

Sam's 2026 Policy Address includes big rises in social security allowances

Tony Wong

In his 2026 Policy Address presented yesterday, Chief Executive Sam Hou Fai announced large increases in four types of government allowances paid to eligible local residents, namely unemployment, sickness, marriage, and funeral allowances, with their increases ranging between 33.8 percent and 81.2 percent.

Sam delivered his second policy address to the Legislative Assembly (AL) yesterday afternoon. His 2026 Policy Address, presented during a plenary session in the legislature's hemicycle, lasted one and a half hours.

Earlier this year, the government raised all seven types of pensions and allowances paid out by the city's social security system, with their increases taking effect retroactively from January this year. Macau's social security system is run by the Social Security Fund (FSS).

The two types of pensions paid out by the fund comprise old-age pensions and disability pensions, while the five types of the fund's allowances comprise unemployment, sickness, birth, marriage, and funeral allowances.

While the birth allowance was increased by 20.0 percent, the other six types of pensions and allowances were raised by between 4.3 percent and 4.7 percent, retroactively effective from January this year.



Chief Executive Sam Hou Fai delivers his 2026 Policy Address in the hemicycle of the Legislative Assembly (AL) yesterday afternoon.

— Photo: Xinhua

According to Sam's 2026 Policy Address delivered yesterday, the birth allowance will remain unchanged at 6,500 patacas next year, while both the old-age pension and the disability pension will remain unchanged at

3,900 patacas per month next year. The birth allowance is a one-off payment.

In his policy address presented yesterday, Sam said that the government will increase its unemployment, sickness, marriage, and

funeral allowances next year.

Both the marriage allowance and the funeral allowance are one-off payments.

According to Sam's 2026 Policy Address, the unemployment allowance will be raised to 210 patacas per day next year, a 33.8 percent increase from the current 157 patacas per day.

The sickness allowance will be raised to 180 patacas per day for those whose treatment does not require hospitalisation, a 51.3 percent increase from the current 119 patacas per day, while the sickness allowance issued to those who have been hospitalised will be increased to 240 patacas per day, up 52.9 percent from the current 157 patacas per day.

According to the 2026 Policy Address, the marriage allowance will be raised to 4,000 patacas from the current 2,220 patacas, an 80.2 percent increase, while the funeral allowance will be increased to 5,200 patacas from the current 2,870 patacas, up 81.2 percent.

The annual subsidy for the elderly paid by the Social Welfare Bureau (IAS) will remain unchanged at 10,000 patacas next year.

Meanwhile, according to the 2026 Policy Address, the annual cash handouts will remain unchanged at 10,000 patacas for each eligible permanent local resident and 6,000 patacas for each eligible non-permanent local resident.

Continued on p.3

Merz, Macron vow to fight for European digital 'sovereignty'

BERLIN — German Chancellor Friedrich Merz and French President Emmanuel Macron vowed yesterday to help Europe catch up in the artificial intelligence (AI) race and unshackle the continent from a heavy reliance on US tech titans.

Speaking at a Berlin summit attended by regional tech firms, the leaders of Europe's biggest economies also pledged to ease rules for the digital sector that many firms complain are holding them back.

"Europe doesn't want to be the client of the big entrepreneurs or the big solutions being provided either from the US or from China, we clearly want to design our own solutions," Macron said, adding that this stance represented

"a refusal of being a vassal".

Merz called for Europe to "join forces and forge its own digital path — and this path must lead to digital sovereignty".

"Digital sovereignty has costs, but the costs of digital dependence are even higher," said the chancellor.

Merz said companies were pledging 12 billion euros (US\$13.9 billion) in investments for Europe's digital future at the summit, without providing further details.

Europe is responding to calls to blaze its own digital path as concerns escalate about US tech dominance at a time of increasingly uneasy ties with Washington under the "America First" administration of Donald Trump. — AFP

Cold shelter opens to public

Rui Pastorin

The Social Welfare Bureau (IAS) announced on their website last night that its cold shelter, upon the issuance of a Yellow or Orange* cold weather alert, has opened.

The shelter is located at 34 Rua Leste da Ilha Verde, Edifício do Bairro da Ilha Verde (青洲東街34號青洲坊大廈E1的避寒中心).

Late last night, the Meteorological and Geophysical Bureau (SMG) announced its Yellow cold weather alert, which denotes that it is "cold" in Macau. The local observatory noted that the temperature today is forecast to range between 12 °C and 17 °C. Members of the public, especially seniors, children and people with chronic illnesses were reminded to put on more clothes and stay warm.

For more information, one can visit the local observatory and IAS's websites.

At 1:05 a.m. today, the mercury stood at



This undated handout photo recently provided by the Social Welfare Bureau (IAS) shows the cold shelter in Edifício do Bairro da Ilha Verde.

13.8° C in Dr. Sun Yat Sen Municipal Park near the shelter. ■

*The orange cold weather alert signifies that it is "very cold" in the city.

Macau's most popular English-language newspaper — Your trustworthy source of news & views

The Macau Post Daily

Xi leading China's drive to enhance law-based governance

China reached a milestone in promoting public awareness of the rule of law as a new law stipulating legal safeguards and responsibilities took effect on November 1.

— Story on p. 7

Israel hails Trump Gaza plan after UN Security Council vote

Israel yesterday hailed Donald Trump's Gaza peace plan after its endorsement by the UN Security Council, as Hamas rejected the resolution which calls for the deployment of an international force in the Palestinian territory. — Story on p. 16

Sheinbaum says US anti-drug strikes on Mexican soil 'not going to happen'

President Donald Trump's threat of US military strikes against drug cartels inside Mexico is a non-starter, Mexican President Claudia Sheinbaum said yesterday.

— Story on p. 17

Tobacco usage rate drops 31 pct from 2012 to 2023



This undated handout photo provided by the Health Bureau (SSM) yesterday shows SSM Tobacco and Alcohol Prevention and Control Office officials promoting the SSM smoking cessation services and the "Tobacco Prevention and Control Law".

Ida Cheong

Since the "Tobacco Prevention and Control Law" took effect on January 1, 2012, the local government has continuously refined its tobacco control legislation, leading to a steady decline of over 31 percent in tobacco use rates in Macau between that year and 2023, according to an SSM statement yesterday.

The statement pointed out that the usage rate of tobacco and related products among the population aged 15 and above has dropped from 16.9 percent before the law's implementation to 11.6 percent in 2023, a relative decrease (5.316.9) of 31.4 percent, which met the WHO's target of a 30 percent relative reduction in tobacco use by 2025 ahead of schedule.

According to the statement, in response to the rising use of novel tobacco products like e-cigarettes and their public health risks, particularly to youth, the "Tobacco Prevention and Control Law" was revised in 2022 to comprehensively ban the manufacture, distribution, sale, import and export of e-cigarettes, and prohibit carrying them in and out of Macau, to eliminate their circulation.

Moreover, in observance of today's World Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD)* Day, the Health Bureau's (SSM) Tobacco and Alcohol Prevention and Control Office has dispatched its officials to promote the SSM smoking cessation services and the "Tobacco Prevention and Control Law" to smokers through various channels, aiming to encourage

smokers to quit for the sake of their own and families' health, and jointly build a smoke-free and healthy living environment, the statement said.

Smoking is a primary cause of COPD, the statement said, adding that COPD is a progressive and irreversible chronic respiratory disease primarily caused by harmful air pollutants like tobacco smoke, which ranks as the fourth leading cause of death globally, responsible for approximately 3.5 million deaths in 2021, accounting for about 5.0 percent of total global deaths. Therefore, quitting smoking is the most effective and cost-efficient method for preventing and treating COPD, according to the statement.

The statement noted that "Smoking Cessation Consultation Clinics" have been set up in various health centres since 2006, providing free services by dedicated healthcare professionals. From January to October this year, these clinics recorded some 1,970 patients.

World COPD Day, themed "Short of Breath, Think COPD" this year, aims to raise public awareness and understanding of the disease, was established by the WHO and the Global Initiative for Chronic Obstructive Lung Disease, the statement noted. ■

* COPD (Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease) is a common, preventable, and treatable disease that is characterised by persistent respiratory symptoms and airflow limitation that is not fully reversible. - DeepSeek

Customs seizes 5.2 kg of cigars, 100 kg of uninspected fruit in 3 days

Armindo Neves

The Macau Customs Service announced in a statement on Sunday night that its officers seized 5.2 kilogrammes of cigars and 100 kilogrammes of fruit within three days.

According to the statement, customs officers at the Barrier Gate intercepted on November 9 a cross-border vehicle in the inbound lane based on an alert from the crossborder "Risk Management System." An inspection revealed 100 kg of uninspected fruit being smuggled into Macau.

Meanwhile, last Tuesday, customs officers at the Barrier Gate outbound passenger inspection hall noticed a female visitor behaving suspiciously.

Upon inspection, the woman was found to have concealed 5.2 kg of cigars inside her personal belongings.

According to Macau's External Trade Law, both smugglers face a maximum fine of 100,000 patacas,

while the seized contraband has been confiscated. The case involving the fruit smuggler has been transferred to the Municipal Affairs Bureau (IAM) for further investigation and disposal of the fruit.

Customs seizes 78,120 cigs, 3 vapes, 205,432 cartridges

The Macau Customs Service announced in a statement on Thursday that its officers busted 11 smuggling cases within two days last week, seized 70,000 cigarettes, three vapes and 205,432 cartridges containing "vape juice".

According to the statement, based on intelligence, customs officers conducted inspections in the inbound passenger inspection area of the local airport targeting individuals arriving on the same flight from Japan. They discovered that seven of the passengers tried to smuggle a total of 140,000 e-cigarette cartridges containing "vape juice", hidden in their hand luggage, into Macau.

Last Tuesday, customs officers at the airport's inbound passenger inspection area screened arrivals from the same flight from Japan. The inspection revealed that four passengers had concealed a total of 65,432 e-cigarette cartridges and three vapes in their hand luggage. Additionally, three of these individuals were also found to be carrying a combined total of 78,120 cigarettes in their luggage, trying to smuggle them into Macau.

According to the statement, the 11 smugglers comprise mainland Chinese and foreign nationals, aged between 24 and 56. In accordance with the Tobacco Control Law, the Customs Service has referred the case to the Health Bureau (SSM) for follow-up action. Three of the individuals are additionally being prosecuted for violating the External Trade Law. The cigarette-smuggling trio each face a maximum fine of 100,000 patacas, while the seized contraband has been confiscated. ■



This handout photo shows the 100 kg of uninspected fruit seized from a smuggler's vehicle at the Barrier Gate on November 9. - Photos: Macau Customs Service



This handout photo shows cigarettes and e-cigarette cartridges seized by Macau Customs Service officers from passengers arriving from Japan at the Macau International Airport last Tuesday.

Police arrest beautician for theft by finding

Ada Lei

The Public Security Police (PSP) apprehended a female non-resident worker (NRW) from the Chinese mainland on Friday for theft by finding, PSP spokeswoman Lai In Hong said during a regular press conference yesterday.

Lai identified the suspect as a woman in her forties surnamed Chen who works as a beautician in Macau.

According to Lai, the Public Security Police (PSP) received a report on September 5 from a mainland woman who said that she had lost her wallet in a shop

near the Barrier Gate (關閘) checkpoint, which contained her ID card and 4,000 patacas in cash. Suspecting that someone had stolen it, she immediately reported the case to the police.

Through citywide CCTV surveillance footage, the police identified Chen as the suspect and summoned her to a police station on Friday. Under questioning, Chen admitted to stealing the wallet.

Chen has been transferred to the Public Prosecutions Office (MP), facing a charge of theft by finding. ■



This undated handout photo provided by the Public Security Police (PSP) yesterday shows a PSP officer escorting the theft-by-finding suspect into a police station.

Published since Aug 2004

- Director & Chief Editor - Harald Brüning
- Office Manager - Sally Chong
- Marketing Manager - Kevin Cheung King Lok
- Managing Editor - Maria Cheung Ut Meng
- Editors - Lesley Wells, Johnny Un
- Senior Reporters - Tony Wong, Rui Pastorin
- Reporters - Ada Lei, Khalel Vallo, William Chan, Ida Cheong, Armindo Neves
- Chief Graphic Designer - Simon Wang
- Graphic Designer - Colin Zhong
- Administrative Assistants - Ester Mak, Carl Leong
- Printed by Tipografia Welfare Lda., 82-86 Rua dos Pescadores
- Wire services - AFP, Xinhua
- Chatbots: Poe, DeepSeek

Macau POST

Macau Weather

DRY.
MAINLY CLOUDY.
LIGHT RAIN AT FIRST.
FORCE 4 TO 6 NORTHERLY
WINDS WITH GUSTS.
RELATIVE HUMIDITY WILL
RANGE BETWEEN 40% AND 75%.



13°C~17°C

Source: SMG

Macau Cultural Box Ltd. invites applications for the following position:

Graphic Design

- Familiar with Soft Ware/In-design/Photoshop/Pagemaking
- Good command of English and Chinese
- Work at night (10 pm - 04 am (Sun -Thu))
- Mature, hard working, independent, self-motivated

Interested parties are welcome to send their detailed resume with a recent photo and expected salary to joininmp@gmail.com. All personal data collected will be used for recruitment related purposes only.

Yonyou vows to provide 'premium' AI service for local businesses: VP



Yonyou Network Vice President Luo Xiaojiang (羅小江) addresses yesterday's annual user conference at the Galaxy International Convention Centre in Cotai.

— Photo: Armindo Neves

Armindo Neves

Yonyou Software (Macao) Co. Ltd hosted an annual user conference titled "Implementing AI in enterprises" yesterday, promising to provide "premium" AI service for local businesses.

According to Yonyou Network Vice President Luo Xiaojiang (羅小江), the company aims to integrate local enterprises' innovation needs and technical challenges into their product development, thereby delivering "superior" AI services.

The conference was held at the Galaxy International Convention Centre in Cotai.

Luo emphasised the critical role of AI and data governance in corporate transformation in the future, and he also said he hopes that via technical collaboration, Yonyou could support local businesses in sustaining their development amid the ongoing wave of digitalisation.

Michael Zhang Yong (張勇), the general manager of Yonyou Macau, introduced the company's business during the presentation, adding that the Yonyou has been established in Macau for 16 years, evolving from a traditional Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP*) provider into a digital platform, "continuously driving" the transformation of Macau enterprises.

Leveraging Yonyou's global presence of 230 branches and extensive overseas delivery experience, Zhang reaffirmed his company's commitment to supporting the diversified development of Macau's economy. Staying true to the founding principle of "In Macau, For Macau," Zhang said, the company is dedicated to assisting local enterprises in their digital upgrade.

Yonyou Space Chief Product Officer Zhang Jiawei (張嘉偉) gave some insights into the practical challenges encountered in implementing enterprise AI, such as large language models being able to handle certain tasks. However, he acknowledged that other aspects still require robust software engineering support.

He pointed out that "intelligent agents"*** should be regarded as

"employees" capable of proactively adapting to user needs, thereby driving corporate digital transformation. He said he hopes to collaboratively explore the potential of AI with all stakeholders to achieve effective integration into business scenarios.

Yonyou Macau Pre-sales Solutions Director Jimmy Gun (甘甜) said that AI is reshaping human resource management by automating processes such as recruitment, interviewing, and talent discovery through AI agents, significantly enhancing efficiency.

Gun cited examples like intelligent résumé screening and AI-structured interviews, which have shown over 92 percent consistency with assessments by senior interviewers. These AI systems can even act as personal assistants, coordinating internal role transfers and training, he said.

"The future of human-machine collaboration requires balancing efficiency and the human touch — letting AI handle transactional tasks while humans focus on empathetic communication and complex decision-making," Gun said.

According to Poe, Yonyou Software is a leading enterprise management software provider based in Beijing. Founded in 1988, the company specialises in providing innovative software and cloud services to support business management across various industries. ■

* Enterprise Resource Planning is a type of software system that organisations use to manage and integrate the essential parts of their business. Think of it as the central nervous system of a company, connecting all departments and their data into a single, unified system. — DeepSeek

** An intelligent agent is anything that can perceive its environment through sensors and act upon that environment through actuators to achieve goals. The fundamental idea, central to AI, is that of agency. An agent is "intelligent" based on its actions and its ability to achieve its goals, not necessarily because it uses complex reasoning. — DeepSeek

Sam's 2026 Policy Address includes big rises in social security allowances

Continued from p.1

No further changes to wealth-sharing programme's modus operandi

Speaking during a post-policy address press conference at Government Headquarters yesterday evening, Sam noted that the modus operandi of next year's wealth-sharing programme will remain unchanged from this year's programme, which is subject to a 183-day minimum stay requirement.

