

# Sam vows optimisation of technological innovation ecosystem, opens first AIE fair

Staff Reporter

During yesterday's opening ceremony of the 2025 Global Artificial Intelligence Machines and Electronics Expo (AIE) in Macau, Chief Executive Sam Hou Fai said in a speech that Macau will continue to optimise its technological innovation ecosystem and strengthen the synergy between research outcomes and their commercialisation, with the aim of fostering new economic growth engines.

The expo is held for the first time. Sam also said that Macau will continue to vigorously seize the opportunities arising from the Macau-Hengqin integrated in-depth development and the development of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area (GBA), while promoting the steady growth of its technological innovation industries, with the aim of injecting fresh impetus into the high-quality development of the global electronics and information industry.

The three-day expo, which started yesterday and ends tomorrow, is being simultaneously held in Macau and Zhuhai.

In Macau, the expo is being held at The Venetian Macao's Cotai Expo.



Chief Executive Sam Hou Fai (centre) watches a performance by a robot during his visit to the 2025 Global Artificial Intelligence Machines and Electronics Expo (AIE) at The Venetian Macao in Cotai yesterday. — Photo: GCS

In his speech, Sam pointed out that President Xi Jinping paid an inspection visit to Guangdong Province last month and delivered an important speech that charted the direction for further deepening cooperation between Guangdong,

Hong Kong and Macau.

Sam said that the GBA is a global cluster for consumer electronics, smart home appliances, high-end equipment, new-energy vehicles and other intelligent products, possessing comprehensive advantages

in intelligent electronics industry clusters and technological innovation industry chains, adding that the GBA is committed to becoming an international science and technology innovation centre.

Sam noted that the inaugural



AIE adopts the pioneering “one expo, two cities” model, held simultaneously in Macau and Zhuhai. The Macau venue focuses on intelligent electronics while the Zhuhai venue centres on intelligent machinery, Sam noted, adding that the expo in the two cities has together attracted professional buyers, exhibitors and leading technology companies from more than 30 countries and regions.

Sam noted that the expo features new-product launches, showcases cutting-edge achievements, and – by leveraging innovative customs policies and arrangements implemented in the Guangdong-Macao In-Depth Cooperation Zone in Hengqin – creates an international platform for consumer electronics that integrates exhibition, incubation and business matchmaking.

Sam noted that Macau, as an international city “backed by the motherland and connected to the world” and a core city of the GBA, offers visa-free entry to citizens from over 80 countries and regions, which make it convenient for industry professionals from foreign countries to visit Macau to attend exhibitions and conferences, pursue investment opportunities, and engage in business negotiations.

In Zhuhai, the fair is being held at the Zhuhai International Convention and Exhibition Centre in Wanzai. ■



President Xi Jinping (left) addresses the closing ceremony of the seventh meeting of China-France Business Council in Beijing yesterday, as his French counterpart Emmanuel Macron (right) looks on. (More on p.7) — Xinhua

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

The Macau Post Daily

## Mozambique, China maintain close cooperation in supporting persons with disabilities: official

Mozambique and China enjoy a long-standing tradition of friendship, with a history of mutual support in assisting persons with disabilities, a Mozambican official has said. — Story on p. 8

## Trump despair drives folk icon Joan Baez back to the studio

Legendary American folk singer Joan Baez has told AFP that the return of Donald Trump to the White House has pushed her to go back to the studio where she has just recorded a protest song. — Story on p. 11

## Spain, Morocco pen deals in latest boost to ties

Spain signed 14 cooperation deals with Morocco in Madrid yesterday, strengthening ties with the European Union's North African neighbour that were long poisoned by the disputed Western Sahara. — Story on p. 12



# H2H Christmas Event hopes to bring celebration to Ka Ho Village



This poster downloaded from the Hold On To Hope Project Facebook page last night promotes this Sunday's "H2H Christmas Event".

## Interview by Rui Pastorin

Another Christmas-themed event is set to heighten the festive spirit in Macau, this time hoping to draw more people to one place: Coloane's Ka Ho hamlet.

Hosted by the Hold On To Hope Project (H2H Project), the one-day "H2H Christmas Event" will be taking place on Sunday in Ka Ho from 3 p.m. to 5:30 p.m., promising an afternoon of fun and activities, all for free. Face painting, balloon modelling, DIY Christmas wreaths and the decoration of gingerbread men and cookies are among the scheduled activities mainly for children, while Santa Claus will also be making special appearances around the venue.

"It's free of charge just to bring more people to the Ka Ho area", Andreia Bento, the coordinator of the H2H Project, told the *Post* in a phone interview yesterday morning, noting that the group is holding the "small and cosy event" for kids and their families.

While Christmas-themed activities and workshops had been held in the area before, Bento said that this year, it will be held for free so that they can draw more people in to the area. "It's a very nice area", she noted, pointing out the beauty of the nature encompassing it.

However, she noted that fewer and fewer people come to Ka Ho

Village. And with the upcoming event, she noted: "We are a little bit concerned", but efforts persist in promoting the event with friends, families and some schools that may bring in some students.

Altogether, the event will provide a "nice afternoon" of free activities for its participants, giving a gentle reminder for those deciding to join the workshops to arrive early to ensure their spots as they are limited.

## Hold on to Hope Project: Breaking barriers, helping towards reintegration

The H2H Project is an initiative by the Association of Rehabilitation of Drug Abusers of Macau (ARTM). It was created to help ARTM residents before they get reinstated into society, according to Bento, who added: "It's like an internship", being a way to improve their social and working skills and experiences, among others.

Bento said that the project searches for training in areas such as cooking, serving and baking for the residents, learning a variety of skills so that when they leave the treatment centre, they can do so with a little foundation to help them find a job easier and know what to do, being a form of support for ARTM residents.

Prior to leaving the treatment

centre, the residents get to help out in areas like the H2H Gallery and its nearby coffee shop, allowing them to socialise a little bit more. "Sometimes our residents are afraid that when they leave, society won't accept them. So, we created this project to help them lose a little bit of the fear and try to change their lives for the better".

Over the years, the programme has received good feedback, some of which is from frequent customers of the H2H establishments who show constant support. And for the centre's staff, seeing that this kind of support is "nice", Bento said, particularly because "we feel that society is starting to accept them because addiction is hard to overcome and people need support to overcome it".

The residents themselves also like the programme as it is a way for them to prepare themselves before leaving the treatment centre, Bento said, equipping them not only with skills, but also how to socialise. Without the programme, if there were only treatment and related daily activities like therapy and workshops without going out to socialise and put themselves out there, residents might just be too nervous and shy in the end, she said, concluding: "This way, when they go out, they already start slowly adapting themselves". ■

# 63 pct of local staff finds govt's NRW policies 'inadequate': FAOM survey

## Armindo Neves

The Macau Federation of Trade Unions (FAOM; aka Gung Luen) co-hosted a press conference in conjunction with the Macau Economic Sciences Association yesterday to announce that the findings of their latest survey show, among other things, that 63 percent of local employees believe that the government's policies on non-resident workers (NRWs) are "inadequate".

The press conference was held at Gung Luen's Macau Gaming Enterprises Staff Association office on Estrada Marginal do Hipódromo in Areia Preta.

The findings indicate that around 60 percent of employees reported no change in their wages compared to last year, while 10 percent reported a decrease, reflecting uneven salary

adjustments across different industries.

The findings also show that 63 percent of employees believe that the current "Law on the Hiring of Non-Resident Workers" lacks a "local hiring priority" mechanism, while 60 percent said they were concerned that the lower wages of NRWs compared to their local counterparts create unfair competition.

The association's recommendations include tightening the approval process for NRWs, establishing "reasonable" salary thresholds, and promoting industry transformation and vocational training.

Regarding working hours, the findings show that over 64 percent of employees have only one to 1.5 rest days per week. The association's recommendations also include promoting corporate digital



Representatives from the Macau Federation of Trade Unions (FAOM; aka Gung Luen) and the Macau Economic Sciences Association look on during yesterday's press conference, including lawmaker Leong Sun lok (centre). – Photo: Gung Luen

transformation, legally defining employees' "right to disconnect," and establishing fair shift and compensation mechanisms to protect employees' right to rest.

