY craft workshops. These included the non-fired ceramic tile painting workshop, Tak Seng On accessories DIY workshop and kalimba DIY workshop. The Guangdong Museum, Guangzhou Museum and Shenzhen Museum are participating in the event and have set up booths at the activity venues. The Leisure and Cultural Services Department of Hong Kong is also taking part in the carnival, and has displayed publications at on-site booths and through online means.

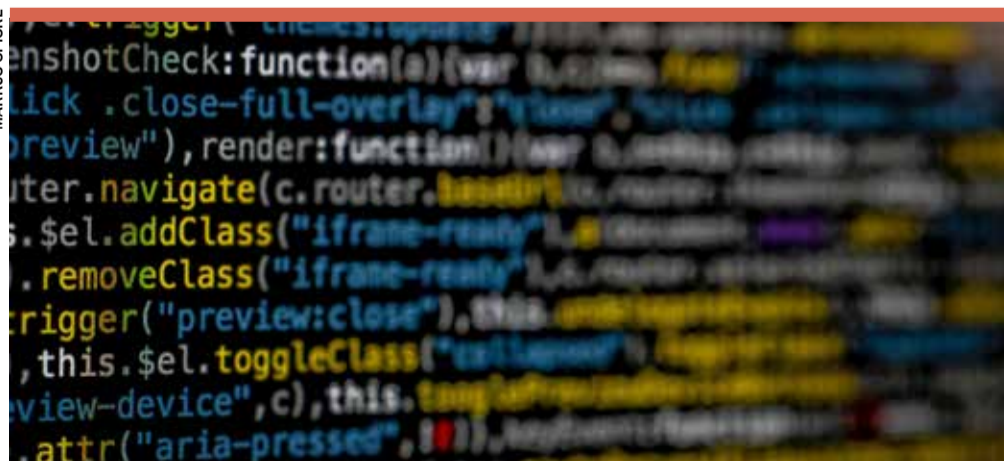
# SSM targeted with cyberattacks over the weekend

RENATO MARQUES

**S**EVERAL cyberattacks to the Health Bureau (SSM) computer system were recorded last Friday and Saturday, the SSM acknowledged in several statements to the media.

The attacks caused several disruptions to the system - namely "affecting the normal operations of the health code system, the booking systems for vaccination against Covid-19, and the nucleic acid tests (NAT)," the SSM informed.

The first attack was recorded on May 7 at around 10:30 a.m. and, according to the SSM, all the systems were operational within 45 minutes following the prompt intervention by its



technicians and the telecommunications company CTM.

The SSM noted that besides users facing difficulties in accessing the system, there were no other complications on SSM's operations reported.

Another attack to one of SSM's communication lines was reported around 3:30 p.m. on the same day. According to the SSM, an immediate action was taken to halt the line's operations, which enabled all services to continue operations with-

out disruption.

Problems persisted on Saturday causing another disruption of the system for a short period around 7 a.m., which was also resolved in less than 30 minutes.

During this disruption, the SSM said that cross-

-border passages in all border checkpoint posts were slightly affected.

The final attack from hackers was reported on Saturday around 5 p.m., which made it impossible for users to obtain the Macau Health Code or schedule vaccinations and NAT.

After immediate repairs to the computer systems, services including the transfer of the Macau Health Code to the Guangzhou Province Health Code resumed as per normal.

According to procedures, the SSM has forwarded the cyberattack cases to the Judiciary Police, who will proceed with the investigation on the cyberattacks through the Cybersecurity Incident Alert and Response Center.

The SSM strongly condemns the cyberattacks, stating that, "[the hackers] had the purpose to affect the fight against the epidemic and the public services."

## RESIDENTIAL PROPERTY PRICE INDEX DECREASED SLIGHTLY

The overall residential property price index for January to March 2021 decreased by 0.7% over the previous period (December 2020 to February 2021) to 261.2, according to information from the Statistics and Census Service (DSEC). The indices for the Macau Peninsula (260.7) and Taipa & Coloane (263.5) dropped by 0.8% and 0.4% respectively. Analysed by quarter, the overall residential property price index in the first quarter of 2021 dropped by 2.8% compared to the fourth quarter of 2020.

### IC REPORTS UNAUTHORIZED CAR ENTRY IN ST PAUL'S RUINS CHURCHYARD TO PSP

The Cultural Affairs Bureau (IC) has reported the unauthorized entry of a vehicle in the area of Ruins of St. Paul (Mother of God church) churchyard to the Public Security Police Force (PSP), the IC informed in a statement. The case occurred last week and received a lot of attention on social media with many netizens sharing the photo of the vehicle circling and stopping in front of the old church façade during nighttime.

### PJ REPORTS ON BULLYING CASE VIRAL ON THE INTERNET

The Judiciary Police (PJ) has acknowledged a video circulating on the Internet in which two teenager students are seen fighting on the street. According to the PJ, one of the students, accompanied by his parents, has reported the case to the police, which is now under investigation. The police force noted that bullying, including insults and defamation, among others, can result in crime. Those involved might face legal liability, a situation that would cause problems in their future. The PJ also calls on everyone who is involved or aware of bullying cases to immediately report them instead of ignoring or tolerate them. The PJ also noted that the case has been reported to the Education and Youth Development Bureau to follow up with the students' school.

### THIRD STIMULUS

# MAJORITY PREFERS CONSUMPTION CARD OPTION, 83,000 REGISTERED

RENATO MARQUES

A total of 83,000 Macau residents registered for the third round of government stimulus through electronic consumption on the first day. From those, approximately 43,000 residents preferred to register to receive the government's benefits via the electronic consumption card, which was launched last year when the first round of the economic stimulus started, the Economic and Technological Development Bureau (DSED) and the Monetary Authority of Macao (AMCM) informed in a joint statement.

According to the bureaus, the registration went smoothly without any issues. On the first day, 40,000 people who registered noted that their preference to receive the funds via one of the eight mobile payment applications available.

To continue informing and clarifying the population regarding any doubts, the DSED and



AMCM will continue to organize public sessions in the community neighborhoods. So far, six sessions have been held with over 400 people attending.

The same entities also noted that over this week, representatives from the bureaus will participate in radio programs aiming to address citizens' doubts promptly.

The DSED also noted that it has created a website with all the details of the plan available,

as well as answers to residents' queries at [www.dsedt.gov.mo/2021consumo](http://www.dsedt.gov.mo/2021consumo).

In a different statement, the Identification Services Bureau (DSI) noted that, in order to facilitate the registration of newborns in the third round of the stimulus, parents can request the registration at the same time they process the formalities related to the baby's Macau Identification Card (BIR), being able to collect both

cards at the same time at DSI.

To ensure that the process is done successfully, the DSI notes that the BIR application needs to be submitted before December 7 so that it can be issued by December 13.

The registration period for the third round of the stimulus started on May 7 and will take place until December 10 this year. Cards can be collected from May 24 to December 13.