The government's annual wealth-sharing programme was revamped earlier this year, according to which the cash handouts are, in general, only issued to Macau residents who stayed here for at least 183 days in the previous year. However, those meeting certain criteria can apply for exemptions from the 183-day minimum stay requirement.

Sam also underlined during the press conference that for the time being the government will not consider the possibility of issuing part of the annual cash handouts in the form of consumption vouchers.

The press conference, which lasted one hour, was held after Sam delivered his policy address in the legislature's hemicycle.

Furthermore, according to the 2026 Policy Address, the government will again inject 7,000 patacas into the Central Provident Fund accounts of eligible permanent residents next year.

100 pct increase in waiver of real estate stamp duty

Meanwhile, according to the 2026 Policy Address, the government proposes a 100 percent increase in the threshold of the waiver of real estate stamp duty for eligible permanent local residents' purchase of a residential unit.

Government-proposed amend-



Chief Executive Sam Hou Fai addresses yesterday evening's post-policy press conference at Government Headquarters.

— Photo: Tony Wong

ments to real estate stamp duties must be passed by the legislature to take effect.

Currently, there is a waiver of real estate stamp duty for the first three million patacas of a residential unit's value for permanent local residents purchasing a residential property for the first time. This means that if a first-time residential property buyer purchases a home for less than or equal to three million patacas, they do not have to pay the real estate stamp duty. For properties exceeding this value, the stamp duty will apply to the amount over three million patacas.

According to the 2026 Policy Address, the government proposes to raise the threshold to six million patacas from the current three million patacas.

Public entities' mergers

Meanwhile, Sam also announced in his 2026 Policy

Address that the Land Registry and Mapping Bureau (DSCC) will be merged into the Lands and Urban Construction Bureau (DSSCU) next year. In addition, the government will also amend DSSCU's organisational structure formally defining it as the public entity tasked with the city's urban renewal campaign.

Sam also said that the Consumer Council (CC) and the Science and Technology Development Fund (FDCT) will be merged into the Economic and Technological Development Bureau (DSED).

In addition, Sam said, the Cultural Affairs Bureau (IC), the Sports Bureau (ID) and the Cultural Development Fund will be merged into a new public entity next year.

Meanwhile, the government yesterday also announced its 2026 budget bill, which expects receipts of 118.8 billion patacas and outlays of 113.5 billion patacas. ■

Police nab mainlander for reporting false theft case

Ada Lei

A man from the Chinese mainland has been arrested for falsely reporting a theft to the police, Judiciary Police (PJ) spokesman Cheong Siu Keong said during a regular press conference yesterday.

Cheong identified the suspect as a 32-year-old driver surnamed Zhao.

According to Cheong, the police received a report on Sunday from Zhao, who claimed that after checking into a hotel guestroom in Cotai that day, he had put HK\$900,000 in chips and HK\$300,000 in cash, which he said he had won while gambling that morning, in a drawer in the room. Zhao told the police that the money had vanished, suspecting that someone had stolen it.

Cheong noted that the

details provided by Zhao were inconsistent with the facts. The police discovered that Zhao had no record of winning any money, and had actually lost HK\$1.1 million while gambling on Sunday morning. Cheong added that the hotel's surveillance footage confirmed that, during the time of the incident, only Zhao entered and exited the room, with no signs of anyone else being involved.

Cheong said that Zhao was later summoned to a police station. Under questioning, Zhao told the police that he had borrowed HK\$1.1 million from friends and family, falsely claiming it was for business purposes. In fact, he had gambled away all the money. Unable to explain the missing funds to his friends and family, he fabricated the story in an attempt to conceal the truth.

Zhao has been transferred to the Public Prosecutions Office (MP), facing a charge of reporting a false case to the police. ■



Judiciary Police (PJ) spokesman Cheong Siu Keong looks on during yesterday's regular press conference.

— Photo: Ada Lei



Macau artist's exhibition depicts soul swapping with family cat

Rui Pastorin

If a sibling or loved one woke up one day to find that they have swapped souls with a family cat, what would life look like? Local artist Josie Ip (葉小喬) answers that question through the creation of a series of artworks depicting the lives of siblings as they suddenly find that their older brother "Koko" and "Mio", the family cat, have somehow swapped souls.

Showcased in an illustration exhibition titled "Swapped: My Brother's Life as a Cat" that kicked off last week, it features a series of 35 colourful digital drawings presented at 10 Fantasia Gallery's Room C03. Upon entering, exhibitiongoers will be introduced to the characters involved in the works, namely three siblings and the family cat, as well as the situations that they find themselves in before and after the swap occurred. Ip reimagines and draws moments from commuting and scenes of working in an office to glimpses of life and interactions between the characters as they go about their days.

Aside from the digital drawings, gallerygoers will also find a series of captioned sketches on paper throughout the venue, as well as items like tote bags, notebooks and postcards featuring the characters.

Regarding the artist's explanation for how the soul swapping happened, a recent statement displayed at the gallery notes that it simply occurred after a night of heavy drinking, with "Koko", the 27-year-old eldest brother, "accidentally" swapping souls with the four-year-old family cat. "What follows is a series of funny, heartwarming and down-to-earth episodes that explore their family life from a whole new perspective", according to the statement, with a separate statement on the 10 Fantasia website adding that some moments may also prove relatable to viewers.

The exhibition is curated by Macau-based artist and illustrator Wong Kin Tong, who has showcased his works nationally and internationally, the statement said. Artist Ip, meanwhile, has a passion for cross-disciplinary creation, which she shows through her works including illustration, animation and installations, the statement said. Her works are described as "combining warmth and humour drawn from everyday life with a touch of imagination", according to the statement.

Ip graduated from the Guangzhou Academy of Fine Arts, majoring in Environmental Art Design. She directed her first "dark-themed animation" titled "Inheritance" in 2023 after joining the Local View Power programme, which is organised

by the Cultural Affairs Bureau (IC) and supports Macau's filmmakers. It debuted in 2007.

Members of the public may admire the works in the free-admission exhibition until December 23. The gallery is located on Calçada da Igreja de S. Lázaro (瘋堂斜巷) and is open from Tuesdays to Sundays from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. It is closed on Mondays.

For more details on the events and exhibitions at 10 Fantasia gallery, one can visit its website and its Facebook page.



-Photos: Rui Pastorin

Taipa market features 11 local creative brands

Ida Cheong

The “Macao Chill Market” is being held in front of the area adjacent to Taipa Municipal Market for three months, featuring 11 distinctive local cultural and creative brands, including handmade crafts, original designs, and eco-friendly products.

The outdoor market will end on December 28.

The three-month event, organised by the Macao Youth Development Service Centre (YDS), holds themed activity days and music performances.

The owner of local brand Chillin Family surnamed Wan told the *Post* yesterday that she has participated in other local craft fairs, adding that, compared to other local fairs, the Macao Chill Market has attracted more casual browsers, but their spending power has met expectations, and businesses have achieved their intended targets so far.

Wan noted she believes that the government should organise more such events to increase exposure for local IPs*, adding that the Taipa location was better than expected, and she was willing to participate again in the future.

Moreover, Wan suggested that the fair dates be concentrated on Fridays, Saturdays and



Customers browse the booths at the Macao Chill Market near Taipa Municipal Market yesterday. — Photos: Ida Cheong



The owner, surnamed Wan, of local brand Chillin Family, poses during yesterday's interview with the *Post* at the Macao Chill Market near Taipa Municipal Market.

Sundays, as foot traffic is lower on weekdays, allowing resources to be focused on better results.

Ieong Hoi Kei, a salesman from local brand Rikka's told the *Post* that the Taipa Fair, which lasts three months longer than previous fairs that only went on for a few days, makes it possible to attract tourists from around the world.

Ieong noted that both foot traffic and business have exceeded expectations to date,

and she recommended that the organisers and the government enhance online promotion efforts, while also hoping to attract more local customers.

According to TDM's webpage, YDS Deputy General Director Cheong Ka Man said in a speech during the opening ceremony that the market was a bridge to inject new and young vitality into the Taipa Municipal Market, leading residents and tourist to experience the traditional

and creative local culture at the same time.

The “Macao Chill Market” opening ceremony was held on September 29. ■

**Intellectual Property (IP) refers to creations of the human mind. Unlike physical property (like a house or a car), IP is intangible and includes inventions, artistic works, designs, symbols, names, and images used in commerce. — DeepSeek*

‘Renowned in Business – Macao Merchants in Historical Archives’ exhibition opens



This handout photo provided by the Cultural Affairs Bureau (IC) on Monday shows IC President Deland Leong Wai Man (centre), Vice-President of the Board of Directors of the Macao Chamber of Commerce Frederico Ma Chi Ngai (left), and Cultural Development Consultative Committee member Ieng Weng Fat posing during that day's inauguration of the exhibition ‘Renowned in Business – Macao Merchants in Historical Archives’ at the Archives of Macao's gallery on Avenida do Conselheiro Ferreira de Almeida

Khalel Vallo

The Archives of Macao opened its “Renowned in Business – Macao Merchants in Historical Archives” exhibition on Monday, presenting documents that illustrate the development of Macau's commercial sector over the past century, according to a statement provided by the Cultural Affairs Bureau (IC) on Monday.

According to the statement, the exhibition was inaugurated at the archives' gallery and officiated by IC President Deland Leong Wai Man, Vice-President of the Board of Directors of the Macao Chamber of Commerce (ACM) Frederico Ma Chi Ngai, and Cultural Development Consultative Committee member Ieng Weng Fat.

The statement underlined that throughout Macau's history, commerce has played a central role in shaping the city's socio-economic landscape.

Beyond its function as an economic engine, commerce has also served as a conduit for cultural exchange and is a reflection of broader historical changes, the statement said, adding that by examining the evolution of Macau's merchant community,

visitors can gain insight into the social development of the city.

The Archives of Macao aims to continue its mandate to collect, preserve and study archival materials of historical value, striving to contribute to research on Macau's history, modern and contemporary Chinese history and Sino-foreign relations, the statement added.

This exhibition presents selected archival materials related to leading merchants from modern Macau, using these documents as the foundation for recounting their stories, according to the statement, pointing out that the display highlights their influence on the city's commercial growth and offers a deeper understanding of Macau's economic transformation.

“Renowned in Business – Macao Merchants in Historical Archives” will run until April 26 next year. The exhibition is open daily from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., including public holidays, but closed on Mondays. Admission is free, and exhibitiongoers may view the exhibition at the Archives of Macao on Avenida do Conselheiro Ferreira de Almeida.

A photo feature about the exhibition will be published on our Page 4 next week. ■

Macau Jazz Week 2025 to kick off next month

Khalel Vallo

According to a statement provided by the Macau Jazz Promotion Association (MJPA) yesterday, Macau Jazz Week 2025 returns next month with international headliners, literature-themed concerts, talks, workshops, and local band showcases, aiming to continue its role in promoting jazz development in the city.

Debuting in 2012, the annual Macau Jazz Week is hosted by MJPA and invites local and visiting musicians for a programme blending performances, workshops, and community engagement, the statement noted.

This year's theme, “Culture, Literature, and Music,” will feature Malaysian pianist Tay Cher Siang and pianist-composer YuYing Hsu from China's Taiwan region, both known for works that merge musical style with cultural depth, the statement said, adding that the opening event on December 9 will present a workshop and a jam session led by Tay's “WVC Trio”, joined by Malaysian vocalist Junji Delfino.

According to the statement, the session aims to introduce local audiences to improvisation, a core element of jazz, with the objective of providing learning opportunities for local musicians.

On December 10, Tay is slated to perform his project “Listen to Wind Sing,” which combines readings from Japanese writer Haruki Murakami's* works with original compositions and jazz pieces referenced by the author, the statement pointed out.

Meanwhile, the performance will feature members of the WVC Trio, Delfino, and Malaysian Chinese writer Li Zishu, who will read Murakami's text in Putonghua, the statement said, adding that Tay will also host a talk on the relationship between jazz and literature.

Moreover, Hsu's programme will follow the day after, the statement said, titled “The Creative World of YuYing Hsu”.

According to the statement, Hsu will perform with Japanese bassist Takashi Sugawa and Taiwan-based French-German drummer Gabriel Amadeus Hahn, presenting original works, adding that she will also hold a pre-concert talk at the Macau Cultural Centre (CCM) in Nape.

With literary crossover performances, international collaborations, and expanded local participation, Macau Jazz Week 2025 aims to deepen public engagement with jazz

and strengthen Macau's cultural landscape, the statement noted.

The opening event is slated for 7 p.m. on December 9, with free admission, at the Sifang Music and Arts Association's 2nd floor at 121A Avenida do Almirante Lacerda.

The talk themed “Listen to Wind Sing” will take place at 6 p.m. on December 10, with free admission to CCM's Black Box I, but an admission fee of 160 patacas for the performance at 7:45 p.m. in the Small Auditorium.

Meanwhile, “The Creative World of YuYing Hsu” will take place on December 12 at CCM as well, with the same admission price. The tickets are available via macauticket.com.

In addition, a “Macau Jazz New Forces Concert” will take place on December 12 at CCM's Small Auditorium at 7:45 p.m., admission set at 120 patacas, available via macau-jazz.org. ■

**Haruki Murakami, 76, is a Japanese writer. Throughout his career, his novels, essays, and short stories have been best-sellers in Japan and internationally, with his work translated into 50 languages and having sold millions of copies outside Japan. Some of his notable works include the novels Norwegian Wood (1987) and The Wind-Up Bird Chronicle (1994–95). — DeepSeek*



This poster provided by the Macau Jazz Promotion Association (MJPA) yesterday promotes the upcoming Macau Jazz Week 2025, slated to take place next month.

Macao sprinter Loi makes historic final at National Games

GUANGZHOU – Loi Im Lan made history at the 15th National Games on Monday night, becoming the first sprinter from Macao to qualify for the women's 100m final.

Despite a seventh-place finish, her presence in the race has marked a milestone for Macao athletics.

"I came here to show what's possible for Macao," Loi, 27, said after the race. "The time wasn't my best, but it was about more than time."

Though not fully satisfied with her performance in the final, attributing it to muscle fatigue, Loi sees it as a crucial learning experience.

"The semifinal was good, but I got too tense over the last 10 meters because I was so desperate to make the final," she noted. "It's a lesson."

What makes Loi's achievement all the more remarkable is that she juggles elite sprinting with a doctorate in clinical medicine at Jinan University.

Her life is filled with routines: lectures in the morning, training in the afternoon, and lab work at night. She expressed her gratitude to the university for coordinating the schedule, allowing her to train in the afternoon.

"I chose to continue my studies partly to extend my athletic career," she explained.



At the 15th National Games, Macao's Loi Im Lan (left) does her best in Guangzhou on Monday night, breaking her Macao record in the women's 100-meter heats and finishing seventh in the final, marking the best-ever result for a Macao sprinter in the history of the National Games. – Xinhua

"Once I graduate, I'll face immediate career pressure. Being a student gives me space to pursue my passion for sport."

This was Loi's second National Games appearance. At the previous edition in Shaanxi, she had failed to make the 100m

final, struggling with technical changes.

"The technique was completely unfamiliar to me then," she recalled. "I understood the concept, but couldn't execute it under pressure. My coaches worked with me one-on-one for months."

"Now, I'd say it's about 70 percent mastered, but there's still more work to do with my coach," she added.

Loi's breakthrough came thanks to persistent training with the Chinese mainland's elite sprinters in Guangdong.

"Training with the Guangdong team showed me the level I needed to reach," she said. "Their technical precision and power... I realized catching up would require full commitment."

Even during the Games, Loi's academic responsibilities were never far away. She remained in contact with her research team, juggling race preparation with academic work.

As the first Macao female athlete to reach the 100-meter final, Loi carries the hopes of a growing athletics community.

"If I can reach the final, younger Macao athletes can do it as well," she said. "They need to come to the mainland for training, and not be afraid to compete at this level. If we train hard and keep believing, we can compete on this stage."

