

For your health and the health of others
Get vaccinated against COVID-19

Vaccination booking system



Please scan QR code or visit website
<https://eservice.ssm.gov.mo/covidvacbook>
Novel Coronavirus Response and Coordination Centre

Let's Play Together

Add \$30 get extra 30 GB Data Usage

Notes: CTM reserves the right to make the final decision in case of any dispute.

CTM 40th Anniversary

WYNN MACAU REVENUE INCREASED BY 70.5% TO HKD6.76 BILLION Y-O-Y IN THE FIRST HALF DRIVEN BY A SURGE IN MASS MARKET

P5

CRIME: ROMANCE SCAMS CONTINUE, WOMAN CLAIMS LOSS OF MOP445,000

P4

MIGRANT DOMESTIC HELPERS ARE USING THE MAINLAND-MACAU U-TURN CONVENIENCE TO CHANGE JOBS

P2



Japan's "state of emergency" for curbing surging COVID-19 cases will continue through Sept. 12 rather than ending at the end of this month as initially planned, the government decided yesterday. With the pandemic continuing to spread in the country, the emergency for Tokyo, Osaka, Okinawa, and three other regions which started in July would be prolonged and expanded.



Indonesia's most active volcano erupted yesterday with its biggest lava flow in months, sending a river of lava and searing gas clouds flowing 3.5 kilometers down its slopes on the densely populated island of Java. The rumbling sound could be heard several kilometers away as Mount Merapi erupted, sending hot ash 600 meters into the sky. Ash blanketed nearby towns, but long-established evacuation orders are in place near the volcano, and no casualties were reported.



Israel Air raid sirens sounded in southern Israel yesterday after a rocket was fired from the Gaza Strip, the first since the 11-day war between Israel and Palestinian militants in May. The Israeli military said in a statement that it identified one rocket launch that was intercepted by aerial defense batteries. Amateur video footage appeared to show the rocket being intercepted over the southern town of Sderot.

More on backpage



ENTERTAINMENT RESUMES

GOV'T RELAXES RESTRICTIONS

P3



CHINA IS WILLING TO HELP AFGHANISTAN REBUILD

P7

CATHOLIC CHURCHES TO RESUME MASSES

Catholic churches will reopen tomorrow, according to an announcement made by Bishop Stephen Lee. Mass centres in the diocese will resume public Masses, liturgies and gatherings after being closed for nearly two weeks due to the Delta cases in the city. Personnel in charge of religious houses and old age homes may allow the faithful to join their in-house liturgy as appropriate. The faithful are enjoined to participate in the liturgy in person as usual. However, they should present their health code and wear a mask during the Masses.

TAXABLE INCOME AMOUNT ANNOUNCED FOR CONFIRMATION

The Financial Services Bureau has opened several channels for taxpayers to make enquiries about the M16 – Taxable Income Evaluation Notice for the year 2020, which states the taxpayer's total monetary income in the year and the tax payable for the year. The bureau added that if the tax payer does not agree with the evaluation, they can file an appeal to the bureau by August 30. The M16 Notice can be accessed in person at the bureau's public offices, using automatic kiosks or via the bureau's online platform.

U-TURN CONVENIENCE ENCOURAGING HELPERS TO CHANGE JOB: AGENCY ASSOCIATION

ANTHONY LAM

SOME migrant domestic helpers are using the mainland-Macau U-turn convenience to change jobs, Ao Ieong Kuong Kao, president of the Macau Overseas Worker Employment Agency Association, disclosed.

He added that, with this convenience policy, some domestic helpers are even requesting to be dismissed by their employers so that they can find a better job.

Ao Ieong described the job market as messy, despite the fact that the policy has helped ease the city's demand for non-resident domestic helpers.

There is a policy being enacted by mainland China that non-resident workers in Macau can apply for a Chinese visa after receiving two doses of the Sinopharm vaccine. After their visas are approved, they will be allowed to cross the border to mainland China and return to Macau.

Currently, foreigners are permitted to enter Macau only under very restricted circumstances.

At the same time, a new law was passed in the parliament and since been enacted, prohibiting non-locals from seeking jobs in Macau. They must be physically outside the city when they participate in the job-seeking process, such as job interviews.

When they come to Macau for vocational purposes, they must



present a relevant endorsement to the immigration department when they apply for a work permit.

Those entering Macau on a tourism visa will not hold the said endorsement.

Stressing the advantages of the visa policy, Ao Ieong disclosed that in reality, the market has become unpredictable. He said that many helpers would receive their vaccinations and prepare for the visa, so that when their employment contract ends, they can leave their current job immediately and look for other opportunities.

Those with a longer contract

validity period may, Ao Ieong said, take advantage of this policy and ask for a raise. If their request is denied, they will conduct themselves in a manner that invites dismissal.

Nedie Taberdo, president of the Green Philippines Migrant Workers Union in Macau, confirmed that there are several domestic helpers who are getting rid of their current employers.

"[They are mostly] getting rid of their current jobs due to exploitation, such as being underpaid, overworking, no health insurance and a lot more," Taberdo told the Times.

She mentioned that seeking for

domestic jobs is easier as those who went back home for vacation are not allowed to come back due to border restrictions. However, there are difficulties in getting legally hired due to "the long process."

Meanwhile, Ao Ieong disclosed that some of them may not go via the legal route, but rather are likely to apply for an extension of their residential permit and work illegally.

He explained that the reason behind the demand is because of the shortages seen in certain job areas, many of which are non-professional, such as cleaning and security. These jobs are not popular among local residents and are also not attractive to mainland workers.

Compared with the average salary of MOP4,000 per month for domestic helpers, workers in these aforementioned areas can earn as much as MOP9,000 per month.

To prevent this situation from occurring, Ao Ieong suggests the addition of a cool-down period to employment contracts, which will prevent outgoing non-resident workers from obtaining immediate employment.

In addition, Ao Ieong suggested that the visa policy be updated to require visa applicants to receive both vaccination shots and provide an employment notice for a new job at the time of applying for the visa.

Pataca remains minor in int'l banking transactions

AT the end of the first half of this year, the pataca contributed to 0.5% and 0.7% in Macau's total international assets and total international liabilities, the Monetary Authority of Macao (AMCM) announced yesterday.

The Hong Kong dollar, the US dollar, the renminbi and other foreign currencies accounted for 31.2%, 42.5%, 21.0% and 4.7% of total international assets respectively while

their respective shares in total international liabilities were 39.4%, 39.8%, 16.9% and 3.3%.

At end-June 2021, the overall share of international assets in total banking assets increased to 86.2% from 85.5% at end-March 2021, while the share of international liabilities in total banking liabilities rose to 83.9% from 82.6%.

At end-June 2021, total international assets increased by 8.7% from the

previous quarter and by 16.0% from the prior year to MOP2,176.5 billion (USD272.2 billion). As a major component of international assets, external non-bank loans advanced by 19.5% to MOP796.4 billion.

A 9.5% increase in total international liabilities from the previous quarter was recorded, and a 16.9% year-on-year increase was recorded, to MOP2,117.3 billion (USD264.8 billion).

Foreign currency deposits held by residents and the MSAR government in local banks continued to form a major component of international liabilities. This type of deposits dropped by 3.4% year-on-year to MOP699.2 billion at end-June 2021.

The majority of external assets and liabilities of the local banking sector were related to Asia and Europe, the AMCM added. **AL**



www.macaudailytimes.com.mo

REACHING OUT!

+20,500

Like us on facebook.com/mdtimes



MacauDaily 澳門每日時報
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, MacauHub, MacauNews, Xinhua
SECRETARY Yang Dongxiao amy@macaudailytimes.com

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

A MACAU TIMES PUBLICATIONS LTD PUBLICATION

ADMINISTRATOR & CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

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

Entertainment venues to resume operations

HONEY TSANG

ENTERTAINMENT venues and facilities can resume operations from tomorrow, August 18, according to the government's scheduled lifting of Covid-19 pandemic-related mandates. The relaxation of restrictions was revealed yesterday, as the city had seen no new Covid-19 cases for 13 consecutive days.

The Novel Coronavirus Response and Coordination Centre's decision to allow certain venues to resume full-swing operations was made after considering "the improvement in the epidemic situation in Macau." The relaxed measures are intended to ensure "a gradual resumption of normal economic activities and normal life in the city."

Recreational venues permitted to reopen include cinemas, theatres, indoor amusement parks, game centers, cybercafes, billiard rooms, bowling centers, saunas, massage parlors, beauty salons, gyms, health clubs, karaoke lounges, bars, and more.