Furthermore, the association recommends that the local govern-

ment should strengthen employees' financial planning support, vocational training, and psychological counselling services to enhance labour welfare and job security.

Additionally, the association also said that the government

should increase the "cost" of illegal employment, enhance cross-departmental supervision and technology-based enforcement, and establish a user-friendly platform for reporting illegal employment, among other measures. ■

## Published since Aug 2004

- Director & Chief Editor – Harald Brüning
- Office Manager – Sally Chong
- Marketing Manager – Kevin Cheung King Lok
- Managing Editor – Maria Cheang 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 Weather

CLOUDY APART FROM SUNNY PERIODS.  
FORCE 3 TO 4 NORTHEASTERLY WINDS.  
RELATIVE HUMIDITY WILL RANGE BETWEEN 45% AND 85%.



17°C~23°C

Source: SMG

# Feast of the Immaculate Conception public holiday

Due to it being the Feast of the Immaculate Conception holiday on Monday, *The Macau Post Daily's* editing team will be taking Sunday off and will return to work on Monday so the print edition of your favourite newspaper will be on the newsstands again on Tuesday morning. However, our website <https://www.macaupostdaily.com/> will be updated round-the-clock.

We wish all our readers, advertisers, distributors and contributors a restful break.

*The Macau Post Daily's* management office, banks and government offices will be closed on Monday.





Quality Tourism Services Accreditation Scheme

澳門有禮運動  
Macao Courtesy Campaign

MACAO GOVERNMENT TOURISM OFFICE

Merchants accoladed with "Quality Tourism Services Accreditation Scheme" awards for Food &amp; Beverage Sector and Travel Agency Sector in 2025:

## Food &amp; Beverage Sector

## Restaurant (hotel)

Quality Tourism Services Gold Award : WING LEI (WYNN)

Sustainable Dining Award : ROBUCHON NO DOMO (HOTEL GRANDE LISBOA)

Local Feature Award : RESTAURANTE DE XANGAI (THE VENETIAN MACAO)

Community Care Services Award : O BUFETE PARISIAN (O PARISIENSE MACAU)

Operational Innovation Award : O BUFETE PARISIAN (O PARISIENSE MACAU)

Integrity Business Award : 456 XANGAI (LISBOA)

Quality Tourism Services Merchant Award\*

1. OS OITO (HOTEL GRANDE LISBOA)
2. 99 NOODLES (PALÁCIO WYNN)
3. 99 NOODLES (WYNN)
4. AMIGO (RIVIERA MACAU)
5. CHALOU GLP (PALÁCIO GRANDE LISBOA)
6. A COZINHA (HOTEL GRANDE LISBOA)
7. PRONTO (PALÁCIO WYNN)
8. QUENTE! A SICHUAN BISTRÔ (WYNN)
9. ROBUCHON NO DOMO (HOTEL GRANDE LISBOA)
10. O BUFETE PARISIAN (O PARISIENSE MACAU)
11. CAFÉ PARISIAN (O PARISIENSE MACAU)
12. A CHINA (O PARISIENSE MACAU)
13. PAVILHÃO DO NORTE (THE VENETIAN MACAO)
14. 456 XANGAI (LISBOA)
15. SW (PALÁCIO WYNN)
16. WING LEI (WYNN)
17. PALÁCIO À VISTA DO LAGO (PALÁCIO WYNN)
18. ORQUÍDEA DE JADE (HOTEL HARBOURVIEW)
19. COZINHA URBANA (HOTEL JW MARRIOTT MACAU)
20. CAÇAROLA (MGM COTAI)
21. EDO JAPONÊS (NÚWA)
22. EDO JAPONÊS (ESTABELECIMENTO VENETIAN) (THE VENETIAN MACAO)
23. O GRANDE BUFETE (PALÁCIO GRANDE LISBOA)
24. MERCADO BISTRÔ (O PARISIENSE MACAU)
25. TEKKA (WYNN)
26. RESTAURANTE DE MASSAS DRAGÃO VERMELHO (THE VENETIAN MACAO)
27. METRÓPOLE (METRÓPOLE)
28. METRÓPOLE (METRÓPOLE)

29. RESTAURANTE DO COZIDO DE MARISCO HIP SENG (CITY OF DREAMS)(HOTEL CONTAGEM DECRESCENTE))
30. RESTAURANTE DO COZIDO DE MARISCO HIP SENG (STUDIO CITY) (HOTEL STUDIO CITY)
31. RESTAURANTE DO COZIDO DE MARISCO HIP SENG (GALAXY) (GALAXIA)
32. MESA (PALÁCIO GRANDE LISBOA)
33. FONTANA (PALÁCIO WYNN)
34. VIC'S (ROCKS)
35. CAFÉ BISTRÔ TEMÁTICO DOS AMIGOS (LISBOETA)
36. DUMPLINGS LAGO CHONG FA (HOTEL BROADWAY)
37. DUMPLINGS LAGO CHONG FA (HOTEL CONTAGEM DECRESCENTE))
38. MIZUMI (PALÁCIO WYNN)
39. PÁTEO IMPERIAL (MGM MACAU)
40. PALÁCIO DE DRAGÃO (DRAGÃO DOURADO)
41. PIN YUE XUAN (THE VENETIAN MACAO)
42. NOVA CASA IMPERIAL- DIM SUM (THE VENETIAN MACAO)
43. PICASSO (DRAGÃO DOURADO)
44. RESTAURANTE PRAHA (HOTEL HARBOURVIEW)
45. CAFÉ PALÁCIO (PALÁCIO WYNN)
46. COZINHA IMPERIAL (CROWNE PLAZA MACAU)
47. 8 VERMELHO (PALÁCIO WYNN)
48. 8 VERMELHO (WYNN)
49. OITO AO QUADRADO (MGM MACAU)
50. RESTAURANTE PENA (HOTEL CASA REAL)
51. COZINHA ZHEN DIM SUM (NÚWA)
52. RESTAURANTE GOOBNE FRANGO & O DEMÔNIO PODE GRELHAR (LISBOA)
53. RESTAURANTE MARMELEIRA MARISCOS (THE VENETIAN MACAO)
54. JARDIM DO PALÁCIO (PALÁCIO GRANDE LISBOA)
55. VIDA RICA (MANDARIN ORIENTAL MACAU)
56. PALÁCIO LÓTUS (O PARISIENSE MACAU)

57. IMPERIAL (HOTEL CASA REAL)
58. NASCENTE (MGM COTAI)
59. CONFETARIA (MGM MACAU)
60. DOCES (PALÁCIO WYNN)
61. ROSSIO (MGM MACAU)
62. GRELHADOS 58º (MGM COTAI)
63. HIRO (THE VENETIAN MACAO)
64. TRATTORIA À BEIRA DO LAGO (WYNN)
65. HUA TING (PALÁCIO GRANDE LISBOA)
66. MOMENTOS (MGM COTAI)
67. PIMENTA AJI (MGM COTAI)
68. ZUICHO (PALÁCIO GRANDE LISBOA)
69. DON ALFONSO 1890 (PALÁCIO GRANDE LISBOA)
70. CASA DON ALFONSO (HOTEL GRANDE LISBOA)
71. VIELA (MGM COTAI)
72. RESTAURANTE TW TSUI WAH (HOTEL BROADWAY)
73. RESTAURANTE TSUI WAH (GALAXIA)
74. CRISTAL JADE LA MIAN XIAO LONG BAO (O PARISIENSE MACAU)
75. BISTRÔ NO PONTO (HOTEL CHINA DRAGÃO)
76. RESTAURANTE DE XANGAI (THE VENETIAN MACAO)
77. ORLA (MGM COTAI)
78. SUSHI KINETSU (NÚWA)
79. CASA DE ESMERALDA (O PARISIENSE MACAU)
80. 蟹家大院 (LISBOETA)
81. OS SABORES DO CHEF TAM (PALÁCIO WYNN)
82. RESTAURANTE THE RITZ-CARLTON CAFÉ (THE RITZ-CARLTON MACAU)
83. RESTAURANTE LAI HEEN (THE RITZ-CARLTON MACAU)
84. LI JING XUAN RESTAURANTE (RIVIERA MACAU)
85. BELAS ARTES (MGM MACAU)