### RESIDENTIAL

# 91% of Iao Hon residents in favor of rebuilding housing estates

RESIDENTS of old residential buildings in Iao Hon are in favor of rebuilding the housing blocks, a survey conducted by the Macau Urban Renewal Limited (MUR) shows.

On supporting the redevelopment of the estate, 91% of the 647 owner-

occupiers of residential units interviewed supported redevelopment, with 8.97% saying they did not support it, had no comments, did not know or refused to answer. Meanwhile, 78.5% of the 84 owner-occupiers of non-residential units interviewed supported re-

development, with 21.5% saying they do not support or did not giving a clear answer.

Residents at the estate were mostly tenants.

Based on the research study and through different channels and methods, MUR has contacted about 55% of the

estate's property owners.

Meanwhile, over 70% of the owner-occupiers of residential units interviewed reported "peeling of the external walls (75.6%)", "waste everywhere (73.3%)", "too many trespassers (71.1%)" and "too many non-resident workers

(71.1%)". Almost 80% of owner occupiers of residential units interviewed said they hoped there will be community facilities such as parks, wet markets, supermarkets, bus stops and banks in the area after redevelopment.

The research study covered all 2,556 residential and non-residential units at Iao Hon Estate, which includes seven blocks: Hong Tai House, Kat Cheong House, Son Lei House, Heng Long House, Mau Tan House, Man Sau House and Seng Yee House. LV

## TRANSMAC SUSPENDS DRIVER OVER UNSAFE DRIVING

RENATO MARQUES

THE Transportes Urbanos de Macau S.A.R.L. (Transmac) has issued a statement noting the suspension of a driver involved in an incident widely spread on social media.

In the statement released on Saturday, the public bus operator noted "regarding the incident broadcasted over the internet in which a driver of a Transmac vehicle is seen pushing against a person - Transmac took the incident very seriously and ordered the immediate suspension of the driver after the incident."

According to the detailed information provided in the same statement, the incident occurred on Friday, May 7 around 11 p.m. when a Transmac bus operating as a private staff shuttle from a hotel was forced to stop its ride because a person stood in front of the bus.

According to the information available, the person was one of the hotel staff members and he was attempting to board bus which had stopped at the traffic light. The man had missed boarding the bus at the pick-up point location nearby.

"Since the driver did not

open the door to let the person get on board of the bus on the road, this staff member stood in front of the vehicle to stop the vehicle from moving," Transmac said, noting that the driver did manage to stop the bus without hurting the person and that the police was called to the scene.

"The hotel staff involved was not injured and left the scene after the police handled the case," the company added.

The suspension of the driver was justified with the company's policy of zero tolerance for all unsafe driving situations.

## WOMAN FOUND DEAD IN COTAI RESORT, PJ SUSPECTS MURDER

A 50-year-old female resident from the mainland has been found dead in a hotel room of an integrated resort in Cotai on Friday afternoon, the Judiciary Police (PJ) reported.

The alert was given by the hotel staff who called the emergency line.

After a preliminary investigation, the PJ found that the deceased woman had unusual scars on her head and neck, promp-

ting further investigation on the case and ruling it as a possible homicide.

According to information collected during the preliminary investigation, it is suspected that the woman may be related to the illegal activity of currency exchange in the casinos.

According to information collected by several media sources, the room where the alleged crime occurred was located on

the 31st floor of the integrated resort, as the floor was sealed during the time that PJ inspectors were collecting evidence.

The incident has been classified as a homicide for now until the exact cause of death is determined by a forensic examination.

The PJ is still investigating the case to try to identify the possible suspect or suspects of the crime. RM

# Stronger GBA wealth tie via new scheme is on the horizon

HONEY TSANG

**T**HE long-anticipated cross-border investment pilot scheme entitled "Wealth Management Connect" — enabling residents in the Greater Bay Area (GBA) to purchase cross-boundary wealth management products distributed by the region's banks — will be rolled out "soon", Financial Secretary of Hong Kong Paul Chan Mo Po unveiled on Friday.

The scheme is a collaborative effort by the People's Bank of China, the Hong Kong Monetary Authority (HKMA), and the Monetary Authority of Macao (AMCM).

The program is considered a landmark in the further opening-up of China's financial system, with experts believing that a deluge of mainland money is set to pour into both Hong Kong and Macau's markets once the Scheme takes effect.

Chan, on Friday, did not specify the concrete timeframe as to when the Scheme will



BLOOMBERG

be launched. On Macau's side, AMCM has not officially revealed the timetable as well. It's believed that the Central government has the last say in the schedule.

According to Bloomberg, head of GBA at HSBC Holdings Plc Daniel Chan stated that the scheme "marks another encouraging step toward the opening

of mainland China's capital markets and reinforcing Hong Kong's status as an international financial center."

The Wealth Management Connect scheme is comprised of two components: The Southbound and Northbound gateways. The Southbound gateway serves residents of Mainland cities in the GBA who plan

to invest in eligible investment products offered by banks in Hong Kong and Macau through opening designated investment accounts with these banks.

The Northbound leg is designed for residents of Hong Kong and Macau to venture into the products distributed by the GBA's mainland banks through the same means.

Chan's reaffirmation came less than a day after the People's Bank of China (PBOC) and other mainland monetary watchdogs issued a statement on Thursday night, which stipulated a set of draft rules on the pilot scheme.

According to the draft regulations, the mainland investors deemed eligible for the scheme must be the holders of household registration issued by the nine Mainland cities in the GBA or having paid taxes in the nine cities for five consecutive years.

The mainland investors are also required to have at least two years of investment experience and with no less than 1

million yuan in net household financial assets over the recent three months.

In the initial stage, the PBOC sets a cap of 150 billion yuan to be invested in either the Southbound or Northbound channel and the individual investment quota of 1 million yuan.

The PBOC is now seeking public opinions upon the draft regulations. The deadline for the consultation is due on May 21.

According to Bloomberg, shares in some Chinese banks picked up on Friday, with that of China Merchants Bank Co. up 4%, Ping An Bank Co. up 3.4%, and BOC Hong Kong climbed by 1.6%.

The cross-border investing mechanism was first unveiled in a joint statement published by the three entities on June 29 last year.

On February 5, the "Memorandum of Understanding on the Launch of the Cross-Boundary Wealth Management Connect Pilot Scheme in the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area" was inked by: HKMA, AMCM, PBOC, China Banking and Insurance Regulatory Commission, China Securities Regulatory Commission, State Administration of Foreign Exchange and Securities and Futures Commission of Hong Kong.

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MACAU'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

# SINOPHARM VACCINE GETS WHO BACKING, FACILITATING BROADER USE

**C**HINA'S Sinopharm Group Co. won World Health Organization backing for its Covid-19 vaccine, paving the way for a wider rollout of the shot in countries scrambling for immunizations.