The facilities under the supervision of the Education and

Youth Development Bureau (DSEDJ) will also reopen from tomorrow onwards, with the exception of the Parenting Education Center.

Subsidized nurseries and social facilities under the Social Welfare Bureau will also resume services tomorrow. Visits to the elderly and rehabilitation centers will be reinstated as well.

Under the same guidelines, the public sports facilities and cultural facilities under the Cultural Affairs Bureau (IC) will reopen tomorrow as well.

Following the city's recording of four Delta cases on August 3, the government mandated the closure of these venues on August 5.

The government attributed the success in controlling the pandemic to the "cooperation of the public regarding the Government's epidemic-control measures, and the relentless efforts from the health, public security, and municipal affairs authorities."

Despite the lifting of restrictions, the government has called on the public and owners of the recreational venues to continue to pay close attention to potential contagion risks and comply with anti-pandemic

measures.

The government also suggested that staff request patrons to display a valid health code before entering the premises.

The Health Bureau (SSM) vows to closely monitor the pandemic situation and make appropriate adjustments as required.

In addition, the Public Administration Building at Rua Do Campo reopened yesterday, after being closed since August 12 for sanitization due to a confirmed case visiting the building on July 29.



ISOLATED ZONES SLATED TO REOPEN

THE red and yellow zones will reopen from August 18, provided that Macau sees no further confirmed cases over the coming days. The absence of any further confirmed cases will be seen as an indication that the Covid-19 outbreak has been kept in check.

The relaxation of measures was revealed by Leong Iek Hou, coordinator at the Center for Disease Control and Prevention at yesterday's Covid-19 briefing.

She added that if no cases are found today among those residing in red and yellow zones, close contacts and secondary close contacts, the government will reopen the two zones on August 18. Today will mark 14 consecutive days since Macau has registe-

red a Covid-19 case and will meet the mainland's precondition for lifting certain restrictions.

Tomorrow, residents in the affected areas will see their health code transform to green again if no further cases are detected.

So far, 2,435 people have undergone some form of medical observation after the emergence of the four confirmed cases on August 3.

Of these, 78 have been classified as close contacts, 699 as secondary close contacts, 164 people were classified with the red Yuekang code, and 33 people had been to a red code zone. There are 1,459 people who crossed paths with positive cases. Meanwhile, 286 people have been quarantined in the red code area. **HT**

COVID-19

New regulation requires doctors to report suspected cases

HONEY TSANG

THE Health Bureau (SSM) has implemented a new protocol, requiring all doctors, including private practitioners, to make a declaration on a dedicated website after dealing with patients with fever or respiratory symptoms and who are suspected of contracting Covid-19.

The new regulation, effective immediately since its announcement, is designed to detect any hidden cases as early as possible, Tai Wa Hou, coordinator of the Health Bureau's Covid-19 Vaccination Operation, said yesterday.

The measure will see all doctors across Macau evaluate patients who display symptoms like fever, cough, fatigue, sore throat, reduced sense of smell or taste, diarrhea and other

related symptoms. The doctors are required to instruct the patient to undergo or otherwise arrange for Covid-19 testing for the affected patients.

These patients will see their health code status change from green to yellow. Tai said he is not certain whether a yellow code would discourage residents from seeking medical treatment. But he emphasized that residents should declare their symptoms honestly, which will also result in the color of the health code changed to yellow anyway.

Tai added that doctors should arrange for testing of patients immediately if the clinics they work at have the capacity to do so. For those clinics that are unable to conduct immediate on-site testing, doctors must instruct the patients to take the test

within 24 hours after the appointment.

The government will closely monitor whether patients with a yellow health code status after receiving medical services are tested within the required period. Their health code will remain yellow until they test negative.

Those who conducted the test within 24 hours before the medical appointment will be granted an exemption.

The government has divided the suspected cases into three categories: no epidemiological risk, slightly higher epidemiological risk, and high epidemiological risk.

For patients classified with presenting no epidemiological risks, their health code will be changed to yellow and they should conduct the test within one day on

their own.

Those with a slightly higher epidemiological risk, including those with frontline facing occupations such as casino workers, restaurant staff and drivers, must conduct the test at one of designated testing centers as early as possible, without the need to make an appointment.

Patients who present a high epidemiological risk, such as those who work at isolated wards, or who have had contact with confirmed cases, must go to a designated venue to conduct the test. They will not be allowed to leave until they test negative.

While these new measures pose additional inconvenience to residents,

Tai affirmed that they represent best practice to safeguard public health and provide reassurance to residents, especially taking into account the significant number of asymptomatic cases.

To ensure a smooth operation, the SSM hosted two explanatory seminars for private doctors on August 15 and 16.

GOV'T URGED TO FIX HEALTH CODE GLITCHES

LAWMAKER Ella Lei urged the government to enhance the city's online health code system and address intermittent glitches in the system. In a written query submitted to the government, she called on authorities to provide the public with an explanation of the cause of frequent technical errors in the system. On the first day of the previous three-day mass Covid-19 test, the system was out of service for several hours, which contributed to confusion and saw many disgruntled residents lining up at testing centers. In

addition to this incident, the system also saw several malfunctions in previous months. In view of this, Lei pushed the government to enhance the system. She suggests the Macau government emulate the success of some mainland governments, which have set up a 5G health system at public transport stations to allow authorities to access each resident's health information by scanning their identity cards. Lei stated that this technology could offer greater convenience for those who are not tech-savvy.

CONSTRUCTION WORKER DIES FROM A FALL AT GALAXY, CAUSES UNKNOWN

HONEY TSANG

A 31-year-old male foreign construction worker has died after falling from a height of five floors at the construction site of Galaxy Macau Phase 3 yesterday morning.

According to Judiciary Police (PJ), the man was previously engaged to work on the electrical wirings on the ground floor at the site.

The PJ learned from his supervisor that the company had not assigned him to work at the location of the incident, as the construction had already completed. The supervisor did not know why the worker was there.

The fall resulted in heavy bleeding from the worker's back, and he was certified deceased after attempted resuscitation.

An examination of the deceased identified open fractures near the man's wrists at the back, both elbows, and ankles. These injuries, the PJ said, "were consistent with a fall from a height."

The man was found wearing a safety harness tied to his clothes. The cause of the incident requires further investigation.

The case has been initially classified as a case of dead body discovery. The cause of death will later be determined following a



forensic examination.

After the accident, the Labour Affairs Bureau (DSAL) issued an official statement, expressing "great concern" over the accident.

According to the document,

the DSAL sent authorities to the construction site right after the incident for follow-up, and has banned the contractor from engaging in works over two meters from the ground.

In the release, the DSAL reminded all contractors of their workplace safety obligations and the need to formulate safety protocols for workers. They were also asked to ensure that staff comply

with the relevant safety guidelines.

The DSAL authorities will conduct an in-depth investigation to identify the cause of death and offer compensation and other relevant assistance in this case.

"The bureau extends its deepest condolences to the family of the deceased," the statement said.

This is not the first tragedy involving death at the Galaxy. In March 2020, a scaffolding collapsed at the construction site of Galaxy Macau Phase 3 killing three workers and injuring four more.

GEG PLEDGES FULL COOPERATION WITH GOVT

In a statement issued last night, a Galaxy Entertainment Group (GEG) representative said that the company has "promptly and fully cooperated with government authorities to carry out rescue work and investigations and ensured that the related contractor will strictly abide by the guidelines issued by the Labour Affairs Bureau."

The gaming operator also pledged to continue working with the contractor to provide assistance to the deceased worker's family and handle any relevant compensation matters.

"With regards to the accident that happened this morning, we would like to express our sincere regrets, and extend our most heartfelt sympathies to the family members of the worker," the representative wrote.

The group did not provide further information as the case is still under police investigation.

CRIME

Romance scams continue, woman claims loss of MOP445,000

RENATO MARQUES

A 40-year-old woman currently living in Macau has reportedly lost MOP445,000 in a scam involving an alleged virtual boyfriend, the Judiciary Police (PJ) reported yesterday during the regular joint press conference of the police forces.

According to the report, in early June this year, the woman met a man through a social media platform who was said to be a physician working in Mali, West Africa.

After about one month of conversation through the platform, the man said that he wanted to retire and relocate to Macau to meet the woman.

He told her that he needed help with some money (MOP95,000) to process his retirement in Mali.

The woman agreed to help and transferred the amount to the account

provided by him. After less than two weeks, the man contacted her again, saying that a war had started in Mali and the only way he could exit the country was by renting a private airplane. For this, he claimed he needed an extra MOP160,000.