## Restaurant (non-hotel)

Quality Tourism Services Gold Award : DUMPLINGS LAGO CHONG FA (STUDIO CITY)

Sustainable Dining Award : RESTAURANTE ÊXITO DO PORTO EXTERIOR (RUA DE CANTÃO)

Local Feature Award : ALBERGUE 1601 (CALÇADA DA IGREJA DE SÃO LÁZARO)

Integrity Business Award : RESTAURANTE ÊXITO DO PORTO EXTERIOR (RUA DE CANTÃO)

Community Care Services Award : RESTAURANTE TONG KWOK HOI SIN FO WO SENG (RUA DE SENG TOU, TAIPA)

Operational Innovation Award : RESTAURANTE ÊXITO DO PORTO EXTERIOR (RUA DE CANTÃO)

Quality Tourism Services Merchant Award\*

1. RESTAURANTE TONG KWOK HOI SIN FO WO SENG (RUA DE SENG TOU, TAIPA)
2. DUMPLINGS LAGO CHONG FA (STUDIO CITY)
3. CIDADE DE MARISCO JIN YUE XUAN (MACAU FISHERMAN'S WHARF)

4. FLORESTA VERMELHA (AVENIDA DE MARCIANO BAPTISTA)
5. RESTAURANTE LITORAL (TAIPA) (RUA DO REGEDOR, TAIPA)
6. ALBERGUE 1601 (CALÇADA DA IGREJA DE SÃO LÁZARO)

7. BAÍA DE OURO (AVENIDA DR. SUN YAT SEN)
8. RESTAURANTE ÊXITO DO PORTO EXTERIOR (RUA DE CANTÃO)
9. RESTAURANTE LONGA COZINHA (AVENIDA DA AMIZADE)
10. CAFÉ AZUL (RUA DA PÉROLA ORIENTAL)

## Simple Dining Establishment (hotel)

Quality Tourism Services Gold Award : JAPONÊS OURO ÁRVORE (DRAGÃO DOURADO)

Sustainable Dining Award : JAPONÊS OURO ÁRVORE (DRAGÃO DOURADO)

Local Feature Award : COMIDA JAPONESA TOEI. COZINHA BOA FORTUNA (LISBOETA)

Integrity Business Award : EDO JAPANESE (LISBOA)

Community Care Services Award : COMIDA JAPONESA TOEI. COZINHA BOA FORTUNA (LISBOETA)

Operational Innovation Award : COMIDA JAPONESA TOEI. COZINHA BOA FORTUNA (LISBOETA)

Quality Tourism Services Merchant Award\*

1. COMIDA JAPONESA TOEI. COZINHA BOA FORTUNA (LISBOETA)
2. EDO JAPANESE (LISBOA)
3. JAPONÊS OURO ÁRVORE (DRAGÃO DOURADO)
4. PEPPER LUNCH (LISBOETA)
5. TURTLE ESSENCE SHOP (LISBOA)

## Food and Beverage Establishment

Quality Tourism Services Gold Award : ESTABELECIMENTO DE COMIDAS HIP SENG (CLÁSSICO) (TRAVESSA DA CALDEIRA, N.º 4A)

Sustainable Dining Award : ESTABELECIMENTO DE COMIDAS YUT UN (AVENIDA DE KWONG TUNG, TAIPA)

Local Feature Award : ESTABELECIMENTO DE COMIDAS UT CHEONG (AVENIDA DE VENCESLAU DE MORAIS)

Integrity Business Award : ESTABELECIMENTO DE COMIDAS HIP SENG (CLÁSSICO) (TRAVESSA DA CALDEIRA, N.º 4A)

Community Care Services Award : ESTABELECIMENTO DE COMIDAS YUT UN (AVENIDA DE KWONG TUNG, TAIPA)

Operational Innovation Award : ESTABELECIMENTO DE COMIDAS ZHEN DIM SUM (AVENIDA DA PRAIA GRANDE)

Quality Tourism Services Merchant Award\*

1. ESTABELECIMENTO DE BEBIDAS HAAGEN DAZS (TRAVESSA DO ROQUETE)
2. ESTABELECIMENTO DE COMIDAS SPRING POT HOT POT (AVENIDA DR. SUN YAT SEN, TAIPA)
3. GELADARIA SAN LOK KAO (RUA DE BRUXELAS)
4. GELADARIA SAN LOK KAO (TAIPA) (RUA DE FAT SAN, TAIPA)
5. GELADARIA SAM POU (RUA DE LEÓNIO FERREIRA)
6. GELADARIA SAM POU (AVENIDA DO GOVERNADOR JAIME SILVÉRIO MARQUES)
7. ESTABELECIMENTO DE COMIDAS "TAI CHEONG" B.B.Q. (RUA DO COMANDANTE JOÃO BELO)
8. ESTABELECIMENTO DE COMIDAS CRYSTAL PALACE SEAFOOD HOT POT (RUA DO REGEDOR, TAIPA)
9. ESTABELECIMENTO DE COMIDAS CAFÉ SUPER MARIO (AVENIDA PANORÂMICA DO LAGO NAM VAN)
10. ESTABELECIMENTO DE COMIDAS CAFÉ SUPER MARIO (RUA FORMOSA)
11. JANELA CAFÉ (RUA DO REGEDOR, TAIPA)
12. COZINHA BOA FORTUNA (RUA DE NAM KENG, TAIPA)
13. ESTABELECIMENTO DE COMIDAS BOA FORTUNA (AVENIDA DO INFANTE D. HENRIQUE)
14. ALIMENTOS E BEBIDAS DE BAMBOO (RUA DE NAM KENG, TAIPA)
15. ESTABELECIMENTO DE BEBIDAS HANG HEONG UN (TRAVESSA DO AUTO NOVO)
16. PEDRO COZINHA PORTUGUESA (RUA DOS MERCADORES, TAIPA)
17. ESTABELECIMENTO DE COMIDAS HIP SENG(LOJA DE GREAT CHINA) (AVENIDA DR. SUN YAT SEN, TAIPA)
18. ESTABELECIMENTO DE COMIDAS HIP SENG (CLÁSSICO) (TRAVESSA DA CALDEIRA, N.º 4A)
19. CASA VERDE (RUA DA PRAIA DO MANDUCO)
20. REI DE DUMPLING LOYAL SUCCESS (RUA DE LUÍS GONZAGA GOMES)
21. REI DE DUMPLING LOYAL SUCCESS (RUA CIDADE DE SANTARÉM)
22. LOJA DE MARISCO JIN YUE XUAN (AVENIDA DR. SUN YAT SEN, TAIPA)
23. ESTABELECIMENTO DE COMIDAS KAM LOU (RUA UM DO BAIRRO IAO HON)
24. LK COMIDAS (AVENIDA DO GENERAL CASTELO BRANCO)
25. WOODLANDS INDIANO VEGETARIANO (RUA DE PARIS)
26. CENTRO DE COMIDAS FOODLANE(PEPPER LUNCH, COMIDA JAPONESA TOEI, COZINHA BOA FORTUNA) (AVENIDA WAI LONG, TAIPA)
27. ESTABELECIMENTO DE COMIDAS PEPPER LUNCH (RUA DO CAMPO)
28. ESTABELECIMENTO DE COMIDAS CHENSON (AVENIDA DE KWONG TUNG, TAIPA)
29. ESTABELECIMENTO DE COMIDAS ELYSÉE BAKERY (AVENIDA DA UNIVERSIDADE, TAIPA)
30. ESTABELECIMENTO DE COMIDAS HOME MADE MEAL (AVENIDA DO GOVERNADOR JAIME SILVÉRIO MARQUES)
31. ESTABELECIMENTO DE COMIDAS YUT UN (AVENIDA DE KWONG TUNG, TAIPA)
32. ESTABELECIMENTO DE COMIDAS YUT UN (RUA DA BACIA SUL)
33. ESTABELECIMENTO DE COMIDAS YUT UN (RUA QUATRO DO BAIRRO DA AREIA PRETA)
34. ESTABELECIMENTO DE COMIDAS YUT UN (RUA DA PRAIA DO MANDUCO)
35. ESTABELECIMENTO DE COMIDAS TEGO (RUA DA PÉROLA ORIENTAL)