The WHO listed the vaccine for emergency use, Director General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus said in a tweet on Friday. It's recommended for adults age 18 and over.

"This afternoon, WHO gave Emergency Use Listing to Sinopharm Beijing's #COVID-19 vaccine, making it the sixth vaccine to receive WHO validation for safety, efficacy and quality," Tedros said on his Twitter account.

WHO's imprimatur for the state-owned pharmaceutical company's shot adds another option for Covax, a program supported by WHO and other global health groups that's aimed at ensuring every country has access to vaccinations. It joins a small supply of immunizations from Pfizer Inc. and its partner BioNTech SE, AstraZeneca Plc and Johnson & Johnson that are available especially to poor nations that have been shut out as wealthy countries wrapped up most of the existing vaccine supply.

The timing of the authorization is critical since India, the largest vaccine manufacturer, dramatically curtailed deliveries of the AstraZeneca shot it was providing to Covax. India is currently battling the largest



outbreak in the world and the immunizations made there are being used locally.

"The addition of this vaccine has the potential to rapidly accelerate Covid-19 vaccine access," Mariangela Simao, WHO assistant-director general for access to health products, said in a statement.

The WHO's green light also

bestows global legitimacy on the shot, and is especially influential in developing countries that lack their own regulatory bodies and rely on the international health organization's advice for which shots are safe. Sinopharm's shot is already being used in countries from Peru to Serbia, but no developed western country has approved it yet.

"It helps a lot to have an independent body review the data," said Rupali Limaye, director of behavioral and implementation science at the International Vaccine Access Center at Johns Hopkins School of Public Health. "It will boost confidence, but use of the vaccines will still require a lot of persuasion at the public level."

## PERFORMANCE QUESTIONS

The WHO nod could also pave the way for countries to allow in travelers who have received Chinese shots, even if the vaccine is not approved for use locally. Ahead of a planned reopening to vaccinated tourists this summer, the European Union has said that member countries can consider opening to people who have shots cleared by the WHO.

Despite the WHO backing, there are questions on how the Chinese vaccines, while protecting individuals from developing severe Covid-19, might help stop the virus from transmitting and infecting more people. The Sinopharm vaccine accounts for roughly 60% of doses administered in Seychelles, which has vaccinated more of its population than any other nation in the world but has still had to reinstate some virus-related curbs as cases surge. The shot's efficacy for preventing symptomatic and hospitalized disease was estimated to be 79% in all age groups combined, the WHO said.

The vaccine contains inactive forms of the Sars-CoV-2 virus, which are injected to stimulate an immune response against the pathogen. The shot has been widely used in China since the middle of 2020. It has been sold or donated to nearly 60 countries and regions ranging from Hungary in the European Union to Egypt and Somalia in Africa since the start of this year.

The WHO is close to making a decision on another Chinese vaccine, this one from Sinovac Biotech Ltd., while Tianjin-based CanSino Biologics Inc. has started to submit data about its immunization to the health agency on a rolling basis.

**BLOOMBERG**

# EU, India try again to clinch trade deal, sidelining China

**BARRY HATTON, PORTO**

**T**HE European Union and India agreed Saturday to restart negotiations on a bilateral free trade deal, eight years after their first attempt failed and as both sides seek alternatives to China.

Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi spoke via videoconference to EU leaders attending a summit in Portugal. The two sides announced what they called "a pivotal moment" in their relations by agreeing to resume talks they gave up on in 2013 and to collaborate on a wide range of other issues.

Speaking at a press conference after the closed-



European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen

-door talks, senior EU officials were thrilled by the prospect of closer ties with India.

European Commission

President Ursula von der Leyen called it "outstanding" and "a landmark moment." European Council President Charles Michel

said Saturday's agreement marked "a new, important chapter" in bilateral relations.

Modi was scheduled to be at the online press conference after the meeting but didn't appear.

Plans for a face-to-face EU-India summit in Porto, in northern Portugal, fell through after Modi canceled his trip due to the devastating pandemic surge in his country. His remote appearance was the first time an Indian leader participated in a meeting with all of the EU's leaders.

Von der Leyen said 17 EU countries have provided more than 100 million euros (\$122 million) worth of pandemic aid to India,

including oxygen generators, medicines and ventilators, and were ready to send more.

While trade talks proceed, parallel negotiations will be held on investment protection and geographic indicators - a key interest for the EU, which places importance on protecting its distinctive products - in order to speed up the process, von der Leyen said.

The two sides said in a six-page joint statement that they also agreed to cooperate more in areas such as supercomputing for pandemic and climate change modelling, artificial intelligence and digital and transport connectivity.

Warm relations with In-

dia have an added attraction for the EU, which is eager to expand its influence in the Indo-Pacific region.

The EU's ties with China have soured over Beijing's treatment of its Uighur Muslim minority, leading to the suspension of the bloc's ratification of a bilateral investment agreement.

India, meanwhile, fell out with China in a border dispute last year.

Clinching a free trade deal won't be an easy task for EU and Indian negotiators. Six years of talks produced no agreement the last time they tried, with issues such as vehicle parts and duties on wine and spirits thwarting an agreement. **AP**

MACAU'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

SPACE

# Agency says debris from long March rocket landed in Indian Ocean

BRUCE EINHORN

**REMAINS** of a huge Chinese rocket have landed in the Indian Ocean amid global concern the country's space program lost control of a giant chunk of debris.

Pieces of the Long March 5B rocket re-entered the atmosphere at 10:24 a.m. yesterday and plunged into the sea at around 72.47 degrees east longitude and 2.65 degrees north latitude, according to a statement by the China Manned Space Agency posted on its official website.

China launched the rocket in late April to deliver the first part of the country's space station, but unlike other large launch vehicles that typically fall back to Earth in a pre-planned area, the Long March 5's core stage went into orbit, too. China's Foreign Ministry said Friday that the rocket was unlikely to cause any damage because most of it would burn up during re-entry.

"Most components have been burned and destroyed during the re-entry into the atmosphere," according to the Sunday statement.

Under President Xi Jinping, China is trying to become a space power on par with the U.S. In 2019, the Asian nation became the first country to send a probe to the far side of the moon, and this month a Chinese spacecraft will attempt to land on the surface of Mars.

The Long March 5B debris wasn't the first scare involving China's giant rocket, which the country is counting on for its space station as well as deep space exploration.

Last year, part of a Chinese rocket crashed in the West African nation of Cote d'Ivoire after Chinese authorities seemed to have lost control, the U.S. Space Command said at the time. The crash earned China a public rebuke from then-NASA Administrator Jim Bridenstine.

COMMONPLACE

The new incident with the Long March 5B raises the prospect of uncontrolled re-entries becoming commonplace, according to Jonathan McDowell, a scientist at the Harvard-Smithsonian Center for Astrophysics in Cambridge, Massachusetts, because China will be using the rocket for its space station as well as other missions.

"Now we can conclude that this is design feature of the Long March 5B," he said.