The woman believed the story and once again transferred the money to a bank account.

On July 20, the man contacted her again, informing her that he had been able to fly to Beijing, where he claimed he was calling from. He made several excuses to request large sums of money from the woman, this time asking for MOP300,000 to process a medical certificate that would allow him to enter Macau.

The woman said that she did not have this sum available but transferred half the amount (MOP150,000), hoping that it would help to solve the problem.

The calls for money did not cease there. A few days later, he contacted her again asking for another MOP200,000, claiming that he needed to pay for the private plane parking at the airport so he could finally depart to Macau.

Since she did not have any money anymore, she asked a friend for a loan of MOP40,000 that she then transferred to the man.

After this last transfer, she lost contact with the man. She realized only then that she had been involved in a scam and filed a complaint with the PJ.

She said she had lost a total of MOP445,000.

The PJ is investigating the case but, like many other similar cases, it is unlikely that the PJ will be able to locate any suspects.

In a separate and unrelated case also reported by the police force, the PJ said that a man had reported the loss of a total sum of



RMB29,870 over a mobile application (app) that he installed under the recommendation of a woman he met online.

The case, reported to the PJ on August 12, had occurred a few weeks earlier when the 44-year-old man found a woman who said she would be able to provide him with a wide choi-

ce of young women who would provide sex services to him.

She then convinced him to download and install an app that he had to pay RMB38 in order to become a member of the group.

He later realized that the app included several games that he could play to win money. He made seve-

ral investments of increasing amounts of RMB588, RMB1,368, RMB3,888, and finally RMB13,988.

After that, he wanted to withdraw his earnings, but he was asked to pay an additional fee of RMB10,000. He then lost contact with the people from the app, filling a case with PJ for fraud.

GAMING

Mass market wins drive Wynn revenue up 70.5% in H1

HONEY TSANG

WYNN Macau Limited's total operating revenue increased by 70.5% from HKD3.97 billion in the first half (H1) of 2020 to HKD6.76 billion in H1 2021, predominantly driven by a surge in mass market table games win at both Wynn Palace and Wynn Macau.

The group's aggregate mass market table games win surged by 103.6% from HKD2.02 billion in H1 2020 to HKD4.11 billion in H1 2021. In a statement from the group, Wynn said this climb was driven by an "increase in business volumes of both Wynn Palace and Wynn Macau, with total mass market table drop up 130.2%, from HKD8.69 billion in H1 2020 to HKD20.00 billion in H1 2021," which was partially offset by a drop in mass market table games win percentage at both properties.

On the other hand, VIP table games win increased from

BLOOMBERG



HKD1.72 billion in H1 2020 to HKD2.06 billion in H1 2021, up 20.3% year-on-year, representing a relatively smaller increase when compared to that of the mass market.

The aggregate gaming revenue of the group stood high

at HKD5.27 billion (78% of the group's total operating revenue) in H1 2021, when compared to HKD2.98 billion (75.1% of total operating revenue) during the first six months of last year.

For non-gaming revenue, including rooms, food and beverage

and retail and other revenue, the group also saw a 51.2% increase in net revenue, which rose from HKD0.99 billion (24.9% of total operating revenue) in H1 2020 to HKD1.49 billion (22% of total operating revenue) in H1 2021.

Overall, the net loss attributab-

le to owners of the group shrunk by 45% from HKD3.92 billion for H1 2020 to HKD2.16 billion for H1 2021.

The adjusted earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation and amortization (EBITDA) for the group was HKD660 million in the first six months of 2021, representing a sharp improvement from the adjusted EBITDA loss of around HKD1.40 billion in the same period last year.

Echoing other casino operators' worries, Wynn Macau also expressed concern about uncertainties in the concession renewal or extension process, but "at this time believes that its concession will be renewed or extended beyond June 26, 2022."

The group also noted that the unpredictable Covid-19 pandemic and ensuing containment measures "could continue to adversely impact our financial condition and operations." The impact of this on the group's business "cannot be reasonably estimated at this time."

Despite the pandemic, the group has continued to design the second phase of Wynn Palace, featuring non-gaming amenities like event spaces, interactive entertainment installations, food and beverage offerings, and additional hotel rooms. The group aims to position the coming new attraction as "a unique world-class cultural destination."

AD

KTRANZ
TRANSLATIONS LIMITED

ACCURATE, TIMELY & COMPETITIVE TRANSLATIONS

Languages:
ENGLISH, CHINESE,
PORTUGUESE, JAPANESE,
KOREAN, SPANISH,
FRENCH, ARABIC,
RUSSIAN

Services
TRANSLATIONS,
PROOFREADING, COPYWRITING,
DATA INPUT, NEWS MONITORING

We translate +10,000 words a day

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

Av. da Praia Grande, 599, Edif. Comercial Rodrigues, 12 Floor C, MACAU SAR

Organizers: 粵東保護網
Co-organizer: 澳門 CEM
澳門科學館

World Environment Day Activities 2021

"Energy Saving Activity – 5% Energy Saving Action" Lucky Draw

2876 2626
www.dspa.gov.mo

OFFICIAL: ECONOMIC GROWTH LIKELY TO SLOW DUE TO VIRUS, FLOODS

JOE MCDONALD, BEIJING

CHINA'S economic growth will soften this year due to summer flooding and anti-coronavirus controls, an official said yesterday, after consumer sales and other activity weakened in July.

China's economy still is in a "recovery trend" from last year's pandemic-induced slowdown but is likely to weaken after a relatively strong first half, said Fu Linghui, a spokesman for the National Bureau of Statistics.

"This year's main economic growth trend will be 'low after high,'" Fu said at a news conference.

Fu gave no growth forecast. Private sector forecasters say the world's second-largest economy easily should achieve 8% over last year's depressed level.

Growth in July retail sales softened to 8.5% over a year earlier, below the consensus forecast of 10.9% and down from the previous month's 12.1%. Factory output grew 6.4%, below the forecast of 7.9%.

"Growth momentum weakened sharply," said Louis Kuijs of Oxford Economics in a report.



The economy was disrupted by unusually severe summer flooding that hit central China in July, killing more than 300 people in Henan province. More floods hit Hubei province to the south this month, killing at least 21 people.

Meanwhile, authorities have reimposed some travel and business controls to fight outbreaks of the coronavirus's more contagious delta variant that began in late July. Some airline flights and train service have been canceled, most access to a

city of 1.5 million cut off and mass virus testing ordered in some areas.

"Given China's 'zero tolerance' approach to Covid, future outbreaks will continue to pose significant risk to the outlook," said Kuijs.

The government reported earlier that economic growth slowed to a still-strong 7.9% over a year earlier in the three months ending in June, down from the previous quarter's 18.3%. Those figures were amplified by comparison with early 2020, when the

economy was shut down to fight the virus.

Output in the second quarter compared with the January-March period, the way other major economies are measured, was 1.3%, up from the previous quarter's 0.6% over late 2020.

Fu, the statistics official, expressed confidence the long-term outlook was still healthy.

"The economy will still maintain a stable recovery," Fu said. "The quality of development will continue to improve." MDT/AP

HONG KONG

AUTHORITIES TO TIGHTEN COVID-19 QUARANTINE ON TRAVELERS FROM 16 COUNTRIES

HONG Kong decided yesterday to tighten health quarantine arrangements on inbound travelers from 16 countries to fend off the more infectious Delta coronavirus variant.

Effective from 12:00 a.m. on Friday, travelers from 15 countries, including the United States, France and Spain, will be required to be fully vaccinated and undergo a 21-day quarantine upon arrival, according to a statement of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region government.

Those countries will be upgraded from the medium-risk category to high risk.

Australia will be moved from low risk to medium risk so that non-vaccinated visitors from the country have to undergo quarantine for 21 days and those fully vaccinated will be quarantined for

14 days, or seven days with a positive antibody test.

The decision to tighten quarantine arrangements was to strengthen the local barrier against the importation of the virus in view of the recent surge of infections with the Delta variant overseas, the government spokesman said.

Meanwhile, Hong Kong reported three new imported COVID-19 cases yesterday, taking the total tally to 12,036. In the past 14 days, a total of 46 cases have been reported, with one untraceable local infection and the rest imported.

Hong Kong's vaccinated population continues to grow. Around 3.73 million people, or 54.8 percent of the eligible population, have taken at least one shot of the vaccine, while around 2.91 million are fully vaccinated. XINHUA

Woman says China held her in a 'secret jail' in Dubai, Beijing denies

A young Chinese woman says she was held for eight days at a Chinese-run secret detention facility in Dubai along with at least two Uyghurs.