Now Loi's focus shifts to the next challenge. "I'm not rushing. As for the Asian Games next year, I'll be better prepared," she said with determination. "There's more to achieve." (More on pages 18 & 20)

– Xinhua

Tap Siac Craft Market in Autumn to kick off tomorrow

Rui Pastorin

The Tap Siac Craft Market in Autumn starts tomorrow, being set to feature over 200 handicraft and creative gastronomy stalls, 47 music performances, and 63 creative handicraft workshops throughout its run.

Held in Praça do Tap Siac, the fair will first be held from tomorrow through Sunday and again from November 27 to 30. Throughout its run this week and the next, the market will operate from 5 p.m. to 10 p.m. on Thursdays and Fridays and from 3 p.m. to 10 p.m. at weekends.

According to a statement by the Cultural Affairs Bureau (IC) on Monday, stalls will be run by "cultural and creative practitioners" from the Chinese mainland, Macao, Hong Kong, China's Taiwan region, Japan, Malaysia, and South Korea, selling products ranging from handicrafts to daily necessities.

Moreover, there will be variety of singers from Macau, the Chinese mainland

and Hong Kong. Tomorrow's opening ceremony will feature the mainland's KURO (梁君諾), who the statement said is known for his "metacore" vocals and "Gentle Rocker" image, as guest performer. When he was 18, the singer-songwriter won second prize in the Global Cantonese Singing Contest. In 2013, he performed in The Voice of China, with his Cantonese song "Guilty Mind" garnering attention and now having over 200 million views across platforms.

Regarding the creative handicraft workshops, the craft market website notes that it will feature everything from creating miniature models to jewellery and other accessories. The IC statement reminded applicants to arrive on time, with latecomers to be replaced by on-site applicants on the waiting list and will not be refunded.

One can find more details by visiting www.craftmarket.gov.mo, the "Macao Craft Market" Facebook page or the IC website on www.icm.gov.mo. ■



This photo provided by the Cultural Affairs Bureau (IC) on Monday shows an undated file photo of the Tap Siac Craft Market.

Retracting Takaichi's erroneous remarks first step for Japan to correct its mistake

China Daily Editorial

For Japan, a nation with its recent history of aggression, how it navigates the ramifications of its historical wrongdoings is crucial for its relations with neighboring countries. How Japan views its past decides its future.

Historical memory plays a pivotal role in shaping contemporary relations in East Asia. The legacy of Japan's aggression since the end of the 19th century, particularly its war of aggression against China and other neighboring countries during World War II, continues to cast a long shadow over Japan's ties with its neighbors. The scars of its aggression are deeply embedded in the consciousness of people in China and elsewhere in Asia.

As such, Japan's perception and portrayal of its history are not merely academic or domestic issues, they are central to its diplomatic engagements in the region. A correct perception of history should therefore serve as the foundation for Japan's relations with its neighbors.

But Japanese Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi's provocative and dangerous remarks on the Taiwan question, her suggestion that Japan may revise its decades-old three nonnuclear principles, as well as her aggressive comment on Japan's territorial disputes with the Republic of Korea, reflect the wrong perception of history that some Japanese politicians harbor.

China therefore had every reason to lodge a strong protest at her remarks during the meeting between visiting director-general of the Asian and Oceanian Affairs Bureau of Japan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Masaaki Kanai, and his Chinese counterpart Liu Jinsong in Beijing yesterday.

As Liu noted, Takaichi's fallacies seriously violate international law and the basic norms governing international relations, severely undermine the postwar international order, and seriously contravene the one-China principle and the spirit of the four political documents between China and Japan.

The nature and impact of her remarks were extremely egregious. The series of moves China has taken in response are fully justified. The Japanese side must take the blame for all the trouble that is of its own making.

There is no room whatsoever for ambiguity or misinterpretation; whichever political party or person is in power in Japan, they must always abide by the commitments made to Beijing in the four political documents that are the foundation for diplomatic relations.

China has therefore solemnly urged Takaichi to retract her erroneous, provocative and dangerous statements, cease creating trouble on China-related issues and take concrete actions to acknowledge and correct her mistakes.

Meanwhile, Tokyo should face up to the truths of history. With a right perception of its past aggression, Japan would understand how alarming its moves to change its "pacifist" Constitution and remilitarize are to its neighbors.

The geopolitical dynamics of the Cold War era significantly influenced the international handling of Japan's war crimes. As tensions escalated, the strategic importance of Japan as a key ally of the United States overshadowed efforts to address Japan as a perpetrator of a large-scale war of aggression against countries in Asia. This made it difficult to press Japan to deeply reflect on its aggression and war crimes. This geopolitical calculus led to a more lenient approach toward Japan than was merited, complicating efforts to get it to take full accountability for its atrocities and thus hindering reconciliation with its neighbors.

Tokyo should draw the right lessons from history. Its "normalization" is not based on its revival as a military power, but on its unflinchingly confronting its past. Japan's true integration into the regional family will not start until it accepts accountability for its historical aggression and recognizes that its remilitarization will only bring further woes to itself.

– Courtesy of China Daily

Xi leading China's drive to enhance law-based governance

Analysis

BEIJING — China reached a milestone in promoting public awareness of the rule of law as a new law stipulating legal safeguards and responsibilities took effect on November 1.

The law on publicity and education on the rule of law, which highlights lifelong legal education for citizens, is designed to consolidate the social foundation for comprehensively advancing law-based governance and promote the building of a socialist country under the rule of law at a higher level.

It incorporates "Xi Jinping Thought on the Rule of Law" into national legal texts for the first time, an important step that strengthens the foundation for advancing law-based governance.

China's rule-of-law process entered a new chapter in 2020, when the Communist Party of China (CPC) convened its first-ever central conference on the rule of law, formally establishing Xi Jinping Thought on the Rule of Law as the guiding philosophy in this field. This marked a historic milestone in the long-term goal of building a socialist rule-of-law country.

Since the 18th CPC National Congress, Xi, general secretary of the CPC Central Committee, has put forward a series of new concepts, ideas and strategies that have shaped China's approach to law-based governance.

These ideas of Xi, also Chinese president and chairman of the Central Military Commission, provide answers to key questions such as why law-based governance in all respects should be pursued in the new era and how to achieve it, offering fundamental guidance for the steady and long-term advancement of law-based governance in China.

Xi's thought has been driving the practice of the rule of law forward in the new era, laying a solid foundation for continuing the two miracles of rapid economic growth and long-term social stability.

TAKING THE LEAD

From Hebei and Fujian to Zhejiang and Shanghai, and from advancing the rule of law at the county level to municipal and provincial levels, Xi has consistently demonstrated a steadfast



President Xi Jinping (center), also general secretary of the Communist Party of China (CPC) Central Committee and chairman of the Central Military Commission, sits with villagers around a firepit to discuss all-around rural revitalisation at a drum tower while visiting the Zhaoxing Dong village in Liping county of the Qiandongnan Miao and Dong Autonomous Prefecture, southwestern Guizhou province, on March 17, 2025. — Xinhua

commitment to upholding and practicing the rule of law throughout his local governance experience.

In March 2018, Xi became the first Chinese president to take the oath of office in front of the Constitution, underscoring his commitment to governing the country in accordance with the Constitution and the law.

Over the past 10-plus years, Xi has delivered numerous important speeches, given key instructions, and personally led efforts to solve major issues related to comprehensive law-based governance.

Under his guidance, a series of national plans, such as the plan to build the rule of law in China (2020-2025) and guidelines for building a law-based government and law-based society, have provided a blueprint for advancing law-based governance.

In October 2025, the fourth plenary session of the 20th CPC Central Committee adopted the recommendations for formulating the 15th Five-Year Plan. The key document highlights the significant role of the rule of law in China's modernization endeavors and the realization of national rejuvenation, calling for stronger mechanisms for resolving administrative disputes and accelerating the development of foreign-related legal system and capabilities.

SERVING DEVELOPMENT, OPENING UP

Xi views the rule of law as essential for sustaining high-quality development. The impact of recent efforts in advancing law-based governance has been visible across multiple sectors.

After the private sector promotion law came into effect in May, China's Supreme People's Court soon applied it in a landmark case, ordering a government department to compensate a private enterprise more than 8 million yuan. The swift ruling was widely welcomed by private businesses, which viewed it as a sign of stronger legal protection.

In the face of profound changes unseen in a century continuing to unfold in the world, Xi has stressed better leveraging the rule of law in consolidating foundations, stabilizing expectations, and serving long-term development as the country shoulders arduous tasks of reform, development and stability, and its opening up to the outside world further advances in depth.

Xi has long emphasized legal safeguards in economic affairs. When he was Party secretary of Zhejiang Province, he led a delegation of lawyers to Hong Kong and Macao in 2005 to boost legal cooperation and support business activities.

Under Xi's leadership, legislation has moved in step with the needs of China's evolving economy. Laws have been introduced or revised to support rural revitalization, ensure fair competition, and regulate emerging industries.

Xi has emphasized the need to define the boundaries of government power through law, standardize administrative procedures, and protect the property rights and legitimate rights and interests of all market entities equally in accordance with the law.

Reform and rule-of-law have formed a synergy to lead comprehensive reform and to promote law-based governance of the country in all respects.

Xi personally planned, deployed and promoted the establishment of the Hainan Free Trade Port, a major reform and opening up initiative. The port is preparing for island-wide special customs operations on December 18.

The practice of rule of law is evident through the development process of the port, from its foundational legislation to the implementation of regulations on streamlined approval and foreign investment.

China's foreign-related legal work has also advanced in tandem with the country's opening up.

The country has formulated and revised key laws in the area, such as Foreign Investment Law, Law on Arbitration, and Maritime Law, and strengthened judicial cooperation with other countries. It is building international commercial courts of high standards to protect the lawful rights and interests of both Chinese and foreign parties on equal footing.

By the end of 2024, Chinese law firms had established 207 overseas branches in 37 countries and regions, and Chinese courts were handling tens of thousands of maritime cases each year, with more and more foreign parties choosing to litigate in China.

FACILITATING SOUND GOVERNANCE

During a 2019 visit to a legislative outreach office set up by the Legislative Affairs Commission of the National People's Congress (NPC) Standing Committee in Shanghai's Hongqiao Subdistrict, Xi spoke with residents who were offering feedback on draft laws.

"People's democracy is a whole-process democracy, in which all major legislative decisions are made in accordance with procedures, through democratic consultation, and via scientific and democratic decision-making," Xi said.

As of August 2025, the Legislative Affairs Commission of the NPC Standing Committee had established 54 such outreach offices across the country, and there were more than 7,800 such offices established by provincial or municipal legislatures.

China's legal system continues to expand and mature, with 310 laws, over 600 administrative regulations, and more than 14,000 local regulations currently in force.

The improvement of China's governance system has been closely tied to progress in the legal field. In April this year, lawmakers reviewed the draft of China's first-ever environmental code, marking steady progress toward consolidating environmental legislation into a unified legal framework.

The judiciary also plays a crucial role in safeguarding fairness and social stability. China continues to combat crimes such as gang-related offenses while expanding public legal services to ensure accessibility in both urban and rural areas.

— Xinhua

Premier Li says determination to develop mutually beneficial cooperation with Russia consistent

MOSCOW — Premier Li Qiang said yesterday that China's determination and position to develop mutually beneficial cooperation with Russia have always been consistent.

He made the remarks in talks with Russian President Vladimir Putin in the Kremlin.

Li first conveyed Chinese President Xi Jinping's cordial greetings and best wishes to President Putin. He noted that under the strategic guidance of the two

heads of state, the China-Russia comprehensive strategic partnership of coordination for a new era has maintained operation at a high level.

Since the beginning of this year, President Xi and President Putin have met twice, pointing out the direction for the further development of China-Russia relations, Li said.

In the face of a volatile international situation, he added, China stands ready to work with

Russia to uphold the original aspiration of eternal friendship, enhance alignment of development strategies, deepen cooperation in various fields, achieve more practical results, so as to better serve the development and rejuvenation of the two countries.

China is willing to further enhance the resilience of cooperation with Russia, consolidate and maintain the steady development momentum of bilateral cooperation,

the premier said.

He urged both sides to jointly host new China-Russia national-level theme years well, leverage mutually beneficial policies, such as visa-free access, to serve the public interest, promote better mutual understanding and closer ties between the peoples of the two countries, and consolidate the foundation of people-to-people friendship in bilateral relations.

China is willing to continue

to work closely with Russia to implement the outcomes of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) Tianjin Summit, carry forward the Shanghai Spirit, deepen unity and cooperation to create a model for practicing the Global Governance Initiative, promote high-quality development of the SCO, and make greater contributions to peace and development in the region and the world at large, the premier said. — Xinhua

The Government of the Macao Special Administrative Region

(TRANSLATED VERSION)

Highlights of 2026 Policy Address

ACCELERATE REFORMS AND EFFICIENCY WITH KEEN DETERMINATION

OVERCOME CHALLENGES AND PROMOTE DIVERSIFICATION WITH FORTIFIED EFFORTS

In 2026, the Macao Special Administrative Region ("MSAR") Government will foster solidarity across different sectors of society to resolutely implement the spirit of the Fourth Plenary Session of the 20th Central Committee of the Communist Party of China and President Xi Jinping's important speeches made during his visit to Macao, proactively align with national development plans, further promote appropriate economic diversification, deepen public administration reform, enhance law-based governance, continue to improve people's well-being, expedite the construction of the Guangdong-Macao In-depth Cooperation Zone in Hengqin (Cooperation Zone), better integrate into and contribute to national development, showcase the successful implementation of the "One country, two systems" principle with Macao characteristics and break new ground for the high-quality development of Macao.



Build a strong line of defence to safeguard national security, maintain social stability

Build a strong line of defence to safeguard national security

- Optimise the legal system to uphold national security.

Consolidate the bedrock for loving the motherland and loving Macao

- Strengthen the synergy and collaboration mechanisms with patriotic organisations.
- Optimise enacted laws for organisations.



Deepen public administration reform, enhance governance efficiency of the MSAR

Vigorously advance public administration reform

- Expedite reforms to "delegate powers, streamline administration and optimise services".
- Re-organise departmental structure.
- Intensify the provision of e-government services.

Improve the legal system of the MSAR

- Implement annual legislative plans in orderly fashion.

Strengthen constructive interactions between executive, legislative and judicial organs



Fortify the momentum of economic recovery, endeavour to promote appropriate economic diversification

Propel economic recovery with stability

- Design featured communities and districts for consumers.
- Advance quality development of small- and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs).

Advocate appropriate economic diversification to achieve concrete results by adopting a multi-pronged approach

- Establish a government industrial fund and a guidance fund.
- Optimise and strengthen the integrated tourism and leisure industry.
- Expedite the development of the traditional Chinese medicine (TCM) Big Health, modern financial services and high-tech industries.
- Solidly enhance the competitiveness of the MICE industry.
- Boost the development of the cultural and sports industries.

Advance administration reform

Accelerate diversification

Seek targeted improvement for people's livelihoods

Integrate into national development



Benchmark the "three key-points" requirement, expedite the construction of Hengqin

Focus on the second phase construction, establish a benchmark for Macao-Hengqin integration

- Create landmark projects to drive the Cooperation Zone's development.
- Solidify and strengthen the economic and trade service centre between China and Portuguese-speaking (as well as Spanish-speaking) countries.
- Build the Hengqin-Macao innovative industrial park.

Accelerate the integrated development of Macao-Hengqin industries

Solicit business, attract investments and recruit talent

Encourage integrated social welfare and services for Macao and Hengqin

Build a new integrated development model for Macao and Hengqin

Build an efficient governance landscape

- Select and assign more outstanding Macao civil servants to participate in the construction of the Cooperation Zone.



Improve people's welfare systems, make solid efforts to benefit people's livelihood

Protect residents' labour rights and interests

- Prioritise the protection of Macao residents' employment.
- Comprehensively evaluate and improve the approval mechanism of non-resident employees.

Improve social security welfare and services

- Channel welfare and resources to low-income groups, disadvantaged and vulnerable communities.
- Actively address the issue of declining birthrates.

Improve medical service standards

Continue to optimise housing policies

Develop Sport for All and competitive sports

Promote high-quality integrated development of education, science, technology and talent nurturing

- Boost artificial intelligence (AI) education
- Strengthen research and development (R&D) and commercialisation of research results of tertiary institutions.
- Implement the third round of the Talent Recruitment Programme.