Since the demise of Skylab, the NASA space station that crashed



AP PHOTO

into Western Australia in 1979, most programs have gone to great lengths not to risk putting big stages of rockets into orbit.

"If you design them the dumb way, they end up in orbit," McDowell said. "For some reason, China when designing the Long March 5B said 'We don't really care, we'll just do it the simple way.'"

That may be because of the unusual design of the Chinese rocket, according to Adam Gilmour, CEO of Gilmour Space Technologies, an Australian company based on the Gold Coast, Queensland, that plans on launching its first rocket next year.

The second stage of the Long March 5B is much larger than that of a comparable rocket from Space Exploration Technologies Corp., or SpaceX, the company backed by billionaire Elon Musk, Gilmour said.

"You shove up into space this massive second stage, and if you can't control it safely to land, you might damage things," he said.

The lack of information from China regarding the rocket highlights the need for greater openness from that country about its space projects, said Richard de Grijns, an astrophysics professor at Macquarie University in Sydney and former faculty member at Peking University in Beijing.

"The Chinese space program is run by the Chinese military, so it's very hush-hush," he said.

While that military control is unlikely to change, China could still find ways to share more information with outsiders, something that will be increasingly important as it moves forward with projects like the space station.

"Whenever you send up a rocket, it needs to go somewhere," de Grijns said. "There will be more debris." **MDT/BLOOMBERG**

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## MGM Organizes "Seminar on Technology Application and Development of Green Buildings in China and Macau"

MGM COTAI is honored to receive a Three-star Green Building Operation Label last December, the highest rating under the "China Green Building Label" certification scheme from the China Green Building and Energy Saving (Macau) Association. In alignment with the Macau SAR government's pledge on promoting the development of green buildings, MGM recently held the "Seminar on Technology Application and Development of Green Buildings in China and Macau".



The seminar was organized by MGM, China Green Building Council and China Green Building and Energy Saving (Macau) Association, supported by various local associations. Chen Guangxian, Deputy General Manager of China Construction Engineering (Macau) Company Limited, and Edison Zhang, National China Green Building Label (GBL) Assessor from Green Building Research Center of Chinese Society for Urban Studies, were invited to speak to nearly 180 local professionals in architecture, electrical and mechanical engineering, property management and environmental protection.



### Three-star Green Building Operation Label Certificate Awarded to MGM COTAI

Before the seminar commenced, Wang Youwei, Director of China Green Building Council, and Albert Chuck, President of China Green Building and Energy Saving (Macau) Association, presented a Certificate of Three-star Green Building Operation Label to Pansy Ho, Co-chairperson & Executive Director of MGM China Holdings Limited. This recognition has made MGM COTAI the only mega complex and hotel in Macau, as well as the first hotel in the Greater Bay Area and the second in Greater China to earn two three-star labels.

Pansy Ho said, "In the spirit of 'early and pilot implementation', MGM always stays at the forefront of protecting the environment. When MGM COTAI was still at the planning stage, we pledged to present an integrated resort with the utmost level of sustainability and fully embrace the nation's green building policies. In the future, we will continue to work towards the nation's targets of green building development and reducing carbon emissions as set out in the 14th Five-Year Plan. It is our fervent hope that we can share our experience in putting up green buildings and related practices. We also look forward to collaborating with industry and community peers to groom emerging professionals in green buildings. This will foster Macau's sustainable development and help build a society where people can live in harmony with the environment."

### MGM COTAI As an Exemplar of Green Hotels

The two speakers introduced the technologies and development of green buildings in China and cited the eco-friendly structures of MGM COTAI as a role model.

Edison Zhang presented MGM COTAI's performance index that justifies its eligibility for a Three-star Green Building Operation Label, plus the major eco-friendly designs and technologies adopted by the integrated resort. He pointed out that MGM COTAI boasts a mix of four distinctive features, which are the keys to attain the Three-star certification. The four features include continuous green performance optimization; green operations backed by an effective deployment of software and hardware; an integration of contemporary elements, biophilia and arts; and exploring potential unconventional water resources. The seminar was concluded with a tour of the hotel, enabling the participants to view its green facilities and technologies.



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E sustainability@mgmmacau.com  
W http://www.mgm.mo/



# Washington Post says US secretly obtained reporters' records

ERIC TUCKER,  
WASHINGTON

**T**HE Trump Justice Department secretly seized the phone records of three Washington Post reporters who covered the federal investigation into ties between Russia and Donald Trump's 2016 presidential campaign, the newspaper said Friday.

The disclosure sets up a new clash between the federal government and news organizations and advocates for press freedom, who regard the seizures of reporters' records as incursions into constitutionally protected newsgathering activity. Similar actions have occurred only rarely over the past decade, including a seizure of phone records of Associated Press reporters and editors over a 2012 story that revealed a foiled bomb plot.

In a statement published by the newspaper, Cameron Barr, the Post's acting executive editor, said: "We are deeply troubled by this use of government power to seek access to the communications of journalists. The Department of Justice should immediately make clear its reasons for this intrusion into the activities of reporters doing their jobs, an activity protected under the First Amendment."

The action is presumably aimed at identifying the reporters' sources in national security stories published in



AP PHOTO

the early months of Trump's administration, as federal investigators scrutinized whether his 2016 campaign had coordinated with the Kremlin to sway the election.

The records' seizure was approved by Justice Department leadership last year. The reporters — Ellen Nakashima, Greg Miller and Adam Entous, who has since left the Post — were notified in letters dated May 3 that the Justice Department had obtained records for their home, work or cellphone numbers.

The records sought cover the period of April 15, 2017, to July 31, 2017, according to the newspaper. Justice Department guidelines for media leak investigations mandate that such actions are to be taken only when other avenues for obtaining the information have been exhausted, and that the affected reporters are to be notified unless it's determined that it would impede the investigation or interfere with national security.

"While rare, the Department follows the established procedures within its media guidelines policy when seeking legal process to obtain telephone toll records and non-content email records from media members as part of a criminal investigation into the unauthorized disclosure of classified information," department spokesman Marc Raimondi said in a statement.

"The targets of these investigations are not the news media recipients but rather those with access to the national defense information who provided it to the media and thus failed to protect it as lawfully required," he added.

Bruce Brown, the executive director of the Reporters Committee for Freedom of the Press, said it "raises serious First Amendment concerns" for the government to obtain records of journalists' communications.

"It is imperative that the new Justice Department leadership explain exactly

when prosecutors seized these records, why it is only now notifying the Post, and on what basis the Justice Department decided to forgo the presumption of advance notification under its own guidelines when the investigation apparently involves reporting over three years in the past," Brown said in a statement.

The government also said it had received a court order to get email records from the reporters that would have shown who they had emailed and when, but that it did not obtain those records, the newspaper said.