36. ESTABELECIMENTO DE COMIDAS ZHEN DIM SUM (RUA DE TAI LIN, TAIPA)
37. ESTABELECIMENTO DE COMIDAS ZHEN DIM SUM (AVENIDA DE KWONG TUNG, TAIPA)
38. ESTABELECIMENTO DE COMIDAS ZHEN DIM SUM (RUA DE PARIS)
39. ESTABELECIMENTO DE COMIDAS ZHEN DIM SUM (AVENIDA DA PRAIA GRANDE)
40. ESTABELECIMENTO DE COMIDAS ZHEN DIM SUM (RUA DE PEDRO COUTINHO)
41. ESTABELECIMENTO DE COMIDAS ZHEN DIM SUM (AVENIDA MARGINAL DO PATANE)
42. COZINHA ZHEN DIM SUM (STUDIO CITY)
43. ESTABELECIMENTO DE COMIDAS MR GUNG DIM SUM (RUA DE MIGUEL AIRES)
44. ESTABELECIMENTO DE COMIDAS GOOBNE ALL DAK HOUSE (RUA DE SENG TOU, TAIPA)
45. ESTABELECIMENTO DE COMIDAS TOP FUSION (RUA DA RIBEIRA DO PATANE)
46. ESTABELECIMENTO DE COMIDAS TOP FUSION (RUA DE FRANCISCO XAVIER PEREIRA)
47. BEING COZINHA (RUA DE LONDRES)
48. BEING COZINHA (AVENIDA DR. SUN YAT SEN, TAIPA)
49. ESTABELECIMENTO DE COMIDAS CHARMING GOURMET CAFÉ (RUA DE XANGAI)
50. ESTABELECIMENTO DE BEBIDAS FAT SOU YEONG SANG MO FONG (AVENIDA DE ARTUR TAMAGNINI BARBOSA)
51. CHINÊS CAFÉ MARCA MACAU (STUDIO CITY)
52. ESTABELECIMENTO DE COMIDAS SON TAI (RUA DE CHIU CHAU, TAIPA)
53. CAFÉ FANTASY (AVENIDA PANORÂMICA DO LAGO NAM VAN)
54. ESTABELECIMENTO DE COMIDAS SAN SONG SONG (AVENIDA DO OUVIDOR ARRIAGA)
55. ESTABELECIMENTO DE COMIDAS IEONG CHI KAM LOU (AVENIDA DE DEMÉTRIO CINATTI)
56. ESTABELECIMENTO DE COMIDAS IEONG CHI KAM LOU (AVENIDA DR. SUN YAT SEN, TAIPA)
57. ESTABELECIMENTO DE COMIDAS IEONG CHI KAM LOU (RUA NOVA DA AREIA PRETA)
58. ESTABELECIMENTO DE COMIDAS UT CHEONG (AVENIDA DE VENCESLAU DE MORAIS)
59. ESTABELECIMENTO DE COMIDAS UT CHEONG (AVENIDA DO ALMIRANTE MAGALHÃES CORREIA)
60. ESTABELECIMENTO DE COMIDAS UT CHEONG (RUA CENTRAL DA AREIA PRETA)
61. ESTABELECIMENTO DE COMIDAS GRAND PLAZA (AVENIDA DA UNIVERSIDADE, TAIPA)
62. ESTABELECIMENTO DE COMIDAS ALMA (RUA DOS NEGOCIANTES, TAIPA)
63. ESTABELECIMENTO DE COMIDAS KING SHIP (RUA DE EVORA, TAIPA)
64. ESTABELECIMENTO DE COMIDAS FAI KEI HOI SIN (AVENIDA DE GUIMARÃES, TAIPA)
65. ESTABELECIMENTO DE COMIDAS FAI KEI HOI SIN (RUA DOS MERCADORES, TAIPA)
66. ESTABELECIMENTO DE COMIDAS FAI KEI HOI SIN (RUA DO GENERAL IVENS FERRAZ)
67. COZINHA DE MACAU (RUA UM DE IP HENG, COLOANE)
68. ESTABELECIMENTO DE COMIDAS LA FAMIGLIA (RUA DOS CLÉRIGOS, TAIPA)
69. CAFÉ T.H.S. HONOLULU (RUA DO PADRE JOÃO CLIMACO)
70. CAFÉ DE HIDEOUT (TRAVESSA LOU FU, TAIPA)

## Travel Agency Sector

Quality Tourism Services Gold Award : AGÊNCIA DE VIAGENS HUAYI LIMITADA (RUA DO DR. PEDRO JOSÉ LOBO)

Integrity Business Award : AGÊNCIA DE VIAGENS E TURISMO INTERNACIONAL (CHINA-MACAU), LDA. (CALÇADA DE SANTO AGOSTINHO)

Quality Training Award : STDN - AGÊNCIA DE VIAGENS LIMITADA ("MACAU LANDMARK")

Courtesy Merchant Award - AGÊNCIA DE VIAGENS HUAYI LIMITADA (RUA DO DR. PEDRO JOSÉ LOBO)

Quality Tourism Services Merchant Award\*

1. AGÊNCIA DE VIAGENS E TURISMO DESTINATION MANAGEMENT (MACAU) (RUA DE LUÍS GONZAGA GOMES)
2. STDN - AGÊNCIA DE VIAGENS LIMITADA ("MACAU LANDMARK")
3. AGÊNCIA DE VIAGENS E TURISMO LAP KEI, LIMITADA (ALAMEDA DR. CARLOS D'ASSUMPÇÃO)
4. AGÊNCIA DE VIAGENS E TURISMO HOU MEI, LIMITADA (AVENIDA DA AMIZADE)
5. TOP HOLIDAYS-P & E INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL CO. LTD. (ALAMEDA DR. CARLOS D'ASSUMPÇÃO)
6. AGÊNCIA DE VIAGENS DONG JENG IAO (AVENIDA DA PRAIA GRANDE)
7. TEMPOS DE OURO AGÊNCIA DE VIAGENS E TURISMO LIMITADA (ALAMEDA DR. CARLOS D'ASSUMPÇÃO)
8. AGÊNCIA DE VIAGENS CHEONG HENG INTERNACIONAL LIMITADA (RUA DE PEQUIM)
9. AGÊNCIA DE VIAGENS VAI WA, LIMITADA (PRAÇA DAS PORTAS DO CERCO)
10. AGÊNCIA DE VIAGENS SING SING, LIMITADA (TRAVESSA DA FORTUNA)
11. AGÊNCIA DE TURISMO CULTURAL EXPLORADORA (AVENIDA DA AMIZADE)
12. AGÊNCIA DE VIAGENS HUAYI LIMITADA (RUA DO DR. PEDRO JOSÉ LOBO)
13. WA OU TURISMO COMPANHIA LIMITADA (RUA DE PEQUIM)