Attach significant importance to and seek further achievements in youth work



Build a cultural "base", promote mutual learning among civilisations and cultural exchanges

- Organise high-level cultural and art events.
- Advocate "Chinese culture going global".

The Government of the Macao Special Administrative Region

(TRANSLATED VERSION)

Highlights of 2026 Policy Address

Optimise urban infrastructure, build a smart and liveable city

Accelerate the construction of infrastructure

- Expedite urban renewal projects.
- Initiate new infrastructure construction projects.
- Improve traffic control and management.

Build a modern, beautiful and liveable Macao

- Increase and optimise urban leisure facilities.
- Deepen cross-sector and inter-departmental urban beautification management mechanisms.

Achieve high-level opening-up to the outside world, integrate into national development

Actively participate in the high-quality development of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area

Enrich and broaden the functions of the platform between China and Portuguese-speaking countries

Advance international economic, trade and technological exchanges

Actively participate and facilitate the implementation of the "Belt and Road" initiative

Intensify cooperation with Chinese mainland provinces and cities

Formulate the Third Five-year Plan for the MSAR, advocate the implementation of key projects

Draft the Third Five-year Plan for Economic and Social Development of the Macao Special Administrative Region Government (2026-2030)

Actively advance the implementation of the four major construction projects

- Develop the Macao-Hengqin international education (university) town.
- Develop Macao's international integrated cultural and tourism zone.
- Develop Macao as an international air transport hub on the west bank of the Pearl River.
- Develop the Macao technology research industrial park

2026 Major Welfare Measures

All Macao residents

Non-mandatory individual accounts of the Central Provident Fund

- Start-up fund of 10,000 patacas (eligible residents)
- Additional fund injection of 7,000 patacas (eligible residents)

Wealth Partaking Scheme

- 10,000 patacas (eligible permanent residents)
- 6,000 patacas (eligible non-permanent residents)

Healthcare voucher (Healthcare Subsidy Scheme)

700 patacas per person (permanent residents)

Allowance scheme for Macao residents to gain access to basic medical insurance in Chinese mainland (new adjustment)

Provide allowances of up to 1,000 patacas to eligible Macao residents for joining personal medical insurance schemes in Chinese mainland. The coverage of the scheme will be extended to Guangdong province and Fujian province.

Birth allowance

6,500 patacas
(both parents may apply at the same time)

Marriage allowance new adjustment

Increase to 4,000 patacas ▲
(both spouses may receive allowance at the same time)

Unemployment allowance new adjustment

Increase to 210 patacas per day ▲
(eligible residents)

Sickness allowance new adjustment

- Increase to 180 patacas per day for non-hospitalisation allowance ▲ (eligible residents)
- Increase to 240 patacas per day for hospitalisation allowance ▲ (eligible residents)

Funeral allowance new adjustment

Increase to 5,200 patacas ▲
(eligible residents)

Continuing Education Programme (2026-2029)

Maximum 6,000 patacas
(per eligible resident) new round

Electricity bill subsidy for residential units

200 patacas per month (each residential unit)

On-going water tariff subsidy

Water tariff subsidy for residential and general non-residential users

Bus fare concessions for members of the public

Fare concessions for people holding top-up cards, student cards, senior cards, disability cards approved by the Transport Bureau, or people using electronic payments approved by the Transport Bureau

Real estate tax (all real estates)

Deduction of first 3,500 patacas of tax
(Macao residents)

Waiver of real estate stamp duty new adjustment

First six million patacas of a residential unit's value
(eligible residents)

Incentive for the increase of supply in the real estate rental market

Reduction of the property tax rate for leased properties to eight percent; property tax rate for non-leased properties remains at six percent

The elderly

Old age allowance

10,000 patacas per year

Pension

3,900 patacas per month (13-month disbursements per year)

Incentive for employment for senior citizens

The basic allowance for personal income tax is 198,000 patacas for elderly employees over 65 years of age

Disadvantaged families

Minimum subsistence index

4,350 patacas per one-person household

Financial assistance

- Continue disbursing 13 months of financial assistance per year
- Disburse an additional month of financial assistance to eligible families (financial assistance amounting from 4,350 patacas for one-person household per month to 20,270 patacas for eight-person household per month)

Special subsidy for three categories of disadvantaged families new adjustment

Learning activity subsidies:

Increase to 400 patacas to 900 patacas per month ▲

Medical subsidies:

Increase to 1,200 patacas to 1,440 patacas per month ▲

Subsidies for the disabled:

Increase to 900 patacas to 1,200 patacas per month ▲

Social Inclusion Scheme – Special living allowance new adjustment

Two disbursements of special allowance per year. Each disbursement ranging from 2,900 patacas for one-person households, to 11,200 patacas for eight-person households. The income ceiling of the eligible households is 1.8 times the minimum subsistence index (single-parent households, the disabled and patients with chronic illness) ▲

Short-term Food Assistance Programme

For a maximum of 10 weeks. The income ceiling of the eligible households is 1.8 times the minimum subsistence index.

Public housing tenants

Tenants whose income does not exceed the income ceiling are eligible for a rent waiver of up to 2,000 patacas per month.

Positive Life Programme

If a benefit recipient is re-employed, when assessing the household income of the family receiving financial assistance, the household is entitled to an income exemption of up to 6,530 patacas per month, for up to 18 months.

Community Employment Assistance Scheme

Participants of this scheme will receive a monthly subsidy of up to 2,000 patacas, subject to individual work situations.

The Government of the Macao Special Administrative Region

(TRANSLATED VERSION)

Highlights of 2026 Policy Address

Childbearing families

Childcare allowance scheme

Disburse an allowance of 18,000 patacas per year to children aged 3 or below (permanent residents)

Schools

Free education basic subsidy (2025/2026 school year)

- Kindergarten education: 1,095,700 patacas per class
- Primary education: 1,193,900 patacas per class
- Junior secondary education: 1,438,700 patacas per class
- Senior secondary education: 1,631,800 patacas per class

Free education supplementary subsidy (2025/2026 school year)

- Kindergarten education: 77,500 patacas to 232,500 patacas per class
- Primary education: 88,300 patacas to 264,900 patacas per class
- Secondary education: 90,300 patacas to 361,200 patacas per class

Tuition fee subsidy (2025/2026 school year)

- Kindergarten education: 21,350 patacas per person
- Primary education: 23,560 patacas per person
- Secondary education: 25,940 patacas per person

Recurrent education subsidy (2025/2026 school year)

- Primary education: 926,600 patacas per class
- Junior secondary education: 1,106,000 patacas per class
- Senior secondary education: 1,246,900 patacas per class

“Optimisation of Class/Teacher and Student/Teacher Ratios Subsidy Scheme”, a special project of the Education Fund under the “School Development Plan” (schools not providing free education) (2025/2026 school year)

- Kindergarten education: 77,500 patacas to 232,500 patacas per class
- Formal primary education: 88,300 patacas to 264,900 patacas per class
- Formal secondary education: 90,300 patacas to 361,200 patacas per class
- Recurrent primary education: 88,300 patacas to 264,900 patacas per class
- Recurrent secondary education: 90,300 patacas to 270,900 patacas per class

Students

Textbook allowance for non-tertiary education

- Secondary education: 3,550 patacas per school year
- Primary education: 3,000 patacas per school year
- Kindergarten education: 2,400 patacas per school year

Tuition fee subsidies, meal allowance and stationery allowance for students from families with financial difficulties

Tuition fee subsidies:

- Senior secondary education: Maximum 9,000 patacas per school year
- Junior secondary education: Maximum 6,000 patacas per school year
- Kindergarten and primary education: Maximum 4,000 patacas per school year

Meal allowance:

- Kindergarten, primary and secondary education: 3,950 patacas per school year

Stationery allowance:

- Secondary education: 3,350 patacas per school year
- Kindergarten and primary education: 2,600 patacas per school year

Tuition fee subsidies and stationery allowance for Macao students studying in Guangdong province

Tuition fee subsidies:

- Primary, junior secondary, full-time senior secondary and full-time mid-level vocational education at senior secondary education stage: Maximum 6,000 patacas
- Pre-school education: Maximum 8,000 patacas

Stationery allowance:

- Junior secondary, full-time senior secondary and full-time mid-level vocational education at senior secondary education stage: 1,700 patacas per school year
- Primary education: 1,450 patacas per school year
- Pre-school education: 1,150 patacas per school year

Stationery allowance for tertiary students

3,300 patacas (per eligible Macao resident)

Internship programme for Macao tertiary students in Chinese mainland

Each student will receive a subsidy of 5,000 patacas after completion of internship

Teaching staff

Professional development allowance for teaching staff

From 3,100 patacas to 11,790 patacas for school year 2025/2026 (eligible teaching staff).

Direct allowance

From 3,100 patacas to 6,550 patacas for school year 2025/2026 (eligible teaching staff).

People with disabilities

Disability subsidy

- 10,000 patacas per year (ordinary)
- 20,000 patacas per year (special)

Employees with disabilities

Subsidised to minimum wage level

Disability pension

3,900 patacas per month (13-month disbursements per year)

Employers hiring people with disabilities

A tax deduction of up to 5,000 patacas on profit tax or personal income tax per employee with disabilities.

Employment incentives

The personal income tax allowance for eligible employees with disabilities is 198,000 patacas.

Carers allowance new adjustment

Increase to 2,400 patacas per month. The application threshold will be lowered to broaden the scope of applicants.

Scheme to support people with disabilities to purchase assistive devices and special household equipment

People with disabilities who meet the described financial criteria will be subsidised with an accumulative maximum of 30,000 patacas to purchase assistive devices and special household equipment during the scheme period.

Employees

Personal income tax deduction and tax rebate

30 percent reduction in personal income tax, with the basic allowance for personal income tax at 144,000 patacas for general employees; 60 percent rebate of personal income tax payable by each Macao resident for the year 2024, subject to a ceiling of 14,000 patacas.

Greater Bay Area Youth Employment Scheme

Support young people to seek employment in the Greater Bay Area (GBA). Tertiary graduates (aged 35 or below) employed in the nine GBA cities on the mainland or the Cooperation Zone in Hengqin will be offered a monthly subsidy of 5,000 patacas for up to 18 months.

Business owners and related persons

- Profit tax allowance will remain at 600,000 patacas.
- Waivers of all business taxes, hawker licence fees, wet market stall rents, inspection and quarantine fees for live food, stamp duty on life or non-life insurance, and bank service charges, and stamp duty for auctions.
- Waivers of signboard taxes for businesses and exemption from tourism tax for restaurants.
- Waivers of stamp duty on entrance passes and tickets for performances, exhibitions and entertainment programmes.
- Waiver of profit tax on dividends and investment income from local bonds issued in Macao; and exemption of stamp duty for issuing, transaction or compensable transfer of such bonds.
- Profit tax waiver for Macao businesses for income or profits received in Portuguese-speaking countries.
- Enterprises can enjoy extra reduction in profit tax for eligible research and development expenditure.
- Continue to implement the “SME Bank Loan Interest Subsidy Scheme”. The maximum annual subsidy rate for loan interest subsidy is four percent, with a maximum subsidy period of three years, for each eligible business or enterprise owner. The maximum loan amount for each beneficiary is five million patacas and the maximum total loan amount eligible for the subsidy scheme is ten billion patacas.

New measures

- Qualified corporate treasury centres (CTC) set up in Macao will be eligible to enjoy a preferential tax rate of five percent for profits tax.
- Qualified fund management companies set up in Macao, specific fund investment businesses and fund investment profits will be eligible to enjoy relevant tax benefits.



(TRANSLATED VERSION)

Major Policies on Various Areas

Administration and Justice

In 2026, the administration and justice domain will conscientiously implement the governance principles of the Chief Executive and exert best efforts to carry out various tasks.

Public administration

- ▶ Make good use of the leadership and coordination mechanisms, implement reform to “delegate powers, streamline administration and optimise services”.
- ▶ Reorganise departmental structure, strengthen performance management of the Government.
- ▶ Improve personnel management systems, intensify training and support for staff.
- ▶ Rigorously simplify administrative procedures to provide greater convenience to the general public, enhance e-governance services.
- ▶ Reform mechanisms with innovative ideas, solicit and listen to public opinions.

Legal affairs

- ▶ Continue to strengthen the coordination of legal works, improve Macao’s legal system.
- ▶ Implement annual legislative plans, advance legislative works on priority areas.
- ▶ Improve registry and notary services, provide more convenience to people and business operators.
- ▶ Intensify regional and international cooperation, build a conducive business environment.
- ▶ Continue to popularise legal education, jointly build a law-based Macao.

Municipal services

- ▶ Improve mechanisms to enhance the urban landscape, optimise governance for the benefit of people’s well-being.
- ▶ Reorganise parks and expand recreational areas, build a novel discovery centre for children.
- ▶ Make progressive steps to build recreational areas, rejuvenate wet markets to enhance competitiveness.
- ▶ Optimise food safety supervision and mechanisms, advocate collaboration for cross-boundary source-tracking works.
- ▶ Strengthen the regular maintenance of drainage networks, improve the quality of urban greening projects and popularise greening education.

Economy and Finance

In 2026, the tenor of the policy principles of the economy and finance domain is to “stay committed to boosting the economy, concentrate on diversified development, strive for people’s well-being and innovate to pursue sustainable progress”. It is important to bear in mind the concept of making progress with stability, optimisation and innovation in order to promote appropriate economic diversification, strengthen the coordination and synergy between Macao and Hengqin in all aspects, integrate into national development with a more open attitude and leverage Macao’s role in “precise liaison”.

Enhance governance quality in economy, forge ahead to promote high-quality development of diversified industries

- ▶ Promote the development of emerging industries, establish a government industrial fund and a guidance fund.
- ▶ Explore the market of international visitors, brand Macao as a world centre of tourism and leisure.
- ▶ Advance the internationalisation of TCM, build a platform for TCM research and development.
- ▶ Cultivate new forms and models for the finance industry, support the quality growth of the technology industry.
- ▶ Foster the comprehensive and integrated development of research, academia and industries, support upgrading the quality and growth of the technology enterprises.
- ▶ Intensify integration of conferences and business investments, introduce quality MICE projects to Macao.

Coordinate collaborative development of residents and businesses, endeavour to improve the overall sense of happiness of the Macao society

- ▶ Strengthen support for youth employment and encourage young people to make steady progress.
- ▶ Prioritise the protection of Macao residents’ employment, broaden residents’ development opportunities.
- ▶ Implement welfare measures, support SMEs to upgrade and transform.

Intensify the coordination and collaboration between Macao and Hengqin, jointly compose a new chapter of integrated development for Macao and Hengqin

- ▶ Implement key construction projects for Macao and Hengqin, enhance regional connectivity.

- ▶ Jointly explore potential in diversification, unleash the synergistic momentum of Macao and Hengqin.
- ▶ Optimise business environment by soliciting business and attracting investment from targeted industries, support the cultivation of talent.
- ▶ Improve welfare security systems and protect people’s employment and livelihoods, jointly build a desirable home to live and work in.
- ▶ Bolster integration and connectivity of soft and hard infrastructure, advance integrated development of Macao and Hengqin.
- ▶ Optimise the management systems of the Cooperation Zone, strive for high-quality governance landscape.



Targeting at the positioning of collaborative development of “Macao+Hengqin”

Align with national development plans, accelerate participation in high-level opening up to the outside world

- ▶ Fully participate in the development of the Greater Bay Area, intensify cooperation between Guangdong, Hong Kong and Macao.
- ▶ Maximise the role as “precise liaison”, enrich functions of the Sino-Lusophone platform.
- ▶ Intensify international exchanges and cooperation in areas of economy, commerce, science and technology, explore external cooperation opportunities.

Public Security

The public security domain will continue to strengthen and modernise the security systems and management capacity. It will remain highly vigilant in the face of the new and complex security landscape, both nationally and internationally, and will continue to closely monitor new trends in various types of crime and uncertainties that may threaten the security of the nation and Macao. Comprehensive preventive measures will be adopted to address potential security risks and build a stable and secure environment to boost the economy, pursue development and advance infrastructure. The objective is to take greater responsibility to break new ground to seek further development opportunities and horizons for Macao.

National security

- ▶ Improve national security system and mechanisms, expedite key legislative and amendment works on key areas.
- ▶ Strengthen law enforcement capacity, fortify the foundation for future development.