The Post said the Justice Department did not specify the purpose of the subpoena or identify any articles at issue. But the time period covered by the subpoena includes the publication of a story that suggested that intelligence intercepts indicated that Jeff Sessions, at the time Trump's attorney general, had discussed campaign issues with Russia's then-ambassador, Sergey Kislyak.

The Justice Department under former Attorney General Eric Holder in 2015 announced revised guidelines for obtaining records from the news media during criminal leak investigations, removing language that news organizations said was ambiguous and requiring additional levels of review before a journalist could be subpoenaed.

The updated policy was a response to outrage among news organizations over Obama administration tactics seen as overly aggressive and hostile toward newsgathering.

Sessions, Holder's successor, announced in 2017 a renewed crackdown on leaks of national security information to the media. **AP**

words, Sturgeon told the BBC that while he first task is steering Scotland through the pandemic, the SNP position on a referendum was clear to voters. She also said it would be "absurd" for the U.K. government to ignore the people's wishes, and that she hopes it never ends up in court.

"All this talk about legality and whether or not the U.K. government challenges the Scottish government in court, misses a point: the people of Scotland have voted for the SNP on the strength of offering, when the time is right, an independence referendum," she said. **MDT/BLOOMBERG**

## this day in history

### 1994 MANDELA BECOMES SA'S FIRST BLACK PRESIDENT



Nelson Mandela has become South Africa's first black president after more than three centuries of white rule.

Mr Mandela's African National Congress (ANC) party won 252 of the 400 seats in the first democratic elections of South Africa's history.

The inauguration ceremony took place in the Union Buildings amphitheatre in Pretoria today, attended by politicians and dignitaries from more than 140 countries around the world.

As part of the ceremony he pledged his allegiance to South Africa and his determination to continue his work for reconciliation.

"I do hereby swear to be faithful to the Republic of South Africa and do solemnly and sincerely promise to promote that which will advance and to oppose all that may harm the republic... and to devote myself to the well-being of the republic and all its people."

Jubilant scenes on the streets of Pretoria followed the ceremony with blacks, whites and coloureds celebrating together.

When the new president, flanked by First Deputy President Thabo Mbeki and Second Deputy President FW de Klerk, appeared on the Botha Lawn beneath the Union Buildings the crowd went wild.

More than 100,000 South African men, women and children of all races sang and danced with joy.

Addressing the crowd President Mandela paid tribute to outgoing president Mr FW de Klerk: "He has made for himself a niche in history.

"He has turned out to be one of the greatest reformers, one of the greatest sons of South Africa."

He also spoke of the "human disaster" of apartheid. "We saw our country tear itself apart in terrible conflict... The time for healing of wounds has come... Never, never again will this beautiful land experience the oppression of one by another."

And urging forgiveness he said in Afrikaans: "Wat is verby verby" - "What is past is past"

Courtesy BBC News

## POLITICS

### UK POLLS SPARK SCOTTISH DEBATE, HURT JOHNSON'S OPPOSITION

**T**HE battle for the future of Scotland has begun after a dramatic set of British election results left the U.K. starkly divided.

Prime Minister Boris Johnson's Conservative party cemented its grip on Labour's former heartlands in northern England, while in Scotland parties pushing to split away from the U.K. won a historic majority.

That threw Johnson and Scottish National Party leader

Nicola Sturgeon into what could be a vicious and lengthy showdown over whether a new referendum should be held Scottish independence.

Yesterday, Cabinet member Michael Gove repeatedly deflected questions about whether the U.K. government would block a second referendum if the Scottish government legislated for one, arguing the focus across the country should be on

recovering from the pandemic. He also said not all SNP voters want the party to prioritize the push for independence.

"If we get sucked into a conversation about referenda and constitutions, then we are diverting attention from the issues that are most important to the people in Scotland and across the United Kingdom," Gove told Sky News.

Responding to Gove's

## IN CONTEXT

Following the inauguration ceremony, President Mandela entrusted his deputy, Thabo Mbeki, with the day-to-day business of the government.

Mandela himself concentrated on the ceremonial duties of a leader, building a new international image for South Africa. Mandela stepped down as South Africa's president after the ANC's landslide victory in the national elections in the summer of 1999, in favour of Mr Mbeki.

Since his retirement he has continued travelling the world, meeting leaders, attending conferences and collecting awards.



MACAU'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

### YOUR STARS



#### ARIES

Mar. 21-Apr. 19

You may want to clear the air where older relatives are concerned. Romantic opportunities will be plentiful if you get out and mingle. Do a little extra work at home.



#### TAURUS

Apr. 20-May. 20

Your emotions have been pulled out of shape and you need to do a little backtracking. Don't overextend your self in order to add luxury items to your entertainment center.



#### GEMINI

May. 21-Jun. 21

Your involvement with groups will raise your self esteem. Travel will entice you; however, a tendency to overspend is quite possible. Do something together and you'll be surprised how sweet a deal you make.



#### CANCER

Jun. 22-Jul. 22

You can make profitable investments if you purchase an art object for your home. Your personal life will be disrupted if you have been too busy with business.



#### LEO

Jul. 23-Aug. 22

Changes in your home may be disruptive and upsetting. Go on business trips if at all possible. You should include children in your activities.



#### VIRGO

Aug. 23-Sep. 22

Try to get out and socialize. Be sure to take care of the needs of youngsters. Don't let peers distract you or push their work your way.



#### LIBRA

Sep. 23-Oct. 22

Friends may have valuable information to pass on. Your emotional state could leave you vulnerable and confused. Pleasure trips will promote new romantic encounters.



#### SCORPIO

Oct. 23-Nov. 21

Enjoy the company of relatives today. You can elaborate on your creative ideas and get involved in groups that relate to the arts. Too much talk will lead to disputes.



#### SAGITTARIUS

Nov. 22-Dec. 21

Don't hesitate to look for alternatives that will enable you to raise the kind of donations you need to do the job right. Be aware that you might be at fault as well.



#### CAPRICORN

Dec. 22-Jan. 19

You are best to back away from commitment. Pushy people must be kept at arm's length. Opportunities to get ahead will be evident in your social events carefully.



#### AQUARIUS

Jan. 20-Feb. 18

You would be wise to socialize with as many people as possible. You may have some difficulties with someone you live with. Don't let your partner get you going.