The woman, 26-year-old Wu Huan, was on the run to avoid extradition back to China because her fiancé was considered a Chinese dissident. Wu told The Associated Press she was abducted from a hotel in Dubai and detained by Chinese officials at a villa converted into a jail, where she saw or heard two other prisoners, both Uyghurs.

According to her, she was questioned and threatened in Chinese and forced to sign legal documents incriminating her fiancé for



Wu Huan speaks to the Associated Press reporters in Ukraine

harassing her, she said. She was finally released on June 8 and is now seeking asylum in the Netherlands.

The Associated Press

was unable to confirm or disprove Wu's account independently, and she could not pinpoint the exact location of the black site.

Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Hua Chunying said: "What I can tell you is that the situation the person talked about is not true." Dubai did not respond to multiple phone calls and requests for comment.

Yu-Jie Chen, an assistant professor at Taiwan's Academia Sinica, said she had not heard of a Chinese secret jail in Dubai, and such a facility in another country would be unusual.

After Wu was released, she flew to Ukraine, where she was reunited with Wang. After threats from Chinese police that Wang could face extradition from Ukraine, the couple fled again to the Netherlands. MDT/AP

CHINA, FRANCE TO RECOGNIZE EACH OTHER'S DRIVING LICENSES

CHINA and France have signed an agreement allowing mutual recognition and exchanges of the two countries' driving licenses, the Ministry of Public Security (MPS) said yesterday.

Under the deal, which will come into effect on Tuesday, China and France will allow holders of valid driving licenses issued by either authority to drive directly or obtain driving permits without an additional test.

To be specific, people staying in the other country for less than a year will have their driving licenses recognized in the destination

country, while those staying for more than a year can exchange their original licenses for local ones without separate tests.

Reciprocal treatment will be applied to students who study in each other's countries.

The agreement was signed to facilitate people's travel by driving in the two countries, and further encourage bilateral trade cooperation and people-to-people exchanges, said the MPS.

China has mutually recognized driver's licenses with the United Arab Emirates UAE and Belgium and inked such an agreement with Serbia. XINHUA



AFGHANISTAN

Chaos as thousands flee after Taliban takeover

AHMAD SEIR, KABUL

THOUSANDS of people packed into the Afghan capital's airport yesterday, rushing the tarmac and pushing onto planes in desperate attempts to flee the country after the Taliban overthrew the Western-backed government. U.S. troops fired warning shots as they struggled to manage the chaotic evacuation.

The Taliban swept into Kabul on Sunday after President Ashraf Ghani fled the country, bringing a stunning end to a two-decade campaign in which the U.S. and its allies had tried to transform Afghanistan. The country's Western-trained security forces collapsed or fled in the face of an insurgent offensive that tore through the country in just over a week, ahead of the planned withdrawal of the last American troops at the end of the month.

In the capital, a tense calm set in, with most people hiding in their homes as the Taliban deployed fighters at major intersections. There were scattered reports of looting and armed men knocking on doors and gates, and there was less traffic than usual on eerily quiet streets. Fighters could be seen searching vehicles at one of the city's main squares.

Many fear chaos, after the Taliban freed thousands of prisoners and the police simply melted away, or a return to the kind of brutal rule the Taliban imposed when it was last in power. They raced to Kabul's international airport, where the "civilian side" was closed until further notice,

according to Afghanistan's Civil Aviation Authority. The military was put in control of the airspace.

Videos circulating on social media showed hundreds of people running across the tarmac as U.S. soldiers fired warning shots in the air. One showed a crowd pushing and shoving its way up a staircase, trying to board a plane, with some people hanging off the railings.

In another video, hundreds of people could be seen running alongside a U.S. Air Force transport plane as it moved down a runway. Some climbed onto the side of the jet just before takeoff. That raised questions about how much longer aircraft would be able to safely take off and land.

Massouma Tajik, a 22-year-old data analyst, described scenes of panic at the airport, where she was hoping to board an evacuation flight.

After waiting six hours, she heard shots from outside, where a crowd of men and women were trying to climb aboard a plane. She said U.S. troops sprayed gas and fired into the air to disperse the crowds after people scaled the walls and swarmed onto the tarmac. Gunfire could be heard in the voice messages she sent to The Associated Press.

Shafi Arifi, who had a ticket to travel to Uzbekistan on Sunday, was unable to board her plane because it was packed with people who had raced across the tarmac and climbed aboard, with no police or airport staff in sight.

"There was no room for us to stand," said the 24-year-old. "Children were crying, women

were shouting, young and old men were so angry and upset, no one could hear each other. There was no oxygen to breathe."

After another woman fainted and was carried off the plane, Arifi gave up and went back home.

The U.S. Embassy has been evacuated and the American flag lowered, with diplomats relocating to the airport to aid with the evacuation. Other Western countries have also closed their missions and are flying out staff and nationals.

Afghans are also trying to leave through land border crossings, all of which are now controlled by the Taliban. Rakhmatula Kuyash, 30, was one of the few people with a visa allowing him to cross into Uzbekistan on Sunday. He said his children and relatives had to stay behind.

"I'm lost and I don't know what to do. I left everything behind," he said.

The speed of the Taliban offensive through the country appears to have stunned American officials. Just days before the insurgents entered Kabul with little if any resistance, a U.S. military assessment predicted it could take months for the capital to fall.

The rout threatened to erase 20 years of Western efforts to remake Afghanistan that saw more than 3,500 U.S. and allied troops killed as well as tens of thousands of Afghans. The initial invasion drove the Taliban from power and scattered al-Qaida, which had planned the 9/11 attacks while being sheltered in Afghanistan. Many had hoped the Western-backed Afghan government would usher in a new era of peace and respect for human rights.

As the U.S. lost focus on Afghanistan during the Iraq war, the Taliban eventually regrouped. The militants captured much of the Afghan countryside in recent years and then swept into cities as U.S. forces prepared to withdraw ahead of an Aug. 31 deadline.

Under the Taliban, which ruled in accordance with a harsh interpretation of Islamic law, women were largely confined to their homes and suspected criminals faced amputation or public execution. The insurgents have sought to project greater moderation in recent years, but many Afghans remain skeptical.

Suhail Shaheen, a Taliban spokesman, tweeted that fighters had been instructed not to enter any home without permission and to protect "life, property and honor." The Taliban have also said they will stay out of the upscale diplomatic quarter housing the U.S. Embassy complex and the posh villas of U.S.-allied former warlords who have fled the country or gone into hiding.

Those assurances are part of an effort by the Taliban to "shape the narrative that their accession to power is legitimate — a message for both inside Afghanistan and beyond its borders," the Texas-based private intelligence firm Stratfor wrote.

"The speed of the Taliban's final advance suggests less military dominance than effective political insurgency coupled with an incohesive Afghan political system and security force struggling with flagging morale."

When the Taliban last seized Kabul in 1996, it had been heavily damaged in the civil war that broke out among rival warlords after the Soviet withdrawal seven years earlier. The city was then home to around a million people, most traveling on dusty roads by bicycle or aging taxi.

Today Kabul is a built-up city home to 5 million people where luxury vehicles and SUVs struggle to push through endemic traffic jams.

Wahidullah Qadiri, a resident of the city, said he hoped for peace after decades of war that have claimed the lives of two of his brothers and a cousin.

"We haven't seen anything but catastrophes and fighting," he said, "so we always live with hope for a long-lasting peace."

MDT/AP

CHINA IS WILLING TO HELP AFGHANISTAN REBUILD, EU HOLDS TALKS

CHINA said yesterday its embassy remains open in Kabul and expressed a willingness to support its reconstruction.

Foreign Ministry spokesperson Hua Chunying did not answer explicitly when asked whether Beijing would recognize the Taliban as the new government but said that China would respect the choice of the Afghan people.

She noted the Taliban pledges to negotiate the establishment of an inclusive Islamic government and to ensure the safety of both Afghans and foreign missions. China, she added, hopes that would "ensure a smooth transition of the situation in Afghanistan."

Today, European Union foreign ministers will hold emergency talks to discuss the crisis in Af-

ghanistan, after the president fled and the Taliban seized control of the capital, Kabul, over the weekend.

EU foreign policy chief Josep Borrell said in a tweet yesterday that he decided to convene the extraordinary videoconference so the ministers can make "a first assessment" of developments.