14. AGÊNCIA DE VIAGENS E TURISMO LEÃO, LIMITADA (AVENIDA DE HORTA E COSTA)
15. YATA, LIMITADA (RUA DE FERREIRA DO AMARAL)
16. AGÊNCIA DE VIAGENS SHUN AN INTERNACIONAL LIMITADA (AVENIDA NORTE DO HIPÓDROMO)
17. GRUPO DE MULTINACIONAL TURISMO LIMITADA (AVENIDA DA AMIZADE)
18. AGÊNCIA DE VIAGENS HAN CHENG LIMITADA (RUA DE PEQUIM)
19. AGÊNCIA DE VIAGENS E DE TURISMO CHINA (MACAU), S.A. (AVENIDA DO DR. RODRIGO RODRIGUES)
20. AGÊNCIA DE VIAGENS E TURISMO INTERNACIONAL (CHINA-MACAU), LDA. (CALÇADA DE SANTO AGOSTINHO)
21. AGÊNCIA DE VIAGENS E TURISMO INTERNACIONAL (CHINA-MACAU), LDA. (TRAVESSA DO COMANDANTE MATA E OLIVEIRA)
22. AGÊNCIA DE VIAGENS E TURISMO INTERNACIONAL (CHINA-MACAU), LDA. (UNIVERSIDADE DE MACAU)
23. COMPANHIA DE DESENVOLVIMENTO TURÍSTICO KONG PAK MACAU, LIMITADA (ALAMEDA DR. CARLOS D'ASSUMPÇÃO)
24. AGÊNCIA DE TURISMO MACAU PASS, LIMITADA (ALAMEDA DR. CARLOS D'ASSUMPÇÃO)
25. MUNDIAL TURISMO INTERNACIONAL DE MACAU, LDA. (RUA FORMOSA)
26. SOCIEDADE DE TURISMO YIN HAI LIMITADA (RUA DE PEQUIM)

The above is the 2025 "Quality Tourism Services Accreditation Scheme" awarded list of new and re-entered merchants. The list of surveillance merchants with renewed awards will be released later through the Macao Government Tourism Office website.

\*no particular order



# Grammy-winning 'Time for Three' perform in Macau



This handout photo recently provided by SJM Resorts shows visitors attending a masterclass during the Whisky Live & Fine Spirits Macau 2025 held at Grand Lisboa Palace (GLP) in Cotai last weekend.

**Kristina Vallesteros**

The Grammy and Emmy-winning string trio "Time for Three" recently performed in Macau and also engaged with the community, according to a Tuesday statement from integrated resort operator Sands China.

Time for Three (Tf3) is a classically trained string trio that explores a variety of musical genres. The members of the group are Nicolas Kendall, Charles Yang, and Ranaan Meyer.

The "Starry Symphony" concert took place last Sunday at the Macau Cultural Centre (CCM) Grand Auditorium. It was title-sponsored by Sands China and conducted by the Macao Orchestra's music director and principal conductor, Lio Kuokman. The statement noted the trio reimagines everything from American bluegrass and folk to pop music, blending them with "classical music and beyond", the statement said.

A "Meeting the Artist - Time for Three" event was held at The Londoner Macao on Monday. According to the statement, over 100 music fans

and Sands Cares Ambassadors were invited by Sands China and the Macao Orchestra. The event included a special performance with 26 children and youngsters aged 6-18, a discussion, a Q&A, and an autograph opportunity.

The statement highlighted that the events are part of the ongoing Sands China Performing Arts Programme, which was launched in 2023. The programme aims to support performing arts development and "showcase the charm of Macau as a City of Performing Arts", according to the statement.

Executive Vice Chairman of Sands China Wilfred Wong Ying-wai noted in the statement that the company has co-organised the Macao Orchestra concert season for three consecutive years and that the community event provided a platform for emerging local talent. "By hosting a wider range of music and art initiatives, we hope to further enhance public appreciation of arts and culture and inject vitality into the city's cultural and creative industry", Wong said in the statement.

# Whisky Live & Fine Spirits Macau 2025 takes place at GLP

**Kristina Vallesteros**

The Whisky Live & Fine Spirits Macau 2025 event was held last weekend at Grand Lisboa Palace (GLP) in Cotai, according to a Tuesday statement from SJM Resorts.

According to the statement, the event was co-presented by SJM and *Whisky Magazine*, with support from the Macau Government Tourism Office (MGTO). More than 80 international brands and over 500 kinds of whisky and fine spirits were featured, and attendance exceeded 1,000 visitors.

The event was officially launched at The Grand Pavilion, attended by guests including Macau Government Tourism Office (MGTO) Director Maria Helena de Senna Fernandes, Chief Officer of Hospitality of SJM Gerard Walker, and Executive Director of *Whisky Magazine HK & Macau* Nicholas Siu, according to the statement.

SJM Managing Director Daisy Ho Chiu-fung was quoted in the statement as saying: "Through events like Whisky Live, SJM is proud to add depth to Macau's identity as a 'Creative City of Gastronomy,' bringing together masters of the culinary craft from

around the globe, firmly positioning Macau as a regional hub of gastronomy excellence and highlighting its culinary heritage as a fascinating crossroads of culture and style."

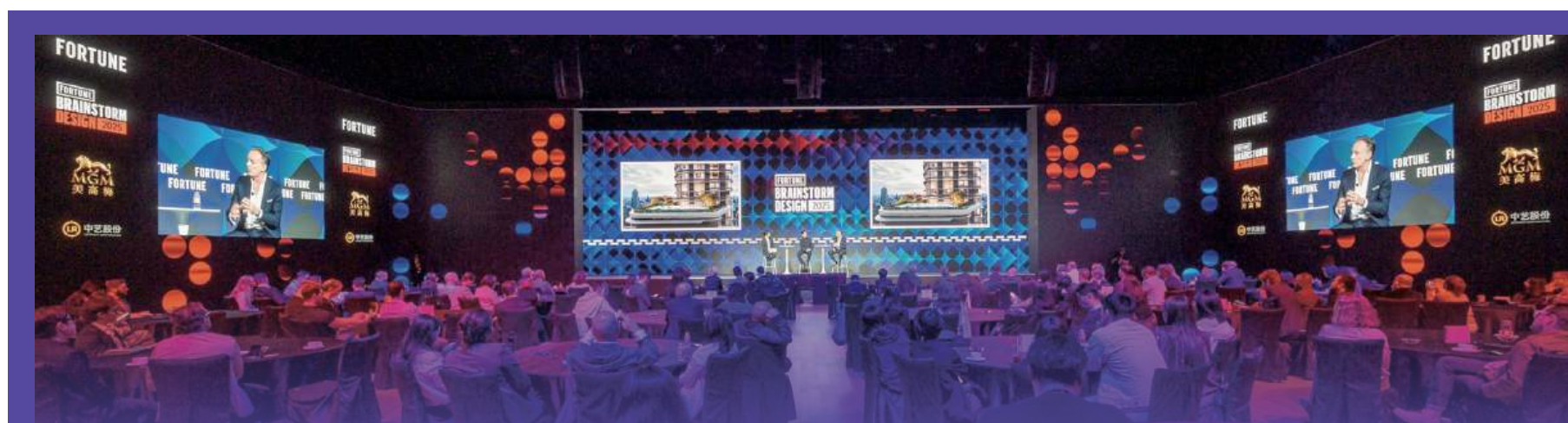
Executive Director of *Whisky Magazine HK & Macau* Nicholas Siu said in the statement: "This year features an even greater collection of world-class whisky brands, along with tasting sessions, creative cocktail pop-ups, and exciting interactive experiences, allowing every participant to deeply experience the diverse charm of whisky."

The statement noted that the programme included masterclasses led by experts from distilleries including Glenfarclas and Elixir Distillers. A new Asia Bar Show featured 12 bars from across the region serving signature cocktails. Live musical performances were provided by Hong Kong DJ duo Beat Friday and jazz musician Eugene Pao (包以正).

The statement added that several SJM restaurants will offer whisky-pairing menus through February. Participating venues include Mesa by José Avillez, Don Alfonso 1890, The Kitchen, and Hua Ting.



This handout photo recently provided by SJM Resorts shows visitors attending a masterclass during the Whisky Live & Fine Spirits Macau 2025 held at Grand Lisboa Palace (GLP) in Cotai last weekend.



This handout photo provided by MGM on Tuesday shows the third Fortune Brainstorm Design event, which attracted over 700 participants including international designers, corporate executives, scholars and young people, on Monday at MGM MACAU's Fantasy Box in Nape.