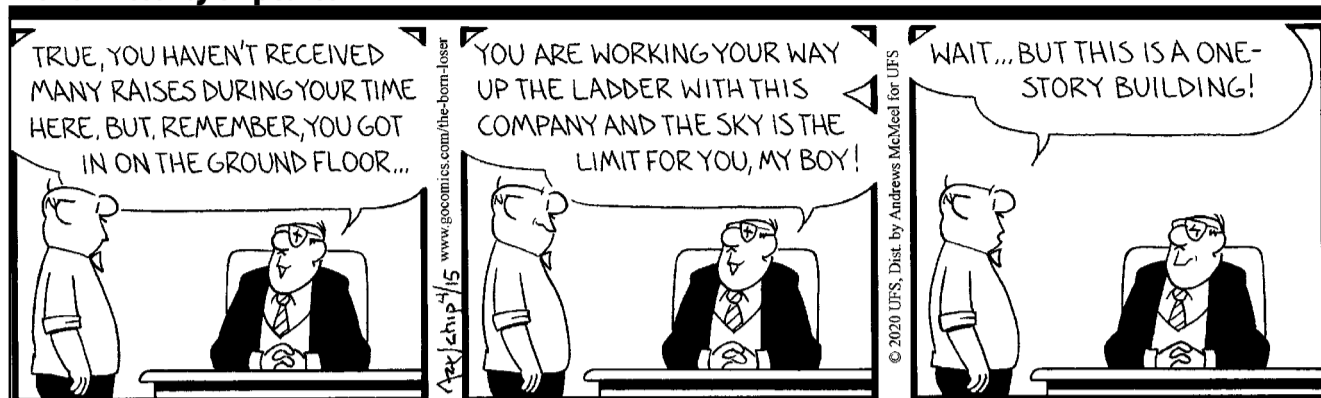


#### PISCES

Feb. 19-Mar. 20

Cultural activities will prove to be quite enlightening for everyone. You may find that depression is causing you to feel lonely and insecure.

### The Born Loser by Chip Sansom



### SUDOKU

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

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

### WEATHER

	MIN	MAX	CONDITION
<b>CHINA</b>			
Beijing	14	26	clear
Harbin	8	13	moderate rain
Tianjin	16	25	clear
Urumqi	17	32	clear
Xi'an	13	27	clear
Lhasa	6	19	cloudy
Chengdu	16	28	cloudy
Chongqing	17	27	cloudy
Kunming	15	26	cloudy
Nanjing	16	27	cloudy
Shanghai	20	28	overcast
Wuhan	16	28	overcast
Hangzhou	20	31	cloudy
Taipei	22	27	cloudy
Guangzhou	23	31	thundershower
Hong Kong	24	31	clear
<b>WORLD</b>			
Moscow	5	13	drizzle
Frankfurt	5	8	drizzle
Paris	5	11	drizzle
London	3	11	clear
New York	8	20	cloudy

### CROSSWORDS

ACROSS 1- The \_\_\_ Valley is a Californian wineland; 5- Betel palm; 10- Yard tunneler; 14- Designer Cassini; 15- Like some bears and icecaps; 16- Is indebted; 17- Nothing in Nice; 18- View; 19- Scottish loch, home to a monster!; 20- Bristly; 22- Abridge; 24- Antagonist; 25- Stable; 26- Actor Stoltz; 28- Author of fables; 32- Store sign; 35- Where the truck driver rides; 37- Capital of New South Wales; 38- Capp and Capone; 39- Groomer; 41- Atmosphere; 42- Native drum; 45- Female pronoun; 46- Look at lustfully; 47- Beer mug; 48- Honolulu's island; 50- Fat used to make candles; 54- Lost; 58- Metallic element; 61- Some mattresses; 62- By and by; 63- Knot; 65- Jason's craft; 66- Wrinkly fruit; 67- Capital on the Red River; 68- Normandy city; 69- Baby powder; 70- Reliable; 71- Bronte heroine;


DOWN 1- Scandinavian; 2- Extra-terrestrial being; 3- Golfer Calvin; 4- Nickname; 5- Semicircular recess; 6- Fabled bird; 7- Opt; 8- Paddled boat; 9- Concert venue; 10- Wealthy; 11- Western writer Wister; 12- Not as much; 13- "\_\_\_ quam videri" (North Carolina's motto); 21- Neighbor of Leb.; 23- June 6, 1944; 25- "The Lion King" villain; 27- SDI concern; 29- Catch; 30- Trompe l'\_\_\_; 31- Combustible heap; 32- Cereal grain; 33- Scheme; 34- Slinger girl; 36- Clear tables; 37- Queens stadium; 40- Demonstrate; 43- Of great size; 44- \_\_\_ even keel; 46- Surpass; 49- Possess, to Burns; 51- Luminous; 52- Pertaining to the moon; 53- Muscat native; 55- Wander; 56- Enthusiastic; 57- Together; 58- Lacking slack; 59- Swenson of "Benson"; 60- Damage done; 61- Lost traction; 64- \_\_\_ v. Wade;






**Friday's solution**

D	A	L	E	E	R	S	T	N	A	N	A	S
E	Y	E	R	L	O	O	M	A	R	O	S	E
L	I	A	R	A	B	B	E	T	E	A	S	E
I	N	H	A	S	T	E	N	E	I	T	H	E
T	E	E	S	R	O	O	S	T	S			
C	I	T	I	E	D	S	T	E	N	O		
E	L	E	C	T	P	I	S	C	A	L	S	
N	I	A	O	P	E	R	A	T	E	L	E	I
T	A	R	L	E	R	N	A	S	A	L		
A	S	L	A	N	T							
M	A	I	L	L	O	T						
T	A	L	O									
T	I	N	E	A								
Y	E	A	R	N								
A	C	T	I									
E	N	D	O									

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PJ (Open line) 993	Telephone - Report 1000
PJ (Picket) 28 557 775	Electricity - Report 28 339 922
PSP 28 573 333	Macau Daily Times 28 716 081
Customs 28 559 944	
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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Property of the Week



**FOR SALE**  
**Chun Fok, Taipa 4 Bedroom Apartment**  
**HK\$6,200,000** 640 ft<sup>2</sup> 2 1



This is a lovely ready to be live or rent out. The whole property was renovated six years ago and has everything ones need to live comfortably. In a convenient convenient location opposite Galaxy, the LRT station and Taipa Village. Two good size bedrooms, perfect galley style kitchen and great walk in shower room, with elevator access and public parking downstairs this property is sure to more quickly. It's a fantastic rental property in ideal location, can be sold with furniture and appliances.

Viewings by appointment.  
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Rain Dance Property "We dance until it's RENTED!"