Macao-Hengqin cooperation

- ▶ Continue to optimise smart boundary crossing services, facilitate convenient movement for people and goods.
- ▶ Launch new rules and regulations to strengthen interconnectivity, jointly build and share quality of life.

Law enforcement deployment

- ▶ Draw up forward-looking law enforcement strategies, strive to prevent illegal activities.
- ▶ Guarantee financial security of the MSAR, uphold public safety and security.

Civil protection and emergency response

- ▶ Broaden the application of civil protection technologies, improve cross-boundary rescue mechanism.
- ▶ Adopt multiple measures to control hazardous substances, eliminate potential fire risks of the community.

Police management

- ▶ Improve internal and external supervision mechanisms, promote modern culture for the police team.
- ▶ Strengthen the building of a professional team, enrich the talent pool of the police team.

Police-community cooperation

- ▶ Promote innovative online and in-person interaction, pragmatically advance and refine community policing efforts.
- ▶ Nurture and cultivate the growth of young people, enhance trust and mutual interaction between the police and the community.

Rehabilitation and social integration

- ▶ Improve the quality of prison management, strengthen the building of the prison guard team.
- ▶ Bring together the diverse powers of the community, support reintegration through community solidarity and inclusion.



The security authorities have made every effort in preventing and resolving various security risks, effectively suppressing various criminal activities

(TRANSLATED VERSION)

Major Policies on Various Areas

Social Affairs and Culture

In line with the concept of “meeting the country’s needs, leveraging Macao’s advantages”, the “Four Aspirations” put forward by President Xi Jinping and the Chief Executive’s principle of building a law-based, vibrant, cultural and blissful Macao, the tasks and projects of the social affairs and culture domain will be elevated to a new level.

Vibrant Macao

- ▶ Advance the establishment of the “regional centre for information and communication technology transfer for higher education institutions in the nation” and the “Macao-Hengqin international education (university) town”, increase Macao’s attraction for science and technology talent across the world.
- ▶ Encourage schools to set up AI classrooms, start up a dedicated “Macao” page on the online platform “Smart Education of China”.
- ▶ Launch the third round of the Talent Recruitment Programme, strive to improve Macao’s environment as a talent hub.
- ▶ Support the development of culture and sports industries, organise more culture and sports mega events.
- ▶ Accelerate the development of the big health industry, facilitate the entry of Macao TCM products to national and international markets.

Cultural Macao

- ▶ Expedite the building of the “International Integrated Tourism and Culture Zone”, initiate the architectural design of the “Macao Cultural Centre of the National Museum”.
- ▶ Organise and host “International Cultural Forum of Mutual Learning between Civilisations” and “International Civilisations Exhibition”.
- ▶ Implement the project “qualitative enhancement and reconversion” for Macao’s historical and cultural venues, launch two immersive cultural experience routes for tourists.
- ▶ Fully utilise the “Macao Patriotic Education Exhibition Pavilion” and the “Educational Patriotic Base for Youth”, optimise the diverse learning experiences about patriotism.



Decentralisation of resources to build in concerted efforts a community with “Energy and a Joyful Heart”

Blissful Macao

- ▶ Increase the amounts of subsidies for caregivers, unemployment, illness, marriage, and funeral expenses.
- ▶ Continue to disburse childcare and birth allowances and establish a “Parents Academy”.
- ▶ Continue to develop the 15-minute service circles for seniors and implement cross-boundary residential care service pilot projects for seniors.
- ▶ Intensify the “Healthy Community” programme, establish a new mechanism for medical health check-ups for students, improve the capacity to treat urgent and serious cases, and provide full support for residents’ mental health.
- ▶ Improve policies regarding student numbers and student admissions per class, increase funding for inclusive education.
- ▶ Implement a “four-tiered support structure” to help young people achieve their aspirations.

Transport and Public Works

The core of the policy-implementation principles of the transport and public works domain lies in the interests of the people. Our objective is to implement construction projects for Macao, integrate into the national development plans, build a harmonious Macao with ideal conditions for living and working.

Build a liveable city

- ▶ Review the urban master plan.
- ▶ Examine the feasibility of expanding the scope of application for replacement housing units and temporary accommodation units.
- ▶ Advance legislative work on the use of maritime areas.

Create a harmonious living environment

- ▶ Improve the commercial amenities for the public housing in New Urban Zone Area A.
- ▶ Advance the feasibility of a home-ownership exchange scheme for economic housing.
- ▶ Initiate the construction of Zone 1 of the sports park for the public.
- ▶ Rejuvenate and better utilise Lots A3, A4 and A9 of Nam Van Lake.



Completion of the public housing projects in New Urban Zone Area A

Develop a convenient transport system

- ▶ Conclude the interim review of the General Planning of Traffic and Land Transport in Macao (2021-2030).
- ▶ Accelerate the construction of the East Line of the LRT.
- ▶ Continue to improve road conditions and parking facilities.
- ▶ Examine the introduction of taxi-hailing services via online platforms.
- ▶ Utilise available land to create temporary parking lots.

Build a green city

- ▶ Draft and compile the *Environmental Protection Plan for Macao (2026-2030)*.
- ▶ Launch of the “Pilot Project for Supercharging Stations for Light and Heavy Vehicles”.
- ▶ Prioritise the use of photovoltaic energy for public lighting.
- ▶ Expedite the construction of the Organic Resources Recovery Centre.
- ▶ Complete and begin commissioning of the Coloane Recycled Water Treatment Plant, Phase I.

Create a support system with resilience

- ▶ Increase the clean energy supply proportion of the Southern Power Grid Co. Ltd. to Macao to 50%.
- ▶ Expedite the capacity expansion project of the Seac Pai Van Reservoir.
- ▶ Improve the meteorological and seismic monitoring network.
- ▶ Accelerate the flood protection and drainage works in the west of Coloane.
- ▶ Optimise of the dykes in New Urban Zone Area A to prevent unprecedented floods.

Integrate into national development plans

- ▶ Study the location of the new access between Hengqin Financial Island and Macao.
- ▶ Build a “Hengqin-Macao Traffic Data Platform”.
- ▶ Establish the “International Earth System Science Data Exchange Center (Macao)”.

Commission Against Corruption

In 2026, the Commission Against Corruption (CAC) will strive to uphold the governance principles, “Safeguarding Integrity and Innovating” and “Building a law-based Macao”, and endeavour to bring together efforts across all sectors to build a law-based society with integrity, stability and harmony.

Stay dedicated to fighting corruption and foster governance with integrity

- ▶ Continue to combat corruption crimes in the public and private sectors, increase efficiency in case investigations with the application of technology.
- ▶ Investigate the characteristics of public services and high-risk sectors where corruption related cases occur, adopt targeted deployment for prevention.
- ▶ Review the oversight work for the Legislative Assembly elections and propose suggestions for improving the Electoral Law for the Legislative Assembly.
- ▶ Improve the cooperation mechanism for case investigation with Chinese mainland and Hong Kong for better facilitation of information exchange.

Supervise in accordance with the law and assist the Government to enhance governance efficiency

- ▶ Strengthen the oversight of disciplinary procedures, define appropriate prevention and intervention strategies.
- ▶ Continue to optimise administrative appeal procedures, improve case management system internally and strengthen communication and cooperation externally with other public services.
- ▶ Increase the efficiency of complaint management and boost public confidence in the work of the CAC.

Keep pace with changing times and deepen integrity education

- ▶ Strengthen the specificity and effectiveness of integrity awareness campaigns in public and private sectors.
- ▶ Develop integrity awareness campaigns in conjunction with the general concept of national security, the foundation relating to the rule of law and the importance of anti-corruption in order to safeguard the country’s governance framework.
- ▶ Continue to train anti-corruption leaders in schools and create more opportunities for young people to participate in the practice of integrity.

Promote cooperation with external bodies and strengthen Macao’s level of integrity

- ▶ Maintain close ties and exchange information with anti-corruption bodies in Chinese mainland and Hong Kong in order to jointly promote the building of a culture of integrity and institutional innovation.
- ▶ Fulfill duties as a member of international and regional institutions, stay committed to improving the level Macao’s level of integrity.
- ▶ Attach importance to staff training, encourage staff to participate in exchange events and improve their investigation capacity in a manner appropriate to the evolving times.

Commission of Audit

In order to advocate good governance, the Audit Commission (CA) will take into consideration the holistic conditions and adopt an objective and pragmatic attitude in the execution of audit works in accordance with the law. It is the CA’s objectives to assist and support the Government to strengthen institutional development and governance innovation, as well as to pursue high-quality social development safeguarded by high standard auditing and monitoring works.

Intensify auditing and monitoring works, advocate good governance

- ▶ Strengthen auditing and monitoring works, identify frequent errors of public services through horizontal and vertical analyses, and present specific audit suggestions.
- ▶ Deepen preventive oversight of public services in order to highlight their deficiencies and potential risks.
- ▶ Optimise audit processes, strengthen preliminary analysis to initiate audit projects and intensify the management of the Government’s key projects.

Strengthen the quality of financial auditing in accordance with the law, optimise the management of public ledger

- ▶ Improve communication with public services and promote the optimisation of their financial management, accounting records and preparation, internal controls over budget execution and risk management.
- ▶ Monitor the implementation of corrective measures adopted by public services in relation to issues identified by CA in the past.

Examine the application of new technologies to improve audit efficiency

- ▶ Assess the use of existing data and stay commitment to conducting research with the application of big data and AI technologies in order to improve audit efficiency and provide support for the implementation of investigation-based audits.

Strengthen the promotion of an audit culture, reinforce awareness of the use of public funds

- ▶ Promote the establishment of improved internal control and risk management mechanisms within public services.
- ▶ Raise awareness of the value and benefits resulting from audit works conducted to optimise governance efficiency and the use of public resources.

Fortify the professional skills of the team, ensure the quality of audit results

- ▶ Strengthen the capacity of the audit teams, continue to send staff to join the National Audit Office delegation to participate in the audit work in the UN and various training activities in order to keep abreast of the latest developments in this area.

4th China-Germany high-level financial dialogue reaches multiple consensuses

BEIJING – The Ministry of Finance on Monday released a joint statement on the 4th China-Germany High-Level Financial Dialogue, outlining 27 points of consensus.

During the dialogue, both sides reiterated that this dialogue mechanism is a key platform for bilateral exchange and policy coordination on strategic, overarching, and long-term fiscal and financial issues.

According to the joint statement, both sides commit to upholding international and multilateral cooperation while combating unilateralism and trade protectionism.

They emphasize the importance of supporting the rule-based multilateral trading system with the World Trade Organization at its core. They are committed to maintaining strong cooperation within the International Monetary Fund and will continue to strengthen bilateral coordination and all-round cooperation under the framework of the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank.

Both sides have agreed to continue cooperation under the policy research collaboration mechanism established between their finance ministries. They will foster exchanges on key issues, including enhancing fiscal sustainability, and will work to strengthen international development cooperation. Additionally, they aim to promote stronger, greener, and more balanced and inclusive global development.

In the financial field, both sides agree to further strengthen cooperation on banking and insurance regulation and supervision, welcome enhanced financial technology collaboration between financial technology service providers from both countries, and encourage qualified financial institutions to invest and conduct business in each other's markets.

The dialogue mechanism was launched in 2015, with the second and third rounds held in 2019 and 2023.

– Xinhua

CPC, Germany's SPD hold 2nd strategic dialogue in Beijing

BEIJING – The second strategic dialogue between the Communist Party of China (CPC) and Germany's Social Democratic Party (SPD) took place in Beijing yesterday.

Liu Haixing, head of the International Department of the CPC Central Committee, and Lars Klingbeil, co-leader of the SPD, German vice chancellor and federal minister of finance, both attended the event and delivered keynote speeches.

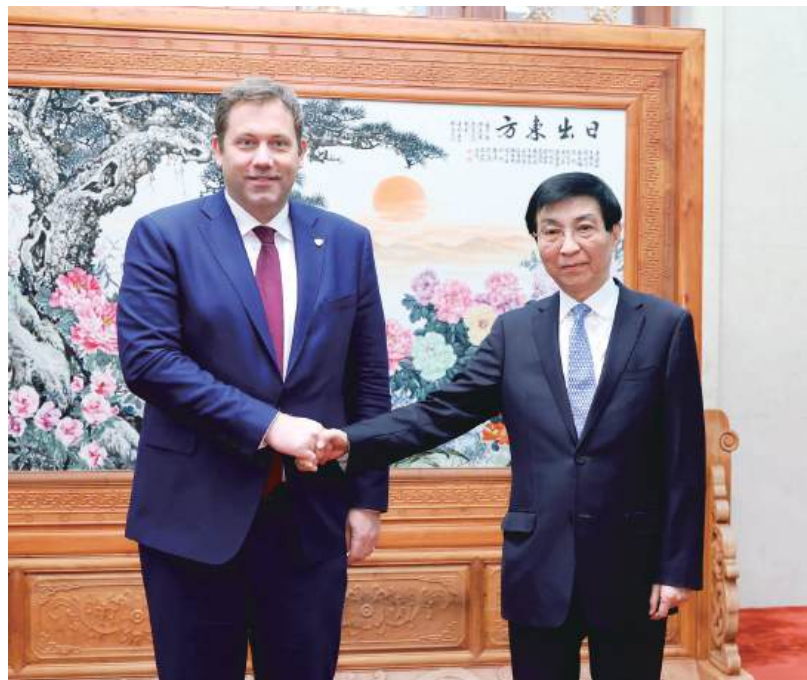
Liu provided an overview of the fourth plenary session of the 20th CPC Central Committee. He said that the CPC is willing to effectively utilize its strategic dialogue mechanism with the SPD to enhance

exchange and mutual learning, promote cooperation in various fields, and drive the stable, healthy development of China-Germany and China-Europe relations.

The German side said that the SPD is willing to strengthen its exchange with the CPC, and to use the mechanism to engage in candid, open dialogue on a wide range of topics, including Germany-China and Europe-China relations, climate change, artificial intelligence, and regional peace and security.

Also present at the dialogue were representatives of relevant Chinese authorities and think tanks, as well as the members of the SPD delegation.

– AFP



Wang Huning (right), a member of the Standing Committee of the Political Bureau of the Communist Party of China Central Committee and chairman of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC) National Committee, meets with a German Social Democratic Party (SPD) delegation led by Lars Klingbeil (left), co-chairman of the SPD, as well as German Vice Chancellor and Federal Minister of Finance, in Beijing yesterday.

– Xinhua

China will never allow resurgence of Japanese militarism: foreign ministry

BEIJING – Foreign ministry spokesperson Mao Ning said yesterday that militarism must never be revived in Japan, the post-WWII international order must never be challenged, and world peace and stability must never be ruined again.

Mao's remarks came after several Japanese officials reportedly said that Japan is planning to revise its Self-Defense Force's ranking system, including reinstating old Japanese military ranks, such as "Taisa" (colonel). Media comments say that this will break the Self-Defense Force's convention of downplaying its military nature over the years, and this is adding insult to injury for nations that have

suffered from Japanese colonial rule and aggression.

Mao told a regular press briefing that due to Japan's history of colonial rule and aggression, Japan's military and security moves have been closely watched by its Asian neighbors and the international community. The Potsdam Proclamation explicitly stipulates that Japan shall not be permitted to "re-arm for war," said Mao, adding that the Japanese Constitution, which enshrines pacifism, also established Japan's exclusively defense-oriented policy.

"It is alarming, however, that in recent years, Japan has drastically readjusted its security and defense policy, increased defense budget

year after year, relaxed restrictions on arms export, sought to develop offensive weapons, and planned to abandon its three non-nuclear principles," Mao noted.

Japan's far-right forces are trying every means to break free from the pacifist constitution, and going further down the path of boosting Japan's military buildup, she added.

The spokesperson said that the war of aggression waged by Japanese militarism inflicted profound sufferings on Asia and the world. Amnesia of war spells disaster; war-mongering spells doom. Lessons from history must not be forgotten, distorted, or even erased, she noted.

– Xinhua



Fairgoers visit an exhibition area of Chinese firms at the Medica 2025 in Düsseldorf, western Germany, on Monday. The prominent medical device exhibition kicked off on Monday, with more than 1,300 Chinese companies attending the event. The Medica 2025 is one of the largest and most influential trade fairs of medical devices. Expecting around 80,000 visitors from over 160 countries and regions, this year's event focused on medical technology and devices, digital health, lab and diagnostics, physio technology, and disposables. Among the participants across the world, the number of Chinese enterprises was the largest from a non-European country. According to the organizer, some 70 countries and regions took part in Medica 2025, which ends tomorrow.