# MGM and Fortune conclude 3<sup>rd</sup> Fortune Brainstorm Design

**Khalet Vallo**

Macau's integrated resort operator MGM and US-based Fortune Media Group concluded the third edition of their Fortune Brainstorm Design on Tuesday, attracting more than 700 participants to two days of discussions and workshops centred on future design, cultural integration and innovation, according to a statement provided by MGM that day.

Held at the eponymous Fantasy Box at MGM MACAU, the forum brought together over 30 international speakers to explore how design can guide social and business transformation in the age of artificial

intelligence (AI), the statement said.

According to the statement, the event continued to expand its global presence since its launch in 2018, combining main-stage talks, cross-disciplinary dialogues and networking sessions. The statement added that this year's programme also incorporated a workshop on Monday curated by MGM under the theme "Cultural Preservation with Technology".

Aimed at young people, including students, the session enabled local participants to interact closely with global speakers.

Meanwhile, the forum on Tuesday then shifted its focus to industry leaders under

the theme "Future Tense: Prototyping Tomorrow", the statement noted.

Kenneth Feng Xiaofeng, president and executive director of MGM China Holdings Limited, said in the statement that MGM aimed to use the "MICE+" initiative to deepen Macau's global connectivity and support the city's economic diversification.

Nicholas Gordon, *Fortune Asia* editor, noted that Macau's East-West cultural blend makes it an ideal setting for design-driven dialogue, the statement said.

Meanwhile, the statement added that speakers from US companies Bjarke Ingels

Group, the Eames Institute, IDEO, LAB at Rockwell Group, Populous, Japan's Samsung and other global design and innovation organisations discussed topics ranging from AI-era creativity and ethical innovation to sustainable and regenerative design.

Fortune Brainstorm Design's third consecutive edition in Macau aimed to reinforce the city's role as a hub for cross-sector collaboration, cultural exchange and forward-looking dialogue, with MGM signalling its intent to continue expanding international design engagement in the city, according to the statement.



# LRT is 0.1 pct of people's transport choice: survey



This photo taken in October shows an LRT train at Taipa Ferry Terminal Station.

— Photo: Tony Wong

Ida Cheong

Regarding the proportion of people using the Light Rapid Transit (LRT), the “2024 Macau Travel Survey” showed that the LRT took up a mere 0.1 percent of residents’ transportation mode share (all trips), according to a survey released by the Transport Bureau (DSAT) statement yesterday.

The statement about the survey noted that the Transport Bureau has completed the data analysis and compilation for its “2024 Macau Travel Survey”, which indicated walking remains the most common mode of transportation for residents, accounting for about 46.5 percent of all trips, a figure similar to that of 2019.

According to the survey, buses continue to be the primary choice of motorised travel among residents, accounting for around 20.9 percent, though the proportion of residents

using buses last year decreased by 1.0 percent compared to 2019, while the use of private cars increased by 0.8 percent over the same period.

The survey pointed out that among motorised transportation, the proportion of travel between Macau peninsula and its two off-shore islands (including Cotai) by residents has continued to rise, while travel demand within the Islands (intra-island travel, i.e., travel between Taipa and Coloane, including Cotai) has also gradually increased, adding that in 2024, the proportion of peninsula-islands travel and travel within the outlying islands increased by 0.3 percent and 2.8 percent, respectively, compared to 2019.

The survey pointed out that motorcycles roadside parking remains the main method, though the trend is declining from 71.7 percent in 2014 to 53.6 percent in 2024. For private cars’ night-time

parking modes, the primary parking option is monthly rental in private car parks, a trend that is on the rise,

In terms of average travel time for motorised transportation, the overall travel time in 2024 was about 31 minutes, a decrease of 1.0 minute compared to 2019, primarily driven by a reduction in bus travel times, the statement said, adding that over the past decade, motorised travel times have shown a slight declining trend.

Since 2009, the Macau Special Administrative Region (MSAR) government has conducted a territory-wide resident travel survey every five years, aiming to better understand public travel habits and perspectives to update and more accurately formulate transportation policies and planning, the statement said.

For detailed report, please download via [https://www.dsat.gov.mo/pdf/traffic\\_survey.pdf](https://www.dsat.gov.mo/pdf/traffic_survey.pdf). ■

## 1,513 social workers hold registration certs

Ida Cheong

Social Welfare Bureau (IAS) Director Hon Wai noted in a speech during a roundtable conference yesterday that as the government’s social worker registration system has been implemented for several years already, 2,370 social workers have meanwhile obtained professional social worker qualification recognition, with 1,513 holding valid social worker registration certificates.

The one-day “Charting Career Paths, Pursuing Dreams” social worker career development roundtable conference was held at Macau Fisherman’s Wharf in Nape, with the aim of expanding career horizons, strengthening social workers’ professional ability and consolidating the strength of the sector, in order to provide clear development guidelines for social workers, and help them move forward steadily on the career ladder. Over 250 social workers participated in the roundtable conference both

online and offline, a IAS statement pointed out.

Hon noted that local government has continued to improve its social worker training system, expand diverse development pathways, and strengthen welfare safeguards to promote the sustained growth of the social work profession and enhance the capacity of social services.

Macau Federation of Social Workers Chairperson Cheong Un Si underscored that the conference focused on three main objectives: First, to enhance social workers’ understanding and exploration of diversified employment directions and expand their career perspectives; second, to elevate professional knowledge, skills, and ethical standards, thereby strengthening service capabilities; third, to foster exchange and collaboration within the industry, solidify professional synergy, and jointly advance the overall development of the field. ■



Social Welfare Bureau Director Hon Wai addresses yesterday’s one-day “Charting Career Paths, Pursuing Dreams” social worker career development roundtable conference at Macau Fisherman’s Wharf in Nape.

— Photos: Ida Cheong



Macau Federation of Social Workers Chairperson Cheong Un Si addresses yesterday’s one-day “Charting Career Paths, Pursuing Dreams” social worker career development roundtable conference at Macau Fisherman’s Wharf in Nape.

## 50<sup>th</sup> APAVT congress closes, Macau named ‘Preferred Destination’ for 4<sup>th</sup> time

Rui Pastorin

The 50<sup>th</sup> Congress of the Portuguese Association of Travel and Tourism Agencies (APAVT) concluded yesterday, with the Macau Government Tourism Office (MGTO) noting in a statement that Macau was named “Preferred Destination 2026” during the congress, marking the fourth time that the city garnered the designation.

The city received the designation

in 2012, 2019 and 2024.

This year marked the sixth time in over four decades that the congress was held in Macau, according to the statement, this time attracting a new record of over 1,000 participants.

The event was themed “75 Years Looking to the Future” and featured three days of keynote presentations and discussions delivered by around 20 speakers, tackling “hot topics for

the Portuguese tourism industry”, the statement noted.

Business networking sessions enabled Portuguese travel agencies to interact with around 40 travel agencies, hotels and other companies from Macau, along with Guangdong, Fujian and Guizhou provinces, the statement added. Moreover, during a welcome dinner earlier this week, Secretary for Economy and Finance Anton Tai Kin Ip was in attendance and received a souvenir from APAVT President Pedro Costa Ferreira.

Moreover, around 60 of the delegates took part in a post-event familiarisation visit to the Guangdong-Macao In-Depth Cooperation Zone in Hengqin, and tours organised by the Ministry of Culture and Tourism to Shenzhen, Xiamen, and Guiyang, the statement said.

Now marking its fourth designation, the statement said that MGTO and APAVT will “join hands to conduct a series of work to promote the destination”, with Macau destination promotion and familiarisation visits to the city among the planned collaborative initiatives. ■



This photo provided by the Macau Government Tourism Office (MGTO) yesterday shows Secretary for Economy and Finance Anton Tai Kin Ip receiving a souvenir from Portuguese Association of Travel and Tourism Agencies (APAVT) President Pedro Costa Ferreira.