**FOR RENT**  
**Manhattan apartment, Taipa**

**\$17,500/mth**  
1,626 ft<sup>2</sup>  
3 2



Property Hotlist



**FOR SALE**  
**Triumph Court, Taipa**

**\$11,700,000**  
1,756 ft<sup>2</sup>  
4 2



**REDUCED**  
**Wonderful layout, Nova Taipa**

**\$16,500/mth**  
2,530 ft<sup>2</sup>  
4 3



**REDUCED**  
**Ocean Gardens, Kapok Court**

**\$13,800/mth**  
1,030 ft<sup>2</sup>  
2 2



More Listings

For Sale

- [Taipa] Superb Studio 1 1 650 ft<sup>2</sup> **\$3,780,000** (ref: 20076001)
- [Macau] Stylish apartment ZAPE 2 1 720 ft<sup>2</sup> **\$7,450,000** (ref: n/a)
- [Taipa] Two apartments 4 2 1,404 ft<sup>2</sup> **\$8,380,000** (ref: 19096006)
- [Taipa] Nova Taipa 1 3 2 2 2,105 ft<sup>2</sup> **\$15,000,000** (ref: 21036004)
- [Taipa] Manhattan D unit 4 2 2,305 ft<sup>2</sup> **\$17,980,000** (ref: 18075558)

For Rent

- [Taipa] Cozy studio 1 **\$8,000/mth** (ref: n/a)
- [Taipa] Chun U Villa 4 3 1,979 ft<sup>2</sup> **\$17,500/mth** (ref: 21041001)
- [Taipa] Spacious Manhattan 3 2 1,720 ft<sup>2</sup> **\$18,800/mth** (ref: n/a)
- [Macau] Retail Shop, Barra area 1,968 ft<sup>2</sup> **\$48,000/mth** (ref: n/a)
- [Taipa] Commercial office- BCM building 4,100 ft<sup>2</sup> **\$85,000/mth** (ref: 21011001)

Recent Movements

**Rented**

Cattleya Court, Ocean Gardens

**Rented**

Villa da Taipa

**SOLD**



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MACAU'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

# Nine Super League clubs accept UEFA fines, three rebels face bans

ROB HARRIS

**O**NLY nine of the 12 European clubs who launched an ill-fated bid to form a Super League have agreed to a peace deal with UEFA and accepted being fined millions of dollars.

The remaining trio of rebels are at risk of being banned from the Champions League for not renouncing the breakaway. Barcelona, Real Madrid and Juventus have refused to approve what UEFA on Friday called "reintegration measures," and they will be referred to UEFA disciplinary bodies for sanctions after backing the new largely closed competition.

The Super League project imploded three weeks ago after the English clubs — Arsenal, Chelsea, Liverpool, Manchester United, Manchester City and Tottenham — backed out inside 48 hours after a backlash from the fans and British government.

The Premier League clubs along with Atletico Madrid, AC Milan and Inter Milan have officially signed up to a settlement with UEFA to participate only in

AP PHOTO



the existing open European competitions and accepted giving up 5% of revenue for one season playing in Europe. It wasn't specified if that would be this or a future season. Teams from England and Spain reaching the final can earn more than 100 million pounds (\$122 million), meaning 5 million euros would be sacrificed.

The nine clubs will also make a combined payment of 15 million euros for what UEFA called a "gesture of goodwill" to benefit children, youth and grass-

roots football.

In a move to prevent them deploying the Super League threat again, the clubs have also agreed to be fined 100 million euros if they seek again to play in an unauthorized competition or 50 million euros if they breach any other commitments to UEFA as part of the settlement.

"The measures announced are significant, but none of the financial penalties will be retained by UEFA," said Aleksander Ceferin, the UEFA president. "They will all be

reinvested into youth and grassroots football in local communities across Europe, including the UK. These clubs recognised their mistakes quickly and have taken action to demonstrate their contrition and future commitment to European football.

"The same cannot be said for the clubs that remain involved in the so-called 'Super League,' and UEFA will deal with those clubs subsequently."

Ceferin previously told The Associated Press that the clubs

not disavowing the Super League could be banned from UEFA's competitions.

"UEFA has reserved all rights to take whatever action it deems appropriate against those clubs that have so far refused to renounce the so-called Super League," UEFA said on Friday. "The matter will promptly be referred to the competent UEFA disciplinary bodies."

The 12 clubs were dubbed the "dirty dozen" by Ceferin in a heated period when he fought to prevent the clubs launching a competition that would lock in 15 places for teams for more than two decades, rather than having to qualify through annual domestic league placings as is required for the Champions League.

The nine clubs to sign up to UEFA's "club commitment declaration" will rejoin the European Club Association, which they quit on May 18 when the Super League was announced, and they will terminate their legal involvement with the company.

The English clubs could yet face separate sanctions from the Premier League and Football Association which is investigating their attempt to split from the established structure. UEFA indicated a desire for the agreement to settle with UEFA to serve as mitigation when domestic punishments are assessed. **MDT/AP**

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**OPINION**

**World Views**

Lionel Laurent, MDT/Bloomberg



**EUROPE STARTS TO FEEL THE VACCINE EFFECT AT LAST**

The European Union's Covid-19 vaccination rollout had looked like a crossbetween a bad joke and a bad dream. Almost everything that could go wrong did: Logistical failures, supply delays, the odd diplomatic incident and an ugly bust-up with AstraZeneca Plc. The euro-area economy, battered by successive virus waves, fell into a double-dip recession earlier this year.

Yet the bloc has really turned a corner in recent days. A concerted effort to get needles into people's arms, helped by an expanded supply of doses and the pressure to escape society-crushing lockdowns, is paying off. The EU daily average rate of jabs is currently around 7 doses per 1,000 people, fully closing the gap with the U.S. and U.K. this week. Germany recently broke records with 1.1 million jabs in one day, while France is about halfway there. There are already signs suggesting a newfound optimism is feeding through to the economy.

The early tics of the EU's characteristic bureaucratic caution have been replaced with a more can-do attitude: French football stadiums and Italian museums now serve as vaccination centers, while family doctors and pharmacists have been roped in to jab patients. Despite some clumsy safety U-turns on AstraZeneca's shot, which slowed take-up, vaccine hesitancy is ebbing as newly regained freedoms in Israel and Britain are viewed with envy. Vaccine manufacturing is ramping up, with the EU eyeing an annual production capacity of 3 billion doses by the end of 2021.

More than 70 million Europeans have now received at least one dose, equivalent to about one-fifth of the EU's population. Even if the bloc is several months away from its target coverage of 70% of adults, that's having a direct impact on the virus. New cases and deaths are on a downward trajectory in France, Germany, Spain and Italy, after a third wave that saw hospitals overloaded and businesses shuttered. Lockdowns are once again tentatively being lifted, hopefully for good this time.

A lot is riding on getting the next phase right. The coming summer is Europe's best chance at something close to normality for a region that's been starved of tourism, consumer spending and nightlife for months. Leaders are projecting confidence: Mario Draghi has told the world to book vacations to Italy, France's Emmanuel Macron is broadening job eligibility to all adults ahead of schedule and Spain's Pedro Sanchez told his country that it had reached the "beginning of the end" of the pandemic.

What's needed is to ensure both vaccine logistics and basic pandemic management stay on track. Caution is still warranted: France is lifting restrictions with daily case levels at around 300 per million people, twice the U.S.'s current level and ten times the U.K.'s. And judging by other countries' experiences, the pace of vaccinations may slow as younger, less vulnerable people become eligible as they may be more reluctant to get the jab. It remains to be seen whether the nudges being tried, such as Germany's offer of relaxing restrictions specifically for the vaccinated, will change that dynamic.