Borrell says that "Afghanistan stands at a crossroad. Security and wellbeing of its citizens, as well as international security are at play."

European nations have been caught by surprise at the speed of the takeover. They've been evacuating embassies and leaving the strife-torn country in recent days. The EU has small diplomatic mission in Kabul. It's one of Afghanistan's biggest aid donors. MDT/AP



Khieu Samphan, former Khmer Rouge head of state, sits in a courtroom during a hearing at the U.N.-backed war crimes tribunal in Phnom Penh yesterday

CAMBODIA

Ex-Khmer Rouge official appeals genocide verdict

SOPHENG CHEANG & DAVID RISING, PHNOM PENH

THE last living leader from the inner circle of Cambodia's brutal Khmer Rouge regime launched his courtroom appeal yesterday, seeking to convince a long-running international tribunal to overturn his conviction on genocide charges.

Khieu Samphan, 90, was the former head of state for the Khmer Rouge, the radical communist regime that ruled Cambodia with an iron fist from 1975 to 1979 and was responsible for the deaths of an estimated 1.7 million people.

His defense team is seeking to overturn a 2018 verdict finding him guilty of genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes, questioning the evidence and arguing there were procedural mistakes.

Kong Sam Onn told the judges of the Supreme Court Chamber of the Extraordinary Chambers in the Courts of Cambodia, or ECCC, that his client had been given inadequate time to prepare an initial defense, and that the original panel failed to provide the grounds for its ruling in a timely fashion, among other things.

"It should be null and void, and so I am requesting the Supreme Court chamber to ... reverse the judgment," he said.

Khieu Samphan sat in a

chair behind his attorneys, wearing a mask in compliance with COVID-19 precautions and appearing to listen intently as they addressed the court. Kong Sam Onn said his client would address the chamber at the end of the four days of scheduled hearings.

Prosecutors in opening statements rejected the procedural arguments, while emphasizing the "totality" of the evidence against the defendant.

"Mr. Khieu Samphan fails to establish the assertion that underlies his entire appeal, that he knew nothing, saw nothing and heard nothing of the crimes for which he stands convicted," said prosecutor Chea Leang.

"In addition, the defendant, Mr. Khieu Samphan, fails to establish that his conduct does not make him responsible for those crimes and contrary to the appellant's assertions the evidence underlying his convictions is extensive, diverse and compelling."

Observers say it's unlikely that the conviction will be overturned, and even if it is, the former leader is already serving a life sentence after being convicted in 2014 of crimes against humanity connected with forced transfers and disappearances of masses of people. That conviction was upheld on appeal in 2016.

"The appeal hearing is quite important for both sides, the Cambodian victims

and the accused," said tribunal spokesman, Neth Pheaktra.

The verdict won't come until next year.

Under the leadership of the late Pol Pot, the Khmer Rouge sought to eliminate all traces of what it saw as corrupt bourgeois life, destroying most religious, financial and social institutions, and forcing millions out of cities to live in the countryside.

Dissent was usually met with death in the Khmer Rouge's notorious "killing fields" or elsewhere, while starvation, overwork and medical neglect took many more lives.

Only when an invasion by Vietnam finally drove the Khmer Rouge from power in 1979 did the magnitude of the killings become truly known.

Khieu Samphan's 2018 conviction was largely connected to crimes committed against Vietnamese and Cham minorities in Cambodia.

He was found not guilty of genocide against the Cham, a Muslim ethnic minority whose members had put up a small but futile resistance against the Khmer Rouge, for lack of evidence. But he was found guilty of genocide of the Vietnamese under the principle of joint criminal enterprise, under which individuals can be held responsible for the actions of a group to which they belong.

His crimes against hu-

manity conviction covered activities at work camps and cooperatives established by the Khmer Rouge. They included murder, extermination, deportation, enslavement, imprisonment, torture, persecution on political, religious and racial grounds, attacks on human dignity, forced marriages and rape.

He was "found to have encouraged, incited, and legitimized criminal policies and to have made a significant contribution to crimes committed" by the Khmer Rouge.

The breaches of the Geneva Convention governing war crimes included willful killing, torture and inhumane treatment.

During his trial, Khieu Samphan claimed the allegations against him were "Vietnamese propaganda" and said that while he had been aware of accusations of suffering under the Khmer Rouge, "the term murderer I categorically reject."

After being ousted from power in 1979, the Khmer Rouge waged guerrilla warfare for another two decades before disintegrating. Pol Pot died in the jungle in 1998, and on Christmas Eve that year, Khieu Samphan surrendered along with Nuon Chea, the movement's chief ideologue and its second-highest official.

Nuon Chea was convicted alongside Khieu Samphan in 2018 and died the following year.

The ECCC tribunal was established at Cambodia's behest to bring to justice the leaders of the Khmer Rouge during its time in power.

Since the first judges and prosecutors took up their duties in 2006, however, the court has only successfully convicted three people in prosecutions that have cost some \$300 million.

In addition to Nuon Chea and Khieu Samphan, the only other leader convicted was Kaing Guek Eav, also known as Duch, who as head of the Khmer Rouge prison system ran the infamous Tuol Sleng torture center in Phnom Penh. He died in 2020 while serving a life prison term for war crimes and crimes against humanity.

After the conviction of Khieu Samphan and Nuon Chea in 2018, the government of autocratic Prime Minister Hun Sen, himself a midlevel Khmer Rouge commander before defecting while the group was still in power, declared no more cases would go forward, saying they would cause instability. **MDT/AP**

this day in history

1998 CLINTON ADMITS LEWINSKY AFFAIR



President of the United States Bill Clinton has admitted having an inappropriate relationship with former White House intern Monica Lewinsky.

In a televised address Mr Clinton told the American people that he took full responsibility for his actions.

He said: "Indeed I did have a relationship with Ms Lewinsky that was not appropriate. In fact, it was wrong."

Aides close to the president now hope the confession will bring an end to the investigation into Mr Clinton's affairs, brought by independent prosecutor Kenneth Starr.

Mr Starr's four-year inquiry began as an investigation into land deals by Hillary and Bill Clinton when he was governor of Arkansas.

It moved onto his personal life when Mr Starr began to investigate allegations that Mr Clinton had had sexual relations with Monica Lewinsky and then lied about it under oath in a sexual harassment case brought by Paula Jones in 1994.

The president's confession follows months of denial. On 26 January this year, Mr Clinton categorically denied having sexual relations with Miss Lewinsky.

Appearing serious and contrite, Mr Clinton told the American people: "I misled people, including my wife. I deeply regret that."

He concluded: "This matter is between me, the two people I love most - my wife and my daughter - and our God."

He said he had not come clean earlier because he was embarrassed but he denied he had asked anyone to lie about the relationship.

He also criticised Mr Starr and the investigation, which so far has cost £25m.

On 6 August this year Ms Lewinsky told the jury that she had an 18-month sexual relationship with the President and that the pair had discussed ways of concealing the relationship.

She also presented one of her dresses as evidence, stating it had been stained with Mr Clinton's semen during one of their sexual encounters.

If it is proved that he lied he faces possible impeachment hearings on Capitol Hill.

Courtesy BBC News

IN CONTEXT

On 21 September President Clinton's Grand Jury testimony was released to the public.

On 9 December 1998 the House Judiciary Committee proposed four articles of impeachment against the president.

Ten days later - after a bitter debate between republicans and democrats - the House of Representatives voted to confirm the recommendation.

Bill Clinton became only the second president in American history to face such an indictment, but he refused to resign.

His trial began on 7 January 1999 and ended on 12 February when senators voted to acquit him of the impeachment charges of perjury and obstruction of justice.

MACAU'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

YOUR STARS

ARIES
Mar. 21-Apr. 19
 Today's skies plunge you into a world of fantastical thinking. The far-seeing Sagittarius moon spends the day out to sea with dream-infusing Neptune, creating a hazy, escapism prone headspace.

TAURUS
Apr. 20-May. 20
 It's hard to see your goals through the fog right now, Taurus. Rather than demand reality today, aim to loosen your grip and let your intuition come to the forefront.

GEMINI
May. 21-Jun. 21
 Today's skies may find you doing some deep-diving into ancient family history, as energetic Mars locks into a smooth alignment with authenticity-demanding Uranus.

CANCER
Jun. 22-Jul. 22
 The moon's presence in can-do Sagittarius gives you the energy and drive to apply yourself work-wise, yet Luna's dizzying square with dreamy Neptune can create a fog of fantasy around your thinking.