**SCHOOL OF THE NATIONS**  
 聯 國 學 校  
 A RUA DO MINHO, TAIPA, MACAU S.A.R., CHINA  
 W [www.schoolofthenations.edu.mo](http://www.schoolofthenations.edu.mo)  
 T +853 2870-1759 F +853 2870-1724

**ADMISSIONS FOR 2026/2027**  
**2026/2027 年度招收新生**

ADMISSIONS ARE OPEN AT ALL LEVELS (Except F6)  
 歡迎報讀本校各個年級（中六除外）

- K1: Please follow the DSEDJ announcements  
 K1: 請留意教育及青年發展局公告
- Other levels: Registration from 1 Mar 2026  
 其他年級: 由2026年3月1日起
- Application forms are available at the School or you may apply via the school online application system on the website  
 報名表可從本校索取或使用學校網站上系統報名。



**Kindergarten Public Information Day 幼稚園課程資訊日**  
**6 Dec 2025, Saturday, 09:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.**  
**2025年12月6日（星期六），09:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.**

**Public Information Day - All Levels 全校所有年級課程資訊日**  
**10 Jan 2026, Saturday, 09:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.**  
**2026年1月10日（星期六），09:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.**

School of the Nations is the first school in Macau to offer the International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme and the Cambridge IGCSE. Our quality English and Mandarin programmes encourage academic excellence, character development, a spirit of service and community mindedness. Please visit our website for details.

聯國學校為學生提供優質的英、中文（普通話）教學課程，專注於學生的知識、品格及服務精神的培養。本校是澳門第一所具備國際文憑組織（IB）大學預科課程及劍橋普通中學考試（Cambridge IGCSE）認證的學校。有關學校的詳情，請瀏覽學校網頁。






# Airport marks 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of operation, pledges greater input to GBA development



CAM Chairman Ma Iao Hang (from left to right), Secretary for Transport and Public Works Raymond Tam Vai Man, and Civil Aviation Administration of China (CAAC) Deputy Administrator Ma Bing address yesterday's reception at MGM COTAI. — Photo: CAM

**Tony Wong**

Macau International Airport operator CAM held a reception yesterday marking the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the airport's operation, where Ma Iao Hang, the chairman of CAM's board of directors, pledged the airport's commitment to making greater contributions to the development of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area (GBA) and the nation's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI).

The local airport in Taipa officially opened on December 8, 1995, when Macau was still under temporary Portuguese administration.

The Macau Special Administrative Region (MSAR) was established on December 20, 1999.

The reception hosted by local airport operator, Macau International Airport Company Limited, was held at MGM COTAI yesterday afternoon.

Delivering a speech during yesterday's reception, Ma noted that the airport officially commenced operation in 1995 in the presence of state leaders from China and Portugal, marking a significant

milestone in the run-up to the MSAR's implementation of the "One Country, Two Systems" principle and fulfilling the aspirations of "countless" Macau residents for civil aviation services, while also demonstrating the central government's unwavering support for Macau's long-term prosperity and stability.

Over the past three decades, Ma said, the airport has adhered to the principles of "Safety, Efficiency and Effectiveness", continuously optimising its facilities and service quality while vigorously integrating its development into the nation's overall development and sustainable development strategies, reflecting its commitment to social responsibility and its determination to strengthen its international image.

Looking ahead, Ma said, the Macau International Airport will, guided by a deep sense of patriotism and dedication to Macau, vigorously participate in the GBA's development and the BRI, and closely align with the MSAR government's strategic plans to develop Macau into a world-class

World Centre of Tourism and Leisure.

Also delivering a speech during yesterday's reception, Secretary for Transport and Public Works Raymond Tam Vai Man said that since its opening in 1995, the airport has consistently achieved new milestones in the number of passengers and cargo volume, while continuously improving its service quality and operational efficiency, adding that the airport has become an important engine to promote Macau's socioeconomic development.

Tam said that the airport is not only a transport infrastructure but also a strategic asset for advancing Macau's appropriate economic diversification and its integration into the nation's overall development, showcasing Macau's role as an important gateway for regional integration and international cooperation.

Tam underlined that the local government is advancing the planning and development of the Macau International Aviation Hub for the Pearl River West Bank, while CAM's airport



A lion dance performance takes place during yesterday's reception marking the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the local airport's operation. — Photo: Tony Wong

reclamation and expansion project and its upstream cargo terminal project in Hengqin are underway. These efforts, combined with deepening cooperation between Macau and Zhuhai's airports, will create seamless logistics and travel options between Macau and Hengqin, further enhancing Macau's competitiveness as a regional aviation hub, the policy secretary said.

Also delivering a speech during yesterday's reception, Ma Bing, a deputy administrator of the central government's Civil Aviation Administration of China (CAAC), noted that over the past three decades, with the central government's strong support, Macau's civil aviation sector has flourished, serving as a vivid example of the implementation of the "One Country, Two Systems" principle in the field of civil aviation.

Ma noted that in the 1990s, the central government strategically supported the construction of Macau International Airport, with CAAC dispatching over 200 experts to participate in its planning, construction and operation, many

of whom subsequently remained in Macau to pursue their career development and became industry leaders.

Ma stressed that since Macau's return to the motherland on December 20, 1999, CAAC has been consistently supporting the MSAR in managing civil aviation affairs in accordance with the MSAR Basic Law, deepening cooperation in safety, flight standards, air traffic control, and talent development, thereby laying a solid foundation for Macau's civil aviation industry.

Ma underlined that CAAC will continue to support the high-quality development of Macau's civil aviation industry, deepen mainland-Macau cooperation, and promote the coordinated development of civil aviation in the GBA.

Ma urged Macau's civil aviation sector to seize opportunities, leverage Macau's unique advantages of being "backed by the motherland and connected to the world", vigorously integrate into the nation's overall development, and embark on the next glorious 30-year journey. ■

## 'Spiritual Narrative' exhibition opens at Taipa Houses

**Khalel Vallo**

The Cultural Affairs Bureau (IC) reopened the Taipa Houses' Nostalgic House yesterday with the launch of its "Spiritual Narrative – 2025 Annual Arts Exhibition between China and the Portuguese-speaking Countries," bringing together eight artists for a cross-cultural showcase.

Speaking at the opening ceremony yesterday, the bureau welcomed guests including Bai Bing, deputy director of the Department of Publicity and Culture of the Liaison Office of the Central People's Government; Cheang Kai Meng, vice president of the Cultural Affairs Bureau; Paula Costa, coordinator of the Portuguese Language Centre of the Instituto Português do Oriente (IPOR); João Ó, coordinator of the Annual Arts Exhibition; as well as participating artists and cultural practitioners.

Centred on the theme "Spiritual Narrative," the exhibition draws inspiration from 16<sup>th</sup>-century travellers Fernão Mendes Pinto and

Xu Xiake, whose writings reflected their philosophical outlooks on life. The show features 28 works across painting, sculpture, video and installation by artists from China and the Portuguese-speaking world, including Cao Yu, Carla Cabanas, Délio Jasse, Juliana Matsumura, Eugénia Mussa, Tong Wenmin, Cosmo Wong, and Wong Hio Chit.

In his remarks, Cheang said the exhibition "takes arts as a bridge," adding that it aims to promote deeper dialogue between China and the Portuguese-speaking countries and strives to leverage Macau's role as "a base for exchange and cooperation where Chinese culture is the mainstream and diverse cultures coexist".

The exhibition forms part of the "7<sup>th</sup> Encounter in Macao – Arts and Cultural Festival between China and the Portuguese-speaking Countries". With free admission, the exhibition is on until March 1 next year at the Exhibitions Gallery and Nostalgic House of the Taipa



Cultural Affairs Bureau (IC) Vice President Cheang Kai Meng delivers a speech at the opening ceremony of the "Spiritual Narrative – 2025 Annual Arts Exhibition between China and the Portuguese-speaking Countries" at the Exhibitions Gallery and Nostalgic House of the Taipa Houses. — Photo: Khalel Vallo

Houses, open daily from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. except Mondays, with guided tours in Cantonese and Putonghua provided at 3 p.m. and 4 p.m. at weekends and public holidays throughout this month. ■

## Police nab Indian security guard for stealing bracelet & power bank from workmates

**Armindo Neves**

The Public Security Police (PSP) arrested on Monday an Indian security guard for stealing a bracelet and a power bank, PSP spokesman Wong Wai Chon said during a regular press conference yesterday.