If the summer does bring brighter days, consumers will need confident signals to ensure the reopening leads to the spending rebound economists and investors expect. That means checking any temptation to withdraw government support too quickly amid a rise in prices and weakness in the job market.

It also means delivering on the promise of the EU's 750 billion-euro (\$905 billion) stimulus plan, due to pay out its first round of grants this summer. Barclays Plc economists reckon the euro region's real gross domestic product won't return to pre-crisis levels until around the middle of next year, and the pandemic's scars will run deep.

No country or region is an island in this crisis, and this is no time to feel overly triumphant when India is going through a devastating wave of infections. But it's still heartening to see the EU learning from past mistakes and giving itself a chance to make up for lost time. It won't get many more.

**STREET PARTIES CELEBRATE END OF SPAIN'S STATE OF EMERGENCY**

Impromptu street celebrations erupted across Spain as the clock struck midnight on Saturday, when a six-month-long national state of emergency to contain the spread of coronavirus ended and many nighttime curfews were lifted.

In Madrid, police had to usher revelers out of the central Puerta del Sol square, where the scenes of unmasked dancing and group signing esembled pre-pandemic nightlife.

Teenagers and young adults also poured into central squares and beaches of Barcelona to mark the relaxation of restrictions. "Freedom!" said Juan Cadavid, who was reconnecting with

friends. "[It's] a bit scary, you know, because of COVID, but I want to feel like this around a lot of people."

The 25-year-old Barcelona resident was also rejoicing at the prospect of going back to work at a Michelin-star restaurant that has been closed for the past seven months due to pandemic-related restrictions.

Local restaurants will be able to serve dinner again beginning Sunday and can stay open until 11 p.m. But a limit of four people per table remains and indoor dining is limited to 30% of capacity.

THE BUZZ

**DEATH TOLL SOARS TO 50 IN SCHOOL BOMBING IN AFGHAN CAPITAL**

RAHIM FAIEZ, KABUL

The death toll in a horrific bombing at a girls' school in the Afghan capital has soared to 50, many of them pupils between 11 and 15 years old, the Interior Ministry said yesterday.

The number of wounded in Saturday's attack has also climbed to more than 100, said Interior Ministry spokesman Tariq Arian.

Three explosions outside the school entrance struck as students were leaving for the day, he said. The blasts occurred in a mostly Shiite neighborhood in the west of the capital. The Taliban denied responsibility, condemning the attack.

The first explosion came from a vehicle packed with explosives, followed by two others, said Arian, adding that the casualty figures could still rise.

In the capital rattled by relentless bombings, Saturday's attack was among the worst. Criticism has mounted over lack of security and growing fears of even more violence as the U.S. and NATO complete their final military withdrawal from Afghanistan.

The attack targeted Afghanistan's ethnic Hazaras who dominate the western Dasht-e-Barchi neighborhood, where the bombings occurred. Most Hazaras are Shiite Muslims.

The area has been hit by violence against minority Shiites and most often claimed by the Islamic State affiliate operating in the country. No one has yet claimed Saturday's bombings.

The radical Sunni Muslim group has declared war on Afghanistan's Shiites. Washington blamed IS for a vicious attack last year in a maternity hospital in the same area that killed pregnant women and newborn babies.

Soon after the bombing, angry crowds attacked ambulances and even beat health workers as they tried to evacuate the wounded,



AP PHOTO

Health Ministry spokesman Ghulam Dastigar Nazari said. He had implored residents to cooperate and allow ambulances free access to the site.

Bloodied backpacks and schools books lay strewn outside the Syed Al-Shahda school. In the morning, boys attend classes in the sprawling school compound and in the afternoon, it's girls' turn.

Residents in the area said the explosion was deafening. Naser Rahimi told The Associated Press he heard three separate explosions, and immediately thought that the sheer power of the blasts meant the death toll would almost certainly climb.

One of the students fleeing the school recalled the attack, the girls' screams of the girls, the blood.

"I was with my classmate, we were leaving the school, when suddenly an explosion happened," said 15-year-old Zahra, whose arm had been broken by a piece of shrapnel.

"Ten minutes later there was another explosion and just a couple of minutes later another explosion," she said. "Everyone was yelling and there was blood everywhere, and I couldn't see anything clearly." Her friend died.

Outside the Muhammad Ali Jinnah Hospital, in the Dasht-e-Barchi neighborhood dozens of people lined up to donate blood, while family members checked casualty posted lists on the walls.

Most of the dozens of

injured brought to the EMERGENCY Hospital for war wounded in the Afghan capital, "almost all girls and young women between 12 and 20 years old," said Marco Puntin, the hospital's programme coordinator in Afghanistan.

In a statement following the attack, the EMERGENCY Hospital said the first three months of this year has seen a 21 per cent increase in war-wounded.

IS has previously claimed attacks against minority Shiites in the same area, last year claiming two brutal attacks on education facilities that killed 50 people, most of them students.

Even as the IS has been degraded in Afghanistan, according to government and US officials, it has stepped-up its attacks particularly against Shiite Muslims and women workers.

Earlier the group took responsibility for the targeted killing of three women media personnel in eastern Afghanistan.

The attack comes days after the remaining 2,500 to 3,500 American troops officially began leaving the country. They will be out by Sept. 11 at the latest. The pullout comes amid a resurgent Taliban, who control or hold sway over half of Afghanistan.

The top U.S. military officer said yesterday that Afghan government forces face an uncertain future and possibly some "bad possible outcomes" against Taliban insurgents as the withdrawal accelerates in the coming weeks. MDT/AP



AP PHOTO

Russian President Vladimir Putin marked the anniversary of the end of World War II in Europe with a speech warning that Nazi beliefs remain strong. Speaking to the annual military parade on Moscow's Red Square, Putin yesterday decried "attempts to rewrite history, to justify traitors and criminals, on whose hands lies the blood of hundreds of thousands of peaceful people."



AP PHOTO

Italian archaeologists have uncovered the fossilized remains of nine Neanderthals in a cave near Rome, shedding new light on how the Italian peninsula was populated and under what environmental conditions. The Italian Culture Ministry announced the discovery Saturday, saying it confirmed that the Guattari Cave in San Felice Circeo was "one of the most significant places in the world for the history of Neanderthals." A Neanderthal skull was discovered in the cave in 1939.

France President Emmanuel Macron's plans for bringing France out of the pandemic aren't just about resuscitating long-closed restaurants, boutiques and museums. They are also about preparing his possible campaign for a second term. A year before the next presidential election, Macron is focusing on saving jobs and reviving the pandemic-battered French economy as his country inches out of its third partial lockdown.



AP PHOTO

Spain Impromptu street celebrations erupted across Spain as the clock struck midnight yesterday, when a six-month-long national state of emergency to contain the spread of coronavirus ended and many nighttime curfews were lifted. In Madrid, police had to usher revelers out of the central Puerta del Sol square, where the scenes of unmasked dancing and group signing esembled pre-pandemic nightlife.