LEO
Jul. 23-Aug. 22
 Pleasure and playfulness reign supreme under Today's cosmic landscape. The moon's presence in optimistic Sagittarius encourages you to connect with joyful activities that boost your creative energy.

VIRGO
Aug. 23-Sep. 22
 Spend some time digging into your family foundations today. The moon's presence in ponderous Sagittarius has you reflecting on the past and how it's led to your current circumstances.

LIBRA
Sep. 23-Oct. 22
 It's hard to keep your feet planted on the ground today, Libra. Today's skies are delightfully disorienting, as the thoughtful Sagittarius moon squares off with dreamy Neptune.

SCORPIO
Oct. 23-Nov. 21
 What talents of yours have you been turning a blind eye towards? The universe is working to illuminate those skills you've placed on the back burner, as the moon floats through idealistic Sagittarius.

SAGITTARIUS
Nov. 22-Dec. 21
 Luna's dance with hypnotic Neptune and uplifting Jupiter creates a foggy overlay between past and present, imbuing the day with a sentimental, optimistic haze.

CAPRICORN
Dec. 22-Jan. 19
 Spending another day behind closed doors is ideal, Capricorn. Luna's presence in philosophic Sagittarius encourages you to look inward, catch up on rest, and restore your peace.

AQUARIUS
Jan. 20-Feb. 18
 The playful Sagittarius moon encourages you to reach out and be among friends today. Luna's dance with deceptive Neptune and hope-instilling Jupiter creates an idealistic, hazy day to drift peacefully through.

PISCES
Feb. 19-Mar. 20
 Luna's encounter with dreamy Neptune can lower energy levels and heighten sensitivity, so be mindful of over-extending yourself to your own detriment.

The Born Loser by Chip Sansom



SUDOKU

EASY

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

EASY+

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

MEDIUM

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

HARD

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

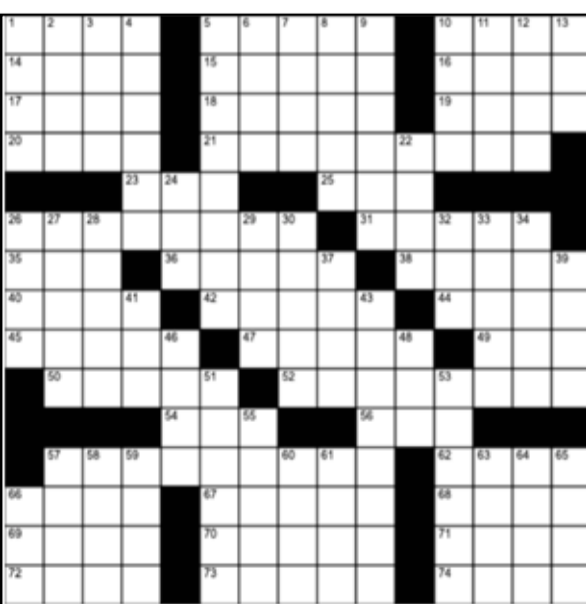
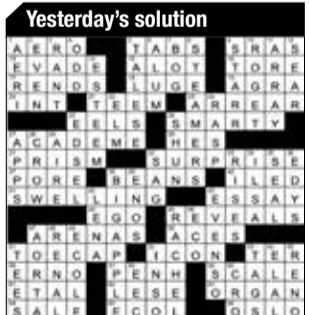
WEATHER

	MIN	MAX	CONDITION
CHINA			
Beijing	22	29	cloudy
Harbin	18	25	thunderstorms
Tianjin	25	32	rain
Urumqi	22	25	showers
Xi'an	26	35	cloudy
Lhasa	21	27	thunderstorms
Chengdu	26	33	rain
Chongqing	26	34	cloudy
Kunming	25	33	cloudy
Nanjing	20	27	cloudy
Shanghai	24	34	cloudy
Wuhan	24	30	overcast
Hangzhou	17	27	cloudy
Taipei	22	31	cloudy
Guangzhou	17	30	cloudy
Hong Kong	22	31	cloudy
WORLD			
Moscow	19	28	overcast
Frankfurt	11	22	rain
Paris	13	22	overcast
London	12	19	cloudy
New York	22	27	overcast

CROSSWORDS

ACROSS 1-Responsibility; 5- Iraqi port; 10- Polynesian carving; 14- Biblical gift bearers; 15- Gives a 9.8, say; 16- Summer coolers; 17- Capri, for one; 18- Spring sign; 19- Composition in verse; 20- Mai ____; 21- Neuron; 23- Tiny bit; 25- Baseball stat; 26- The study of forces in motion; 31- Commerce; 35- Aussie hopper; 36- City near Kobe; 38- ____ evil...; 40- Doing nothing; 42- Backs of feet; 44- Pious platitudes; 45- Minor, in law; 47- Family tree member; 49- Him, to Henri; 50- Russian revolutionary leader; 52- Disturbed; 54- Cattle call; 56- Maui memento; 57- Anticipate; 62- Fall feller; 66- Exile isle; 67- Japanese gateway; 68- Socialite Maxwell; 69- Classic autos; 70- Right-hand page; 71- Break; 72- Greek goddess of the earth; 73- Sallow; 74- Goes down;

DOWN: 1- Pass over; 2- Mission control gp.; 3- Wrinkly fruit; 4- Midday nap; 5- Wave threateningly; 6- Swiss river; 7- Agitate; 8- Actor Christopher; 9- Declare; 10- Record; 11- Golden calf, e.g.; 12- Ship stabilizer; 13- Belief; 22- Bugs, clunkers, and rides, e.g.; 24- Latin 101 word; 26- Faucet problem; 27- Warble; 28- Nick of "Cape Fear"; 29- Normandy city; 30- Loose coil of yarn; 32- Former nuclear agcy.; 33- Passed out; 34- Affection of sophisticates; 37- "Hard ____" (sailor's yell); 39- Auricular; 41- Ich bin ____ Berliner; 43- Kitchen servant; 46- Duration; 48- Before, of yore; 51- Cosa ____; 53- Edmonton team; 55- Siouan speakers; 57- Type of market; 58- Clarinet cousin; 59- Tabula ____; 60- Foot part; 61- Lo-cal; 63- Gen. Robert ____; 64- Helper; 65- Solid oils; 66- Energy unit;



Crossword puzzles provided by BestCrosswords.com

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

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



SELL INVEST RENT
 MORE INFO
 (853) 2835 2699

jml property
 卓雅物業
 since 1994
 hello@jmlproperty.com
 www.jmlproperty.com
 jmlmacau jmlproperty

FOR SALE

 Nam Long **HKD 4,888,000**
 Ref: 2108 6001 750 ft² 2 1

FOR SALE

 Nam Long **HKD 8,380,000**
 Ref: 1909 6006 1,404 ft² 4 2 1

Rain Dance Property
 "We dance until it's SOLD!"

 Traditional apartment **HKD 2,680,000**
 Ref: 2103 6001 788 ft² 2 1 1

AD

MACAU'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

AP PHOTO



ENTERTAINMENT

'FREE GUY' GIVES BOX OFFICE A LIFT, OPENING WITH \$28.4M

JAKE COYLE

FREE Guy, an action comedy starring Ryan Reynolds as a background character in a videogame, opened better than expected over the weekend, collecting an estimated \$28.4 million in ticket sales despite a marketplace challenged by COVID-19.

After a few weeks of declining audiences and underwhelming debuts amid the delta variant surge, "Free Guy" succeeded with an old-school formula: an original, star-fronted movie with good word-of-mouth playing only in theaters. The movie directed by Shawn Levy was made by the Walt Disney Co.-owned 20th Century Fox, with a theatrical release contractually stipulated for the roughly \$100 million production.

Playing in 4,165 North American theaters, "Free Guy" was expected to debut around \$20 million. Its surprisingly strong opening gave further proof to what some analysts have been saying throughout the year — hybrid releases that send new movies immediately onto streaming platforms can significantly harm ticket sales. The last two No. 1 movies — Warner Bros.' "The Suicide Squad" and Disney's "Jungle Cruise" — were launched simultaneously in theaters and homes.

But however movies are being released right now, box office conditions are far from ideal. The rise in U.S. coronavirus cases over the last month has corresponded with diminished ticket sales at theaters. Some cities, including New York and San Francisco, are preparing

to make vaccine passports required for entering movie theaters.

David A. Gross, who runs the movie consultancy Franchise Entertainment Research, estimates that new releases are selling about half the tickets they normally would.