– Xinhua

Aircraft carrier Fujian formation conducts first live-force training at sea

SANYA – The Chinese People's Liberation Army Navy (PLAN) yesterday said the aircraft carrier formation of the PLAN Fujian has conducted the carrier's first on-sea live-force training since its commissioning.

During the mission, the formation conducted various training exercises, including fleet navigation, vessel-aircraft joint search and rescue, and carrier-based

aircraft takeoffs and landings.

In the vessel-aircraft joint search and rescue exercise, the vessels and aircraft coordinated and cooperated to quickly complete the rescue task following the formation's command instructions to handle an emergency. The exercise helped enhance the formation's capability of contingency response, according to the PLAN.

Various types of carrier-based

aircraft, including the J-35, J-15T, J-15DT and KJ-600, completed rounds of catapult-assisted takeoffs and landings on the Fujian. These exercises effectively tested the carrier's electromagnetic catapult, recovery and deck operation capabilities, further validating its vessel-aircraft compatibility, the PLAN said.

The Fujian was commissioned on Nov. 5.

– Xinhua

China criticizes US patent rule revision as discriminatory against Chinese firms

BEIJING – China's commerce ministry yesterday said that the United States' recent revision of its patent rules constitutes a discriminatory restriction on the legitimate rights of Chinese companies.

The comments were made in response to a media inquiry on a memorandum issued by the United States Patent and Trademark

Office that revised transparency rules related to patent invalidation petitions, with a particular focus on applications submitted by entities with foreign backgrounds.

The move, which was made in the name of "national security," has violated the United States' international obligations on intellectual property protection and amounts to

a discriminatory restriction on the legitimate rights of Chinese enterprises, according to a spokesperson for the Ministry of Commerce (MOC).

China will follow all developments closely, and will take necessary measures to firmly safeguard the legitimate rights and interests of Chinese companies, the ministry said.

– Xinhua

First charges in Philippine flood control scandal target ex-lawmaker, officials

MANILA – Philippine prosecutors filed yesterday the first criminal charges in a sweeping corruption scandal over bogus flood control projects, promising “many” more indictments in the case that has prompted public ire and protests.

Rage over so-called ghost infrastructure, believed to have cost taxpayers billions of dollars, has been building for months, ever since President Ferdinand Marcos put the issue centre stage in a July address after weeks of deadly flooding.

Scores of construction firm owners, government officials and lawmakers in the archipelago country have been accused of pocketing funds for substandard projects.

Yesterday, the ombudsman’s office unveiled charges against former congressman Elizaldy Co, public works officials and members of a construction firm over their ties to a “grossly” substandard road dike in Oriental Mindoro province.

The charges include falsification of documents, misuse of public

funds and graft law violations.

“Public funds were meant to protect communities from flooding, not to enrich officials or private contractors,” ombudsman spokesman Mico Clavano told a press briefing.

He said the department was acting on the first case submitted by an independent commission, with more in the preliminary investigation stage.

“This is the first of many cases that will be filed in court,” he said.

The announcement comes a day after Iglesia ni Cristo (INC), a church which has historically been a powerful voting bloc with ties to the Duterte political dynasty, concluded back-to-back rallies in Manila that drew hundreds of thousands of people.

The rallies saw INC leaders allude to “emerging evidence” in the case, and featured videos that Co – who has gone into hiding – released from abroad, accusing Marcos of masterminding the corruption.

While it was Marcos who

pledged to identify the guilty and name names in his July speech, the ensuing furore has enveloped friend and foe alike.

On Monday, the Marcos administration saw two cabinet members, executive secretary Lucas Bersamin and budget director Amenah Pangandaman, step down after being linked to flood-control fraud.

The president’s congressman cousin, Martin Romualdez, resigned as House speaker in September after being implicated.

At Monday’s INC rally, Senator Imee Marcos, the president’s sister and a key ally of his arch-foe Vice President Sara Duterte, took to the stage to accuse him of drug use, saying it had impaired his judgement.

“His addiction became the reason for the flood of corruption, the lack of direction and very wrong decisions,” she said.

President Marcos’s son Sandro fired back yesterday, slamming the accusations as “not only false, but dangerously irresponsible”. – AFP



Philippines' Secretary of Department of Foreign Affairs Theresa Lazaro (right) shakes hands with Palestinian Foreign Affairs and Expatriates Minister Varsen Aghabekian Shahin after their joint press conference in Manila yesterday. – AFP

N Korea says Seoul-US sub deal will trigger ‘nuclear domino’ effect

SEOUL – North Korea denounced an agreement between Seoul and Washington to build nuclear-powered submarines, saying in a state media commentary yesterday that the deal would cause a “nuclear domino” effect.

South Korean President Lee Jae Myung announced the finalisation of a long-awaited security and trade agreement with the United States last week, including plans to move forward with developing atomic-powered vessels.

Seoul said it had secured “support for expanding our authority over uranium enrichment and spent-fuel reprocessing”.

In its first comments responding to the deal, the nuclear-armed North fired back that the submarine programme was a “dangerous attempt at confrontation”.

The agreement is a “serious development that destabilises the military security situation in the Asia-Pacific region beyond the Korean peninsula and causes the situation of impossible nuclear control in the global sphere,” said the commentary carried by the official Korean Central News Agency (KCNA) yesterday.

South Korea’s possession of nuclear submarines “is bound to cause a ‘nuclear domino phenomenon’ in the region and spark a hot arms race”, Pyongyang added. It also said “the DPRK (North Korea) will take more justified and realistic countermeasures,” due to the two countries’ “confrontational intention”.

North Korea’s state media said in October that it had fired the ninth and final test of a ballistic engine, indicating that a full launch of a new ICBM could be conducted in coming months.

Military talks offer

The commentary comes just a

day after Seoul proposed military talks with Pyongyang to prevent border clashes, the first such offer in seven years.

President Lee has also offered to hold broader discussions with the North without preconditions, a sharp reversal from the hawkish stance taken by his conservative predecessor.

In response to the commentary, South Korea’s presidential office said the country had “no hostile intentions toward North Korea, contrary to the Korean Central News Agency opinion”.

The agreement between South Korea and the United States was aimed at “protecting the nation and solidifying the security alliance between Korea and the United States”, said presidential spokesperson Kang Yu-jung.

North Korea’s comments show concerns from the nuclear-armed state that if South Korea acquires nuclear-powered submarines, “it could become a stepping stone to the country achieving a semi-nuclear-weapon-state status”, Yang Moo-jin, a professor at the University of North Korean Studies in Seoul, told AFP.

“The move is likely to negatively affect the prospects for holding inter-Korean military talks,” added Yang.

North Korea has yet to respond to Lee’s overtures.

Beijing also voiced caution over the Washington-Seoul deal on nuclear submarine technology on Thursday.

The partnership “goes beyond a purely commercial partnership, directly touching on the global non-proliferation regime and the stability of the Korean Peninsula and the wider region”, Dai Bing, China’s ambassador to Seoul, told reporters last week. – AFP

Singapore seizes record rhino horn haul

SINGAPORE – Singapore has seized over US\$800,000 worth of illegal rhino horn and animal parts hidden in air cargo bound for Laos, authorities said yesterday, in the largest haul of its kind discovered in the city-state.

Disguised as “furniture fittings”, the stash was found 10 days ago after a cargo handler “detected a strong odour” coming from a package, Singapore’s National Parks Board and air cargo handler SATS said in a joint statement.

Singapore law officials were alerted, and uncovered “20 rhinoceros horns weighing 35.7 kilogrammes, along with around 150 kg of other animal parts”, the statement said.

The haul’s total value is estimated at around US\$870,000.

“This marks the largest seizure of rhinoceros horns in Singapore to date,” the statement added.

The 20 horns were identified as belonging to white South African rhinoceroses. Authorities are looking into the provenance of the other animal parts.

Rhinos are protected under wildlife protection convention CITES, and international trade in their horns is prohibited.

The horns will now be destroyed according to CITES guidelines, the



This undated handout photo released yesterday by the National Parks Board of Singapore shows rhinoceros horns seized by authorities in Singapore, after the horns and other animal parts were confiscated during inspection of a shipment bound for Laos. – AFP

Singapore authorities said.

Rhino horns are considered status symbols and believed to have medicinal properties in parts of Asia. They are also carved into jewellery and household items, including combs, buttons and belt buckles.

The largest previous seizure of rhino horns in Singapore was in October 2022, when 34.7 kg of the forbidden commodity were found in a South African man’s bags at Changi Airport.

The smuggler was sentenced to two years in jail in January last year.

The Switzerland-based International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) said in 2022 that poaching and the illegal trade in horns have decreased in recent years but remain grave threats to rhinos.

It said more than 2,700 rhinos were poached in Africa between 2018 and 2021, of which 90 percent were killed in South Africa, mainly in the Kruger National Park.

Home to nearly 80 percent of the world’s rhinoceroses, South Africa is a poaching hotspot, driven by demand from Asia. – AFP

Indonesia detains man wanted in China over US\$138 million loan default

JAKARTA – Indonesian authorities said yesterday they had detained a Chinese real estate executive wanted over the default of a US\$138 million corporate loan.

The 58-year-old man, identified only as WZ, was arrested on Indonesia’s western island of Batam on Thursday after a request was received from the Chinese embassy in

Jakarta, said Agus Waluyo, Indonesia’s immigration intelligence director.

The immigration directorate general said the man was a former president and director of a Chinese real estate company that had failed to repay 980 million yuan (US\$137.8 million) in loans.

The loan default led to a police investigation that identified him as a

financial crime suspect, it said, and a wanted notice was issued after he fled China.

Agus said the man had moved around several countries in Asia since August before entering Indonesia on October 7.

“WZ has been detained for further investigation by the Directorate General of Immigration,” Agus told a

news briefing, adding that Indonesian authorities had been in touch with Chinese government officials.

China’s property sector boomed as it was propelled by decades of rapid urbanisation and rising living standards. However, its fortunes reversed in 2020 when Beijing imposed new regulations seeking to limit excessive borrowing.

Real estate woes have hit the

Chinese economy heavily since then and debt struggles have led to the collapse of major market players such as Evergrande.

Indonesia has detained and deported several other people wanted in their home countries in recent months, although the focus across Southeast Asia has been heavily on those involved in online scams. – AFP

Indian police say Maoist leader of worst rebel massacre killed

RAIPUR – India’s police said yesterday its forces had killed a “dreaded” Maoist rebel commander responsible for one of the deadliest attacks by the guerrillas, along with five other insurgents.

New Delhi has vowed to end the decades-long insurgency entirely by March 31, 2026, with yesterday’s killing marking the latest in a series of reported victories against the shrinking rebel force.

Senior police officer Mahesh Chandra Laddha told reporters that Madvi Hidma, a top Maoist commander, his wife Raje, and four other fighters were “killed in an encounter with police” in Andhra Pradesh state.

Laddha called Hidma the “most dreaded Maoist commander”, who had a bounty of 10 million rupees (around US\$110,000) on his head. Police also seized assault rifles, pistols and explosives.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) hailed the operation, noting

that Hidma had masterminded the April 2010 ambush in Dantewada, Chhattisgarh, that killed 76 security personnel – one of the worst massacres in India’s recent history.

“Left-wing extremism is collapsing across the country, shrinking from 182 affected districts in 2013 to just 13 today,” the Hindu nationalist BJP said in a statement.

India continues a determined campaign against the remnants of the Naxalite rebellion, named after the village in the Himalayan foothills where the Maoist-inspired insurgency began nearly six decades ago.

Police said the Maoist guerrillas had been moving south to escape the security net closing in on rebel bases in Chhattisgarh state.

More than 12,000 rebels, soldiers and civilians have been killed since a handful of villagers rose up against feudal landlords in 1967.

The insurgency controlled nearly a third of India at its peak in the mid-2000s, with 15,000 to 20,000 fighters. – AFP

Vietnamese govt warns of potential flu outbreak

HANOI – Vietnam’s Ministry of Health has warned of a potential flu outbreak after the country logged up to 11,000 cases of seasonal influenza per month over the past three months, a sharp rise from the mid-year figures, local media VnExpress reported yesterday.

Since the beginning of the year, more than 132,000 flu cases have been recorded nationwide, including three deaths, the report said.

Elderly individuals, those with underlying conditions, pregnant women and children under five are at risk of severe complications.

The ministry advises citizens to maintain personal hygiene, wash hands frequently with soap, and cover mouths when coughing or sneezing. Those with flu-like symptoms should seek medical advice promptly.

– Xinhua



Security personnel escort alleged car blast accused Jasir Bilal Wani (centre) as he was produced at Patiala House Court, in New Delhi, India yesterday. The agency said Wani had “allegedly provided technical support for carrying out terror attacks by modifying drones and attempting to make rockets” ahead of the blast. – AFP

Malaysia welcomes new giant panda couple Chen Xing, Xiao Yue

KUALA LUMPUR – Malaysia welcomed the arrival of a new pair of giant pandas, “Chen Xing” and “Xiao Yue,” with the pair touching down at Kuala Lumpur International Airport yesterday.

The new pair were born in 2020. The male “Chen Xing” is described as robust and outgoing, while the female “Xiao Yue” is rounder and more docile.

The pair will be kept at Zoo Negara, the country’s national zoo,

where they will undergo quarantine before being introduced to the Malaysian public.

In May 2014, China and Malaysia launched their first round of international cooperation on giant panda conservation. This April, a joint statement signed by both countries announced their agreement to continue cooperative research on giant panda conservation, expressing hopes for further progress in the field.

– Xinhua

Education for girls hit hard by India’s drying wells

Shefali Rafiq

NANDURBAR – Each morning, 17-year-old Ramati Mangla sets off barefoot with a steel pot in hand, walking several kilometres to fetch water from a distant spring in India’s Maharashtra state.

By the time she returns, school has already started.

“I have kept my books,” she said. “But what if I never get a chance to go back?”

In the drought-hit villages of Maharashtra’s Nashik and Nandurbar districts, wells are drying up and rainfall has become increasingly erratic – forcing families to adapt to harsher living conditions.

As men migrate to nearby cities in search of work, girls like Mangla are left to take on the responsibility of collecting water.

It’s a chore that can take hours each day and leaves little time for school.

Local officials estimate that nearly two million people in these regions face daily water shortages.

A 2021 UNESCO report warned that climate-related disruptions could push millions of girls worldwide out of classrooms.

It is a pattern already visible across India’s rural heartlands.

Teachers say attendance among girls has sharply dropped in recent years, particularly during the dry months.

Many families, struggling to survive, see no option but to keep



In this photograph taken on September 23, Sangita Santosh (right), who dropped out of school to manage household chores, walks home with her sister after fetching pots of water at Khaparmal village in the drought-prone district of Nandurbar, India. – AFP

their daughters home or marry them early.

“Children living in drought prone areas, with family responsibilities for fetching water, struggle with attending school regularly - as collecting water now takes a longer time due to water scarcity and pollution,” the UN children’s fund wrote in a report.

For Mangla, and many other girls across India, climate change is turning the simple act of fetching water into a choice between survival and education.

Mangla’s story has been spotlighted alongside a photography series shot by Shefali Rafiq for the

2025 Marai Photo Grant, an award open to photographers from South Asia aged 25 or under.

The theme for 2025 was “climate change” and its impact on daily life and the community of the photographers who enter.

The award is organised by Agence France-Presse in honour of Shah Marai, the former photo chief at AFP’s Kabul bureau.

Shah Marai, who was an inspiration for Afghan photographers throughout his career, was killed in the line of duty at the age of 41 in a suicide attack on April 30, 2018, in Kabul. – AFP

Australia holds S African man after neo-Nazi rally

SYDNEY – Australian authorities detained a South African man yesterday after cancelling his visa for taking part in a neo-Nazi protest outside a parliament building in Sydney.

Matthew Gruter was among about 60 dark-clothed men – some hiding their faces with sunglasses or hats – who protested outside the New South Wales parliament this month.

Protesters shouted antisemitic slogans and brandished a banner reading: “Abolish the Jewish lobby” in the November 8 rally, according to television images and media reports.

Home Affairs Minister Tony Burke, who cancelled Gruter’s

visa Monday, said Australian Border Force officials took him into immigration detention early yesterday.