"Since Memorial Day weekend, the domestic box office has been running at approx. 50% of 2019 levels, with several spikes from strong titles, but then returning to 50% of 2019," Gross said in an email. "Under normal conditions, 'Free Guy' would be opening 50% higher than this weekend's number — comfortably."

But the enthusiasm for "Free Guy" was enough to lead Reynolds to announce over the weekend that Disney wants a sequel. In the film, Reynolds' character, Guy, rea-

lizes he's a "non playable character" in a "Grand Theft Auto"-like game. It features co-stars Jodie Comer, Lil Rel Howery and Taika Waititi.

Reviews were good (82% fresh on Rotten Tomatoes), and a male-heavy audience gave "Free Guy" an "A" CinemaScore. (About 60% of moviegoers were male, Disney said.) "Free Guy" also added \$22.5 million internationally.

"Free Guy" is also the latest in a comeback for gaming-based movies. After decades of futility, Hollywood is increasingly finding success by mining videogames for intellectual property. Reynolds starred in one of the best performing videogame adaptations — 2019's "Pokémon: Detective Pikachu," which grossed \$432 million worldwide.

"Free Guy" will play exclusively in theaters for at least 45 days — and its strong performance through the weekend suggests it could buck the summer's typical trend of fast drop offs.

Last week's top film, "The Suicide Squad," slid steeply, dropping 70% in its second weekend. After its \$26.2 million debut, James Gunn's "Suicide Squad" redo pulled in just \$7.8 million for Warner Bros., bringing its two-week total to \$42.9 million. It's concurrently playing on HBO Max.

That film's tumble gave a few other releases more room at multiplexes. Sony Pictures' horror sequel "Don't Breathe 2" opened with \$10.6 million, in line with studio projections. While "Don't Breathe 2" debuted with less than half the opening of the 2016 original, the sequel was made with a modest budget of \$15 million.

MGM and United Artists' Aretha Franklin biopic "Respect," starring Jennifer Hudson, debuted with \$8.8 million. "Respect," which has drawn praise for Hudson's leading performance, also landed an "A" CinemaScore. Its audience was 66% female and nearly half of ticket buyers were Black.

Disney's "Jungle Cruise," starring Emily Blunt and Dwayne Johnson, landed in third place in its third weekend with \$9 million. Its worldwide total is \$154.3 million. It's also playing on Disney+ for an additional \$30.

Apple didn't report grosses for "CODA," one of the company's major movie acquisitions and one seen as a crowd-pleasing milestone in deaf representation of on screen. The film, starring deaf actors Marlee Matlin, Troy Kotsur and Daniel Durant, was a prize-winning sensation at the Sundance Film Festival in January, where Apple plunked down a festival-record \$25 million for the film. "CODA," which stands for child of a deaf adult, debuted simultaneously in theaters and on Apple TV+. **MDT/AP**

CORPORATE BITS

Grand Lisboa to present mooncakes from The 8



Grand Lisboa presents Michelin-starred mooncakes from The 8 in celebration of Mid-Autumn. This year, in its ongoing commitment to sustainability, Grand Lisboa has designed mooncake gift boxes that celebrate the traditions of Mid-Autumn, while also embracing the eco-friendly practices of today.

The four-piece "The 8 Mooncake with Jinhua Ham and Assorted Nuts" will be packed in a gift box that can be transformed into a multi-purpose

carrying case.

Dim Sum Head Chef Yah Wah Fai and his team from the hotel's Michelin 3-starred Cantonese restaurant — The 8 — will prepare the selections of homemade mooncakes: The 8 Mooncake with Double Egg Yolk and Lotus Seed Paste and The 8 Mooncake with Jinhua Ham and Assorted Nuts, the group announced in a statement. The chefs will also once again prepare its collection of sweet mini mooncakes: The 8 Bird's Nest and Custard Mini Mooncake.

Melco hosts F&B event with SMEs



Melco Resorts & Entertainment recently held the "To the Table by SMEs" F&B event as part of its "Knowing You, Knowing Us" campaign.

The campaign was developed to offer a communications platform for SMEs to develop a better understand-

ing of Melco's procurement requirements and standards, while enabling the Melco team to better understand local suppliers, their businesses, products and services.

During the event, Melco introduced its food safety

guidelines, hygiene standards and latest sustainability initiatives to attendees, and the company's supply chain, F&B and culinary teams were present to taste and experience products and services offered by participating local SMEs.

Donald Tateishi, senior vice president, Finance (Macau), said, "The event aims to enable direct dialogue between Melco and local SME suppliers. [...] We will continue providing educational initiatives to strengthen local SME organizations, equipping them to provide the best products and services to Melco and the broader industry."

Paralympics follow lead of Olympics: No fans during pandemic

STEPHEN WADE, TOKYO

ALL fans will be barred from the Paralympics in Japan because of the coronavirus pandemic, just as they were from the recently-completed Tokyo Olympics, organizers said yesterday.

There were a few exceptions made during the Olympics with some fans allowed in outlying areas away from Tokyo. This time, all fans will be barred except the possibility of some children attending a few unspecified events.

Organizers have also asked the public not to come out to view road events.

The decision was announced after a meeting with International Paralympic Committee president Andrew Parsons, organizing committee president Seiko Hashimoto, Tokyo Governor Yuriko Koike and Olympic Mi-

nister Tamayo Marukawa.

The Paralympics open on Aug. 24 with about 4,400 athletes, a far smaller event than the Olympics with 11,000 athletes. But the Paralympics come as new infections have accelerated in Tokyo, which may expose an athlete population that is more vulnerable to COVID-19.

Parsons, speaking at a news conference, said there was no room for complacency in the wake of the Olympics.

"In light of the current case numbers in Tokyo and wider Japan, everyone attending these games must be vigilant," Parsons said.

New infections in Tokyo tripled during the 17 days of the Olympics, although medical experts said the surge was not directly linked to the Tokyo Games. Rather, experts suggested an indirect effect as the public was distracted and lulled into a false sense of security that staging

the Games offered.

With the situation growing worse, Japanese Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga yesterday said a state of emergency in Tokyo and other areas will be extended until Sept. 12. The state of emergency has been in force since July 12 and was to end later this month.

The Paralympics end on Sept. 5.

"The surge in infections is reaching alarming record highs," Suga said after meeting with other government ministers.

On Friday, Tokyo logged 5,773 cases, a new high. On Sunday, the Japanese capital reported 4,295 cases. The rise in infections has severely strained the medical system. Experts say the situation is getting out of control and some call it "a disaster."

Japan has attributed 15,400 deaths to COVID-19.

Dr. Haruo Ozaki, president of



the Tokyo Medical Association, said in an interview with regional newspaper Tokyo Shimbun published Saturday that a significant number of people are still unvaccinated, and characterized the virus situation for the Paralympics as worse than it was during the Olympics.

Estimates suggest about 37% of the Japanese population has been fully vaccinated.

Ozaki called having no fans

"a minimum necessity" and attributed the surge to the delta variant.

He called holding the Paralympics "a political decision, but the judgment by the medial side is that it will be difficult."

"The Olympics," Ozaki added, "is a festival and might have affected the people in ways to loosen up and served as an indirect cause of rising cases." **MDT/AP**

合夥人 PARTNERS:
官樂怡 Rui José da Cunha °
山度士 Álvaro Rodrigues °
馬天龍 Nuno Sardinha da Mata °
趙魯 Zhao Lu °*
馬傑安 João Nogueira Marques

大律師 ASSOCIATES:
高文軒 Adelino Correia °
羅善齡 Zelina Rodrigues *
白秀蘭 Susana Batalha
馬潔冰 Maria João Marques
陶義德 António Isó de Azevedo
白穎怡 Iclia Berenguel
冼玲鳳 Mariana Afonso Esteves
馬秀文 Sofia Mendes Martins
飛嘉華 Carlos dos Santos Ferreira °
杜力信 Nelson de Azevedo
宋哲言 João Gonçalves Assunção
莫永誠 Rui Velez de Moura
安東尼 António Manuel dos Santos
巴慧雅 Vera Bastos
歐文傑 Miguel Evaristo
陳芷喬 Joana Chan
顏曉蓉 Teresa Xiaorong Yan
諾瑪莉 Maria Noras
康靜雅 Viviana Hong
梁淑嵐 Ana Leon
黃瀚賢 Frederico Vong

實習律師 TRAINEE LAWYERS:
張偉鴻 Cheong Wai Hong
陳健雄 Eurico Chan
吳霆鋒 Ng Teng Fong
戴博晴 Tai Pok Cheng
吳佩愉 Ng Pui U
法律專家 JURISTS:
羅成軒 José J. Rodrigues
斐彥德 Gonçalo Figueiredo
潘卡莉 Candice Pun
陳子健 Kimi Chan
伍福賢 Domingos Ng



To protect the health and safety of our Clients and Staff, we continue implementing prevention measures at the office entrance, as recommended by the local Authorities.