The South African will be held until he gets a ticket to fly out of Australia or is deported, Burke told reporters.

“If you’re on a visa, you’re a guest in Australia,” the minister said.

“If someone turns up for the purposes of just abusing people and wrecking the place and damaging the cohesion, we can ask them to leave, and Australia has asked him to leave.”

Burke said Gruter had limited grounds for appeal and he was expected to leave the country “very soon”.

Gruter, a civil engineer, moved to Sydney about three years ago and was a senior member of Australia’s largest neo-Nazi group, the *Sydney Morning Herald* newspaper said.

“The bottom line here is we’re setting the standard for Australia. We’re setting the standard that multicultural Australia and modern Australia are the same thing,” Burke said.

Australia’s intelligence services have warned that growing numbers of people are being drawn towards neo-Nazi ideologies as extremist groups step up efforts to recruit new members.

Australia banned the Nazi salute and the display or trade of Nazi symbols last year. – AFP

Cambodia, UNICEF launch digital platform to advance teacher training

PHNOM PENH – Cambodia and the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) yesterday launched an innovative Capacity Development Platform (CDP), aiming at strengthening the skills and knowledge of educators in the kingdom.

Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Education, Youth and

Sport Hang Chuon Naron said the initiative is set to digitize and formalize teacher training, transform professional growth for teachers, educators, and staff across Cambodia, and ultimately help improve learning for every child.

“The CDP marks a transformative step in Cambodia’s journey toward quality teacher education,” he said.

“By digitizing teacher training and professional development, we are empowering our educators with the tools, knowledge, and support they need to inspire learning and improve outcomes.”

Naron added that the platform reflected a joint commitment to innovation, equity, and excellence in education. – Xinhua

Israel hails Trump Gaza plan after UN Security Council vote

Alice Chancellor

JERUSALEM – Israel yesterday hailed Donald Trump's Gaza peace plan after its endorsement by the UN Security Council, as Hamas rejected the resolution which calls for the deployment of an international force in the Palestinian territory.

The United Nations Security Council voted on Monday in favour of a US-drafted resolution bolstering President Trump's plan for the Gaza Strip – which has allowed a fragile ceasefire to hold between Israel and Hamas since October 10.

The peace plan notably authorises the creation of an international force that would work with Israel and Egypt and newly-trained Palestinian police to help secure border areas and demilitarise Gaza.

Following the vote, Gazans embraced a chance for life to improve, but had little faith that Israel would comply with the resolution.

"Any international decision that benefits the Palestinians now is welcome. The important thing is that the war ends," said 39-year-old Saeb Al-Hassanat, who lives in a school sheltering displaced people in central Gaza.

"It doesn't matter who rules us. We welcome international administration of Gaza," he told AFP, but added that "without strong pressure from the US, Israel will not comply with any decision, and the Security Council resolution will remain worthless."

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's office hailed Trump's plan yesterday, saying it would lead to "peace and prosperity because it insists upon full demilitarisation, disarmament and



US Ambassador to the United Nations Mike Waltz raises his hand during a meeting of the UN Security Council in New York City on Monday to vote in favour of a draft resolution authorising the deployment of a temporary international stabilisation force and a transitional governance administration in Gaza. – AFP

the deradicalisation of Gaza".

On X, Netanyahu's office said the plan would also lead to an expansion of the Abraham Accords, under which a few Arab countries have normalised ties with Israel.

There were 13 votes in favour of the resolution and none against, with Russia and China both abstaining but not deploying their veto as permanent members.

'Conditions are catastrophic'

The Gaza Strip has been largely reduced to rubble after two years of fighting, sparked by Hamas's attack on Israel on October 7, 2023.

Rawia Abbas, who lives in a partially destroyed house in Gaza City's Zeitun neighbourhood, said

conditions in the territory remained dire despite the ceasefire.

"We still have no food, no water and no homes. Winter has begun and people's conditions are catastrophic. My young children stand in line for hours to get a gallon* of water and a coupon for some food," the 40-year-old told AFP.

Hamas, which is excluded by the resolution from any governance role in Gaza, said it did not meet Palestinians' "political and humanitarian demands and rights".

In a statement, the Islamist militant group decried the establishment of an international force and said the resolution imposes "an international trusteeship on the Gaza Strip, which our people, its

forces, and its constituent groups reject".

The peace plan authorises the creation of an International Stabilisation Force that is mandated to work on the "permanent decommissioning of weapons from non-state armed groups", protecting civilians and securing humanitarian aid corridors.

It also authorises the formation of a "Board of Peace", a transitional governing body for Gaza – which Trump would theoretically chair – with a mandate running until the end of 2027.

The resolution also calls for the resumption of humanitarian aid deliveries at scale through the UN, the Red Cross and the Red Crescent.

'Soft occupation'

"The UN Security Council's resolution is something that gives me a lot of hope," Israeli entrepreneur Ron Poole-Dayen told AFP in Tel Aviv.

"It is vital that we have as many forces reinforcing the little bit of common interest and will that has been displayed in the ceasefire agreement to increase the chances that we will go through to more long-lasting arrangements and

hopefully for peace, eventually."

But Ahmad Al-Kabariti, a Gaza City resident, told AFP he thought the "unjust resolution will undermine the rights of the Palestinian people" and amounted to "a soft occupation" in the territory.

The European Union's foreign affairs spokesman, Anouar El Anouni, hailed Monday's vote as "an important step" in ending the Gaza conflict, enabling scaled-up aid access and reconstructing the war-battered territory.

On X, the Palestinian foreign ministry, based in the Israeli-occupied West Bank, said the vote affirmed the Palestinian people's "right to self-determination and the establishment of their independent state," stressing the need for immediate implementation.

In convoluted language, the resolution does mention a possible pathway to a future Palestinian state once the Palestinian Authority completes reforms – but it is something firmly and repeatedly rejected by Israel. – AFP

* A US gallon equals 3.785 litres. The imperial gallon, used in the UK, Canada and some other countries, equals 4.546 litres. – DeepSeek

Google boss warns no company immune if AI bubble bursts

SAN FRANCISCO – The head of Google's parent company Alphabet warned that every company would be impacted if the AI bubble were to burst, in an interview to the BBC.

Sundai Pichai acknowledged there was "irrationality" behind the boom in artificial intelligence investment, which has fuelled a tech rally this year.

But fears that the AI bubble could burst have led to a selloff, sending global stock markets tumbling in recent months.

Asked if Google would be impacted by the AI bubble bursting, Pichai told the BBC: "I think no company is going to be immune, including us."

The interview, released on Monday, covered long-standing concerns surrounding AI, including energy needs, reducing climate targets, accuracy and the impact of AI on jobs.

Pichai warned of the "immense" energy requirements of AI, which accounted for 1.5 percent of global electricity consumption last year, according to the International Energy Agency (IEA).

AI's global computing footprint could reach 200 gigawatts by 2030 – the annual equivalent of Brazil's electric consumption – half of that in the United States.

Geopolitical tensions have helped drive a tech frenzy to

build massive data centres housing tens of thousands of chips requiring a phenomenal amount of electrical power and large-scale cool.

Pichai said action was needed to develop new energy sources and strengthen infrastructure.

The tech boss also acknowledged that the energy needs of Alphabet's AI operations would delay the company's climate goals, but insisted the company was still aiming for carbon neutrality by 2030.

AI will also have an impact on work as we know it, he said.

Pichai said it would cause "societal disruptions," even potentially replace CEOs, and "people will have to adapt."

He insisted those who adapt to AI "will do better."

"It doesn't matter if you want to be a teacher or a doctor. All those professions will be around, but the people who will do well in each of those professions are people who learn how to use these tools."

Alphabet reported its first US\$100 billion quarterly revenue in October, which it said was buoyed by its ability to capitalise on the AI boom.

The tech giant has ramped up spending to meet demand for AI infrastructure and pushed a global rollout of AI features in Google Search and the company's Gemini AI models. – AFP



US President Donald Trump greets Crown Prince and Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia Mohammed bin Salman on the South Lawn at the White House in Washington, DC, yesterday. Trump laid on a noisy military flypast featuring F-35 stealth fighters that Washington will sell to Riyadh as the de facto Saudi ruler arrived at the White House. Portugal soccer legend Cristiano Ronaldo, who plays in Saudi Arabia, was slated to attend the White House for the gala day of events, a White House official told AFP. – AFP

Spain raises 2025 growth forecast to 2.9 pct

MADRID – Spain’s leftist government yesterday approved an increase of its 2025 growth forecast from 2.7 to 2.9 percent, more than double the average expected in the eurozone.

The European Union’s fourth-largest economy has outperformed its peers since 2021, driven by tourism, low energy prices, domestic consumption and foreign investment.

Economy Minister Carlos Cuerdo said the cabinet had approved a revised economic outlook yesterday, which he said reflected the latest data and aligned with projections from other institutions.

“Despite the complex, uncertain international context and a slowdown among our main partners within the European Union, Spain maintains a dynamic and resilient growth,” Cuerdo told a press conference.

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) recently raised its full-year growth forecast for Spain for 2025 to 2.9 percent from 2.5 percent previously.

Spain’s revised forecast is sharply higher than the 1.3-percent growth Brussels expects for the entire eurozone in 2025, as large economies such as France and Germany post sluggish figures.

The Spanish economy grew by 0.6 percent in the third quarter, slowing slightly from 0.8 percent in the previous quarter as exports fell.

While Spain’s economic performance has drawn praise, the country’s unemployment rate of 10.45 percent in the third quarter is the highest in the European Union.

Another headache for the minority coalition is its inability to approve a new budget since its formation in 2023, limiting room for manoeuvre in launching new spending programmes.

That year’s accounts have been extended automatically as the government has failed repeatedly to squeeze a new budget through a hung parliament, although the impasse has not weighed down economic growth.

Budget Minister María Jesús Montero presented a 2026 spending ceiling of 212 billion euros (US\$246 billion) yesterday, an increase of 8.5 percent on the current framework and a first step towards submitting a new budget to lawmakers.

Montero vowed to “give it all” in negotiations with other parties, aiming to present the budget in the first quarter of next year for approval in parliament in April or May. – AFP

‘Dictatorial’: Why Ecuadorans said ‘No’ to hosting US base



Voters celebrate following the results of a referendum in Guayaquil, Ecuador on Sunday. Ecuadoran voters rejected the return of US military bases, a damaging blow to Trump-friendly President Daniel Noboa. – AFP

Paola López

QUITO – Ecuador’s Donald Trump-aligned President Daniel Noboa was dealt a major blow on Sunday by voters who spurned his plans for a return of foreign military bases to the country battling rampant cartel violence.

Despite opinion polls projecting a comfortable referendum victory for the millennial president, Ecuadorans roundly rejected all four of his proposals.

Besides an overwhelming “No” to overturning a ban on foreign military bases, voters also shot down proposals to end public funding for political parties, to reduce the number of lawmakers, and to draft a new constitution.

Analysts say Noboa was unable to convince the electorate that his ideas were the best way to deal with what is a very real problem of sky-high crime and murder rates.

‘They don’t care’

Noboa last year deployed the military to Ecuador’s crime-riddled prisons and streets, and raised taxes to fund his war on drug gangs – also a major focus of US President Trump.

Seeking to boost cooperation with Washington, which has been carrying out deadly strikes on alleged drug-smuggling boats in the Caribbean and Pacific, Noboa proposed reopening a US base at Manta on the Pacific coast.

But voters told AFP this was not a

problem for the United States to solve.

“Does the United States care if our children are robbed on the street? They don’t care,” said Daniela Cordova, a 44-year-old university employee who voted “No” in the referendum.

Security “does not depend on a constitution or on military bases”, she added.

Political scientist Santiago Cahuasquí from Quito’s Universidad Hemisferios said voters punished Noboa for “grandiose communication that is completely divorced from reality.”

“There hasn’t been a single result” from Noboa’s heavily-publicised anti-crime campaign, said Andrés Delgado, a 23-year-old university student.

“In fact, insecurity is getting worse.” He also voted “No.”

Ecuadoran security expert Michelle Maffei said it was a mistake to focus on military solutions without the existence of “crime prevention programmes or programmes to strengthen institutions” that investigate money laundering and other offences linked to drug trafficking.

‘Fear of change’

Presidential spokeswoman Carolina Jaramillo on Monday blamed “a deep fear of change” for Noboa’s referendum defeat.

But voters and analysts told AFP it was more a fear of losing rights

to a president who has proposed chemical castration for rapists and intelligence operations that require no warrants.

“My ‘No’ vote was a rejection of the government for being dictatorial,” said Ximena Martínez, a 29-year-old vendor in Manta.

“Why would he [Noboa] bring US military personnel back to Manta after the abuses they committed here?” asked Martínez, referring to reports by rights groups that the base was used in the past as a launchpad for strikes on boats transporting drugs or migrants. Or sometimes fishermen.

Ecuadorans “are punishing Noboa’s authoritarian drive,” added Cahuasquí, the political scientist.

Indigenous ‘repression’

A military crackdown on recent indigenous protests against the elimination of a diesel subsidy also seemed to have turned the mood against Noboa.

In Imbabura province, where indigenous protesters blocking roads clashed with security forces – leaving at least two dead – more than two-thirds of the population voted “No” to the referendum’s four questions.

Norma Navarro, a 73-year-old retiree, said her rejection was informed by “the brutal repression of the indigenous people.”

“That’s what hurt me the most,” she told AFP. – AFP

Sheinbaum says US anti-drug strikes on Mexican soil ‘not going to happen’

MEXICO CITY – President Donald Trump’s threat of US military strikes against drug cartels inside Mexico is a non-starter, Mexican President Claudia Sheinbaum said yesterday.

“It’s not going to happen,” she said at a press conference, responding to Trump’s warning that he would do “whatever we have to do,” including strikes within the territory of the key US economic partner and ally.

“We don’t want interventions by any foreign government. There is cooperation and there is coordination, but not subordination,” Sheinbaum said.

Referring to a war in the 19th century, she said “the last time the United States came to intervene in Mexico, they took half of the territory.”

“We cannot permit an intervention.”

Trump told reporters on Monday that he would authorise an attack on Mexico if deemed needed.

“Would I launch strikes in Mexico to stop drugs? It’s OK with me,” Trump said. “I didn’t say I’m doing it, but I’d be proud to do it. Because we’re going to save millions of lives by doing it.”

Trump’s threat came as the United States has deployed an aircraft carrier and other significant military forces near Venezuela to pressure the leftist president, Nicolás Maduro, accusing him of leading a drug cartel.

US forces have blown up more than 20 small boats, killing at least 83 people, according to an AFP tally. No evidence has been presented to back up the Pentagon’s claims that the boats in the Caribbean and off the Pacific coast were running drugs and threatened the United States. – AFP

Brazil defines boundaries for 10 new indigenous territories

BRASÍLIA – Brazil’s government announced yesterday that boundaries have been drawn for 10 new indigenous territories, a move that follows protests for more representation that disrupted UN climate talks in the Amazonian city of Belém.

President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva has already approved 16 indigenous territories since retaking

office in 2023, but some groups have criticised slow progress.

The new territories span seven states and benefit people from several communities, including the Munduruku, Tupinamba, Guarani-Kaiowa and Pataxo, the government said in a statement.

The demarcation is an intermediate step in recognising the lands, which must be ratified by Lula.

Thousands of demonstrators, including indigenous protesters, marched at the COP30 summit on Saturday to pressure negotiators to act urgently against climate warming.

And last Tuesday, dozens of indigenous protesters clashed with security forces guarding a conference venue.

Indigenous groups are demanding greater representation at COP30

and in decisions on preserving their territories.

Last Wednesday, renowned Brazilian tribal chief Raoni Metuktire told journalists at a parallel event to the UN talks that Lula “must respect us.”

“I will make an appointment with him, and, if necessary, I will give him a talking-to so that he listens to me,” said Raoni – instantly

recognizable for the large wooden plate in his lower lip.

Lula made the demarcation of indigenous lands a campaign promise – resuming a policy abandoned by his far-right predecessor Jair Bolsonaro.

Indigenous lands currently occupy 13.8 percent of Brazilian territory.

Scientists say that the demarcation of these areas contributes to preserving the environment. – AFP

Liu's late surge denies Mo Jiadie 3rd National Games gold



GUANGZHOU - Local favorite Mo Jiadie's bid for a third gold medal at the 15th National Games unraveled in the final meters of the women's 400m yesterday, as Liu Yinglan of Sichuan overtook her in the rain to win in 51.75 seconds.