為了保護客戶和員工的健康和安全，我們將繼續按照本地政府的建議在辦公室入口處實施預防措施。

A: Av. da Praia Grande 759, 3-5 Floors Macau SAR, China
地址:澳門南灣大馬路759號3-5樓
Tel: (853) 2837 2642 / 2837 2623
Office hours: Mon-Thu: 9:30-13:00, 14:30-18:30
Fri: 9:30-13:00, 14:30-18:00
Sat: 9:00-13:00

WWW.CCADVOG.COM



OPINION

China Daily

Editorial, China Daily

MASKS ESSENTIAL TO CUT TRANSMISSION CHAINS

That every individual wears a mask in public is the first line of defense to cut the transmission channels for the novel coronavirus. The importance of wearing a face mask can never be overemphasized.

That explains why the National Health Commission has released new guidelines for wearing masks, which specify what kind of masks should be worn by those in higher-risk places and how ordinary residents should wear a mask.

Different from before, besides the mandatory requirement of wearing masks in enclosed venues, the latest guidelines require ordinary residents to wear a mask even in open spaces if there is a gathering. This is because the virus is constantly mutating and the Delta variant is much more transmissible than previous strains. It is quite likely that any mutation of the Delta variant will be even more transmissible and pose an even greater threat to public health.

That the wave of Delta cases has caught many countries off guard should serve as a reminder to China that its vigilance against the virus cannot be slackened.

The story of an old lady is a case in point to testify how effective masks can be in protecting people from being infected. This lady was infected and traveled from Nanjing, capital of East China's Jiangsu province, to Yangzhou, another city in the province. Although she passed the virus to many players at a mahjong parlor where the majority of those present did not wear masks, she did not pass the virus to anyone during her journey because all the passengers on her train and then the bus she took were wearing a mask.

The number of domestic cases detected has been on the decline since July 20 when this wave of Delta cases was first identified in Nanjing. The total number of local cases reported on Sunday was 24, and only in Jiangsu, Henan and Hunan provinces.

Hopefully, there will be no cases reported in those three provinces in a couple of weeks. Life and work in those districts which have been designated as high- and medium-level risk areas will then return to normal.

It should still be mandatory for residents to wear a mask in enclosed spaces and at open gatherings. People should err on the side of caution when the pandemic is still raging in many parts of the world and cases as well as asymptomatic carriers from abroad are reported on a daily basis.

Those working at customs or ports where the chance of being infected by someone carrying the virus from abroad or even from cargoes carrying the virus should strictly follow the rules and wear higher-level protection masks. As long as all follow the rules and wear masks as required, the country will be able to control the virus.

People in England who are fully vaccinated against COVID-19, or are under 18 years of age, will no longer have to self-isolate if they come into contact with someone who has tested positive for the coronavirus.

The change, which came into effect yesterday, has been welcomed by businesses, many of which have suffered staff shortages as a result of the requirement for people to spend 10 days in quarantine if they have been a contact of a positive case.

Nearly 77% of people in the U.K. aged over 18 have received

two jabs.

The change to the rules applies to those who received their final dose at least 14 days prior to contact with a positive case.

People are still advised, though not compelled, to take a PCR test if they find out they have been in contact with a positive case. People who test positive will still be legally required to self-isolate.

The other nations of the U.K. — Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland — are taking, or have taken, similar steps.

DEATH TOLL OF POWERFUL EARTHQUAKE IN HAITI SOARS TO 1,297

THE death toll from a 7.2-magnitude earthquake in Haiti climbed to 1,297 yesterday (Macau time), a day after the powerful temblor turned thousands of structures into rubble and set off frantic rescue efforts ahead of a potential deluge from an approaching storm.

Saturday's earthquake also left at least 5,700 people injured in the Caribbean nation, with thousands more displaced from their destroyed or damaged homes. Survivors in some areas were forced to wait out in the open amid oppressive heat for help from overloaded hospitals.

The devastation could soon worsen with the coming of Tropical Depression Grace, which is predicted to reach Haiti on Monday night. The U.S. National Hurricane Center warned that although Grace had weakened from tropical storm strength Sunday, it still posed a threat to bring heavy rain, flooding and landslides.

The earthquake struck the southwestern part of the hemisphere's poorest nation, almost razing some towns and triggering landslides that hampered rescue efforts in a country already struggling with the coronavirus pandemic, a presidential assassination and a wave of gang violence.

The epicenter was about 125 kilometers west of the capital of Port-au-Prince, the U.S. Geological Survey said, and aftershocks continued to jolt the area Sunday.

In the badly damaged coastal town of Les Cayes, Jennie Auguste lay on a flimsy foam mattress on the tarmac of the community's tiny airport waiting for anything — space at a hospital or a small plane like the ones ferrying the wounded to the capital. She suffered injuries in the chest, abdomen and arm when the roof collapsed at the store where she worked.

"There has been nothing. No help, nothing



from the government," Auguste's sister, Bertrande, said.

In scenes widespread across the region hit by the quake, families salvaged their few belongings and spent the night at an open-air football pitch. On Sunday, people lined up to buy what little was available: bananas, avocados and water at a local street market.

Some in the town praised God for surviving the earthquake, and many went to the cathedral, which appeared outwardly undamaged even if the priests' residence was destroyed.

"We only have Jesus now," said Johanne Dorcelly, whose house was destroyed. "If it wasn't for Jesus, I wouldn't be able to be here today."

Workers tore through rubble of collapsed buildings with heavy machinery, shovels and picks. After sundown, Les Cayes was darkened by intermittent blackouts, and many slept outside again, clutching small transistor radios tuned to news, terrified of a possible repetition of Saturday's strong aftershocks.

Prime Minister Ariel Henry has declared a one-month state of emergency for the whole country and said he was rushing aid to areas where towns were destroyed and hospitals were overwhelmed.

"The first convoys started following the coordination efforts of several

ministers mobilized at the level of the National Emergency Center," Henry told reporters Sunday. "We salute the dignity, the resilience effort of the victims and their ability to start over. From my observations, I deduce that Haitians want to live and progress. Let us unite to offer these people a living environment conducive to development."

UNICEF Executive Director Henrietta Fore said Sunday that humanitarian needs are acute, with many Haitians urgently needing health care, clean water and shelter. Children who have been separated from parents need protection, she said.

"Little more than a decade on, Haiti is reeling once again," Fore said in a statement. "And this disaster coincides with political instability, rising gang violence, alarmingly high rates of malnutrition among children, and the COVID-19 pandemic — for which Haiti has received just 500,000 vaccine doses, despite requiring far more."

The country of 11 million people received its first batch of U.S.-donated coronavirus vaccines only last month via a United Nations program for low-income countries.

Haiti's Office of Civil Protection said more than 7,000 homes were destroyed and nearly 5,000 damaged. Hospitals, schools, offices and churches were also affected. **MDT/AP**



Germany's defense minister says the country's military will airlift as many people as possible out of Afghanistan as long as it is possible. Annegret Kramp-Karrenbauer told reporters that three A400M military transport planes had left for Kabul yesterday. The defense minister said: "For the army it's clear: as long as possible — and this depends extremely on the support by the Americans — we will make as many rounds as we can out of Kabul." More on p7

Greece Yet more wildfires broke out yesterday, with two blazes triggering evacuation alerts for settlements to the southeast and northwest of the Greek capital. Fanned by strong winds, the first blaze, which broke out yesterday morning in the Keratea region southeast of Athens quickly burned through shrubland and was headed toward a national park in the Sounion area.



Canada Prime Minister Justin Trudeau triggered an election Sunday as he seeks to capitalize on Canada being one of the most fully vaccinated countries in the world. Trudeau announced the election would be held on Sept. 20 after visiting the governor general, who holds a mostly ceremonial position representing Britain's Queen Elizabeth II as head of state.



Zambia's veteran opposition leader Hakainde Hichilema has won the southern African country's presidency after taking more than 50% of the vote. Hichilema was declared president-elect by Esau Chulu, chairman of the Electoral Commission of Zambia, yesterday after results for 155 of the country's 156 constituencies were announced. President Edgar Lungu, 64, conceded defeat and said he would work for a "peaceful transfer of power."