Two-time Asian U20 champion Liu, 20, chopped more than a full second off her personal best - previously 52.76 set in August - with a decisive kick over the last 30 meters.

"I wasn't completely confident coming in," Liu said. "I just wanted to push, and in the end I held on and drove through the finish."

Persistent rain and temperatures dropping to 13 degrees Celsius made conditions difficult, but Liu said they simply had to adapt. "The weather wasn't ideal, but we have to adjust. This gold medal represents a new beginning for me - it's my first major title since moving up from the youth ranks to senior competition."

Mo, representing Guangdong, took silver in 51.87. She

acknowledged the weather but said fatigue in the closing meters had proved decisive.

"The conditions affected everyone, but I was just tired at the end," said Mo, who had entered the race having already won the women's 400m hurdles and the 4x400m mixed relay at these Games. She said missing out on a third title brought no disappointment. "This is my third National Games. I have no regrets. Running this time today, in this weather, is something I'm proud of."

In the men's 400m, national record holder Liu Kai of Shandong clocked 45.77 seconds, earning the 19-year-old his first National Games gold.

"I'm thrilled," Liu said. "To win in a field this strong, and in tough weather, means a lot. I haven't thought much about the next goal yet, but I really hope to get a good result at next year's Asian Games."

In the men's long jump, World University Games and Asian Championships winner Shu Heng opened with an 8.17-meter leap and never relinquished his lead. The mark fell just five centimeters short of his personal best.

"I wanted to go beyond my PB today, but winning the gold still makes me very happy," Shu said, adding that the shifting winds made attempts unpredictable.

"Sometimes it was tailwind, sometimes headwind. I was just waiting for a good wind to take a strong jump," said Shu.

World Championships bronze medalist Shi Yuhao of Jiangsu failed to qualify for the final after fouling on all three attempts in the preliminary round.

The women's 5,000m saw 12 athletes set personal bests. Liang Tiantian of Henan claimed the title in 15:09.85.

The men's 5,000m produced similar depth, with all the top 10 finishers breaking the 14-minute barrier. Yu Shuiqing of Liaoning won in 13:36.89.

In the women's pole vault, Wei Lingxia of Jiangxi cleared 4.30 meters and edged Du Rui of Sichuan on countback. Hu Haoran of Hunan won in the men's javelin with a season-best 81.60-meter, and the men's hammer throw final saw Wang Qi of Jiangsu take gold at 73.28 meters. (More on page 20)

- Xinhua



Wang Manyu of Heilongjiang serves during the women's singles final against Sun Yingsha of Hebei at the 15th National Games in Macao, on Sunday. Wang has withdrawn from the table tennis competition Heilongjiang Provincial Sports Bureau announced yesterday. In the women's team quarterfinals yesterday, Wang defeated Jiangsu's Kuai Man and Qian Tianyi successively to help Heilongjiang reach the semifinals. According to the Bureau, Wang suffered neck discomfort during the match against Qian. After receiving treatment from the medical team, Wang decided to continue the match and eventually sealed the victory. However, Wang's condition worsened afterwards. The medical team recommended further examination and treatment in Beijing after assessing her injury. Yesterday night, in Wang's absence, Heilongjiang lost to Hebei 3-0 in the semifinals. Heilongjiang will compete against Shanghai for the bronze medal today.

- Xinhua

Malaysia to appeal to CAS after damning FIFA report on forgery scandal

Football

KUALALUMPUR - Malaysia's football federation said yesterday it would go ahead with an appeal to the world's top sports court, hours after FIFA released a damning report in an eligibility scandal that saw seven players banned.

The world governing body suspended the seven foreign-born players for a year and fined the FA of Malaysia (FAM) US\$440,000 in September for submitting false documents that said the players had Malaysian ancestry.

The FIFA appeals committee released its full findings on Monday, explaining why it had rejected an FAM appeal against the sanctions.

The report also ordered a full investigation into the FAM's conduct and governance, accusing it of "not taking any discernible disciplinary action - no concrete suspensions, no dismissals, no referrals to domestic authorities".

The report added: "This omission suggests a lack of accountability and raises serious concern about the governance culture within the organisation.

"Consequently, the committee instructs the secretariat to take immediate steps to launch a formal investigation into the internal operations of the FAM."

The FAM denied any deliberate wrongdoing and appealed to FIFA in October, before suspending its secretary-general and saying it would establish an independent committee to investigate.

The body's acting president Yusoff Mahadi said in a statement yesterday: "The FAM will initiate the process of bringing this case to CAS."

"This step is taken to ensure justice is upheld and to defend the integrity of the player eligibility process established by the Malaysian government and relevant bodies.

"FAM remains committed to fighting for the rights of all players eligible to represent the country and will ensure every action is taken professionally, transparently, and through the proper legal channels."

FIFA launched the player eligibility probe after receiving a complaint following Malaysia's 4-0 win against Vietnam in June in an Asian Cup qualifier in which two of the seven players scored.

Its investigation showed none of Hector Hevel, Jon Irazabal, Gabriel Palmero, Facundo Garcés, Rodrigo Holgado, Imanol Machuca or Joao Brandao Figueiredo had a parent or grandparent born in Malaysia, a requirement for selection to a national team.

- AFP



South Korea's Son Heung-min (right) fights for the ball with Ghana's Caleb Yirenkyi (left) and Jonas Adjetey during the international friendly match between South Korea and Ghana in Seoul yesterday. South Korea won the game 1-0. - AFP

Japan boost World Cup confidence with friendly win over Bolivia

Football

TOKYO - Coach Hajime Moriyasu said Japan will head into next year confident they can make an impact at the World Cup after cruising past Bolivia 3-0 in a friendly yesterday.

Moriyasu's side picked up their third straight friendly win, including a first victory over Brazil, to end the year on a high at Japan's National Stadium.

It was also their second successive clean sheet following

Friday's 2-0 win over Ghana.

Moriyasu has said that Japan are aiming to win the World Cup and he believes they are building momentum heading towards the tournament in the United States, Canada and Mexico.

"The work we have done this year meant we were able to keep a clean sheet," said Moriyasu, who was taking charge of Japan for the 100th time.

"It doesn't matter who we're playing against, it's up to us play our game and go in search of goals.

"Winning today gives us confidence and sets us up for the challenge of next year."

An early goal from Crystal Palace's Daichi Kamada set Japan on their way before second-half strikes from substitutes Shuto Machino and Keito Nakamura made the game safe.

Japan were able to win despite Moriyasu making seven changes from the team that started against Ghana.

"This game showed that we can win whoever is in the team and whether the game is going our way or not," he said.

Kamada, who has yet to score for his club this season, struck with a sweet left-foot finish in the fifth minute.

"I was playing in midfield today but I was told to try to get into scoring positions," the 29-year-old said.

"It was a good cross that came in and I was able to put it away."

Machino put Japan two ahead just minutes after coming off the bench, turning home Nakamura's cross from close range.

Nakamura added another after making space for a shot with some

deft footwork inside the Bolivia box.

Bolivia also have a chance to qualify for the World Cup and will compete in an intercontinental playoff in March, after finishing seventh in South American qualifying.

Coach Oscar Villegas admitted that his team had been outclassed by Japan.

"Japan put us under pressure in the build-up," he said.

"We wanted to stop them breaking through our lines but it was difficult, as they also showed against Brazil."

- AFP

‘Demon Slayer’ becomes first Japanese movie to break 100 billion yen

TOKYO –The latest film adaptation of the “Demon Slayer” manga franchise has become the first Japanese movie to gross more than 100 billion yen (US\$644 million) worldwide, its distributors said.

“Demon Slayer: Kimetsu No Yaiba – Infinity Castle: Part 1”, about sword-swishing Tanjiro Kamado’s final showdown to slay demons and make his sister human again, is part of a planned trilogy.

Released outside Japan from August, including in North America and last Friday in the Chinese mainland, the caper has attracted 89.17 million viewers internationally, Aniplex and Toho said on Monday.

In Japan, it remains in second place by revenues behind a previous “Demon Slayer” movie, a massive hit during the COVID-19 pandemic, having already overtaken Studio Ghibli’s

“Spirited Away” (2001).

Originally penned by comic book artist Koyoharu Gotouge and then animated by studio Ufotable, “Demon Slayer” is often lauded for setting a new standard for anime cinematography.

Dazzling visual effects permeate the latest movie featuring acrobatic, lightning-fast battles with demons at a kaleidoscopic castle with an infinite array of floors.

The original manga also sets it apart from other Japanese juggernauts like “One Piece”, which spans over 100 volumes compared to just 23 for “Demon Slayer”.

Anime is king in Japan but the popularity of animation has also exploded elsewhere.

Chinese animated fantasy “Ne Zha II” is the highest-grossing film of 2025, while Netflix’s most-watched movie ever is the animated “KPop Demon Hunters”. – AFP



Theatrical release poster for “Demon Slayer: Kimetsu No Yaiba – Infinity Castle: Part 1” – Image courtesy of IMDB

McCartney to release silent AI protest song

LONDON – Pop legend Paul McCartney will release a silent music track next month as part of a silent album to protest UK copyright law changes that would give exemptions to tech firms.

Other artists such as Hans Zimmer and singer Kate Bush have joined the project, highlighting what they say are the dangers artificial intelligence (AI) poses to the creative industries.

McCartney’s contribution to the album “Is This What We Want?” will draw “attention to the damning impact on artists’ livelihoods controversial government proposals could cause,” the artists behind the project said in a statement.

Called “Bonus Track” it is a two minute 45 seconds recording of an empty studio featuring a series of clicks.

More than 1,000 artists, including Annie Lennox, Damon Albarn and Jamiroquai, have collaborated

on the silent album which was first released in February.

They maintain that the government’s law changes “would make it easier to train AI models on copyrighted work without a licence”.

“Under the heavily criticised proposals, UK copyright law would be upended to benefit global tech giants. AI companies would be free to use an artist’s work to train their AI models without permission or remuneration,” they added.

The changes “would require artists to proactively ‘opt-out’ from the theft of their work – reversing the very principle of copyright law,” they added.

Only 1,000 copies of the vinyl album have been pressed.

In May, some 400 writers and musicians including Elton John and Bush condemned the proposals as a “wholesale giveaway” to Silicon Valley in a

Gianfranco Rosi: the slow documentary maker in a frantic world

Adam Plowright

PARIS – If the regular recipe for success in the modern entertainment industry or on social media is being loud, attention-seeking and a prolific creator of “content”, Italian filmmaker Gianfranco Rosi has carved out a career doing the exact opposite.

The work of the award-winning documentary producer is everything our contemporary culture is not: slow, nuanced, contemplative.

It’s a strategy that has taken him to the pinnacle of European cinema – he’s won the top Golden Lion prize at the Venice Film Festival and the Golden Bear in Berlin – and has pushed the boundaries for non-fiction in the process.

“There were people saying ‘How can you give a Golden Lion to someone that never directed an actor?’” he told AFP. “It’s not important that division for me [between fiction and documentary]. What I feel close to is cinema.”

His latest work “Sotto le nuvole” (“Below the Clouds”), which releases internationally in France this week, is a portrait of the gritty Italian port of Naples.

It bears all the hallmarks of Rosi’s distinct way of working.

The 61-year-old, who also holds American nationality, believes in “immersion”, often heading to live alone at the location of his films with no script and only a vague notion of what he is trying to capture.

He spent three years in Naples, wandering, meeting people, filming relentlessly, finding the characters whose lives form the core of the 115-minute production.

“I’m a director that doesn’t go home to sleep. I’m always on location,” he said.

For 2013’s “Sacra GRA” (“Holy Ringroad”), his breakthrough documentary, he spent two years living in a van around the ringroad



Italian-American filmmaker Gianfranco Rosi poses with his award at the 82nd Venice International Film Festival in Venice, Italy for his film “Sotto le nuvole” (“Below the Clouds”) on September 6, 2025. – Photo: LucaFazPhoto/Wikimedia Commons.

on the outskirts of Rome where he slowly won the confidence of his subjects: an ambulance driver, an eel farmer, a faded aristocrat, prostitutes.

“Notturmo” (“Night”), which released in 2020, saw Rosi spend over three years on the borders of Iraq and Syria, documenting the impact of the Islamic State (IS) group.

His first film “Boatman” took five years to complete.

“Time is my biggest investment,” he told AFP. “Working alone allows me to wait for the right moment, to create a certain intimacy with the people I meet, and allows me to wait for the right light.”

Meditation on time

Rosi’s film-making process is only part of his craft, with his visual language and approach to storytelling also setting him apart.

He disdains the look of many modern documentaries – shaky handheld camera work and an urgent, grave tone – preferring a static vantage point, with a fixed lens.

He frames wide and his camera lingers, leaving long pauses that he likens to the space between notes in a piece of music, or the void between the lines of a poem.

He conducts no on-screen interviews, does no narration, and allows himself a strict minimum of directing his subjects to ensure his work remains almost entirely observational.

“Below the Clouds” features a handful of unconnected people around Naples – an after-school

teacher, a fire department call-centre operator, a sailor, archeologists – whose lives are revealed little by little in looping segments.

There is no place for pizza, football, sun-drenched piazzas, or the mafia – the clichés of Neapolitan life.

“There’s always a very strong stereotype about Naples,” he explained. “I wanted to get rid of all the elements that belong to the collective imagination of people.”

Overall, it is a meditation on time that links the ancient Vesuvius volcano that looms over the city to its buried Roman past and its often chaotic present.

“The film, for me, is a reflection on the complexity of Naples and on history, on the weight of the past, and somehow on suspended time,” he added.

It is shot in black-and-white to give it a vintage feel, while the sparse musical score is provided by Britain’s Daniel Blumberg, who won an Oscar for his work on “The Brutalist”.

Reviews of Rosi’s film were overwhelmingly positive when it premiered at the Venice Film Festival in September, where it won the Special Jury prize.

The Hollywood Reporter said Rosi “makes documentaries like no-one else” and called his latest work “stunning”.

The Guardian gave it a five-star rating, saying it was “another of [Rosi’s] brilliantly composed docu-mosaic assemblages of scenes and tableaux.”

– AFP

World Weather			
CHINA	ASIA-PACIFIC	WORLD	LUSOPHONE
Beijing 2°C~13°C	Manila 25°C~32°C	New York 5°C~10°C	Lisbon 9°C~17°C
Shanghai 1°C~11°C	Bangkok 20°C~27°C	London -1°C~6°C	Rio de Janeiro 18°C~25°C
Hong Kong 13°C~18°C	Tokyo 3°C~12°C	Frankfurt 1°C~4°C	Luanda 23°C~28°C
Taipei 15°C~17°C	Singapore 24°C~32°C	Vancouver 6°C~10°C	Maputo 18°C~26°C
Guangzhou 10°C~16°C	Kuala Lumpur 24°C~31°C	Paris 1°C~7°C	Dili 21°C~33°C
Nanjing -1°C~11°C	Jakarta 23°C~31°C	Moscow -1°C~2°C	São Tomé 25°C~29°C
Guilin 8°C~14°C	Seoul 0°C~8°C	Las Vegas 6°C~14°C	Praia 21°C~31°C
Xi'an -1°C~10°C	Sydney 17°C~28°C	Monte Carlo 8°C~13°C	Bissau 23°C~34°C



Du Rui of Sichuan competes during the women's pole vault final at the 15th National Games in Guangzhou, Guangdong Province, yesterday.

— Xinhua



Lee Sze Wing of Hong Kong shows the three gold medals she won after the awarding ceremony the women's omnium in the track cycling event at the 15th National Games in Hong Kong, on Monday.

— Xinhua



Zhang Boheng of Hunan competes during the men's parallel bars final at the 15th National Games in Zhaoqing, Guangdong Province, on Monday.

— Xinhua



Liu Qingyi of Henan performs during the breaking B-Girls final against Guo Pu of Shandong at the 15th National Games in Guangzhou, Guangdong Province, yesterday.

— Xinhua



Li Zeyang (right) of Hubei celebrates with Chen Guanfeng of Guangdong after the men's 100m final at the 15th National Games in Guangzhou, Guangdong Province, on Monday.



Ren Min (front) of Sichuan competes during the softball bronze medal match against Guangdong at the 15th National Games in Zhongshan, Guangdong Province yesterday.



— Xinhua