Wong identified the suspect as a 40-year-old Indian male surnamed Singh, who told police that he works in Macau as a security guard.

According to Wong, last Saturday the Public Security Police received a report from two security guards working at a hotel in Cotai, stating that their personal belongings had been stolen. They reported that they had placed a bag containing a bracelet worth 4,000 patacas and a power bank worth 300 patacas near a lift in the hotel lobby, Wong said.

When they finished work at

around 11 p.m., according to Wong, they discovered that the bag had been moved to the hotel's storage room, but the items that had been inside were missing. Hotel CCTV footage showed a man, Singh, acting suspiciously in the area, Wong said.

On Monday, the police summoned Singh for questioning, according to Wong. As his two colleagues whose valuables had vanished, Singh worked for a security company hired by the hotel. Under questioning, Singh admitted that he had taken the two items from the bag after finding it in the storage room, acting out of greed. PSP officers later recovered the bracelet and power bank from his home in San Kio district, Wong said.

Singh has been transferred to the Public Prosecutions Office (MP) for further questioning, facing theft charges. ■



# Xi holds talks with Macron, calling for expanded cooperation in multiple areas

BEIJING – China and France should seize opportunities and expand the scope of cooperation, President Xi Jinping said while holding talks with visiting French President Emmanuel Macron in Beijing yesterday.

As both independent, visionary and responsible major countries, China and France serve as constructive forces in advancing multipolarity and promoting solidarity and cooperation among humanity, Xi said.

At present, as changes unseen in a century are accelerating, humanity once again stands at a crossroads, facing crucial choices about its future path, Xi noted, adding that China and France should demonstrate a sense of responsibility, uphold multilateralism, and stand firmly on the right side of history.

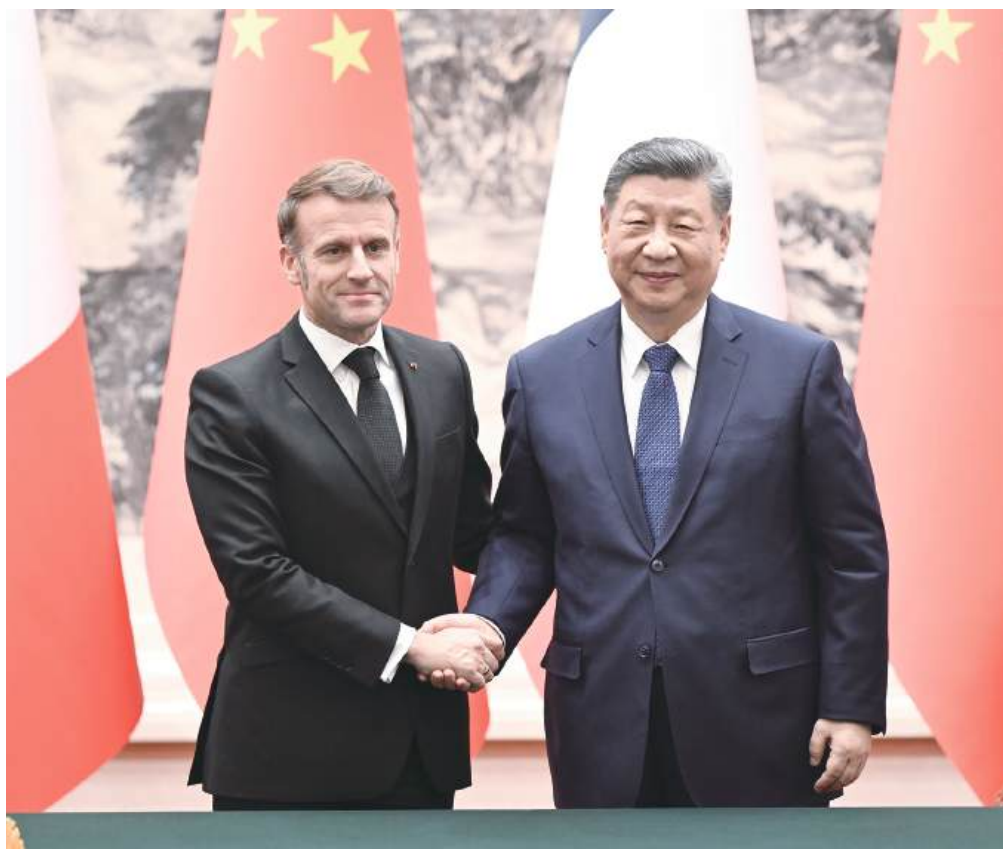
Xi said China is willing to work with France to always proceed from the fundamental interests of the two peoples and the long-term interests of the international community, while upholding equal dialogue and open cooperation, to ensure that the China-France comprehensive strategic partnership continues to advance steadily and thrives over the next 60 years, fully demonstrates its strategic value, and makes new contributions to promoting an equitable and orderly multipolar world as well as a universally beneficial and inclusive economic globalization.

Xi emphasized that regardless of changes of the external environment, China and France should always demonstrate the strategic vision and independence as major countries, understand and support each other on issues concerning each other's core interests and major concerns, and safeguard the political foundation of bilateral relations.

The fourth plenary session of the 20<sup>th</sup> Central Committee of the Communist Party of China deliberated over and adopted the recommendations for formulating the 15<sup>th</sup> Five-Year Plan, outlining a blueprint for China's development over the next five years and providing the world with a "list of opportunities," Xi noted.

China and France should seize opportunities and expand the scope of cooperation, consolidating cooperation in traditional fields such as aviation, aerospace and nuclear energy, while tapping into the potential for cooperation in areas including the green economy, digital economy, biopharmaceuticals, artificial intelligence and new energy, Xi said.

China is willing to import more high-quality French products, welcomes more



**President Xi Jinping (right) and French President Emmanuel Macron shake hands while meeting the press after their talks in Beijing yesterday. Xi held talks with Macron, who is on a state visit to China, at the Great Hall of the People in Beijing yesterday.**  
– Xinhua

French enterprises to develop in China, and also hopes that France will provide a fair environment and stable conditions for Chinese enterprises, Xi said.

Noting that the Chinese and French people share a natural sense of affinity, Xi urged both sides to deepen exchanges and cooperation in areas such as culture, education, science and technology, and at the sub-national level.

Xi stressed that the world today is far from tranquil, with complex, intractable hotspot issues flaring up in many places. As founding members of the United Nations and permanent members of the UN Security Council, China and France should practice true multilateralism, and uphold the UN-centered international system and the international order underpinned by international law, he said.

Both countries should increase communication and coordination on the political settlement of disputes and the promotion of world peace and stability, and jointly advance the reform and improvement of global governance, Xi said.

Noting that the world now faces many imbalances, such as uneven development between the North and the South and

inadequate representation of developing countries in international financial institutions, Xi said countries should shoulder responsibilities together, coordinate actions, and work together to make global economic governance fairer, more just and equitable.

Xi said the exchanges and cooperation between China and Europe over the past 50 years have been mutually beneficial and have contributed to each other's success.

"The industrial and supply chains of countries are deeply interconnected. Openness and cooperation will bring opportunities for development, while decoupling and severing supply chains will lead to isolation," Xi said. "Protectionism cannot solve the problems caused by global industrial restructuring, but will only worsen the international environment for trade."

Xi said China and Europe should stay committed to partnership, pursue cooperation with an open mind, and ensure that China-Europe relations develop along the right track of independence and mutually beneficial cooperation.

Macron noted that China and France have maintained close high-level exchanges, and have always trusted and respected each other.

France values its relations with China, firmly upholds the one-China policy, and is willing to continue deepening the France-China comprehensive strategic partnership, Macron said.

France is pleased to see the dynamism of the Chinese economy that promotes openness and cooperation and has brought more opportunities to the world, he said, adding that France is ready to work with China to promote mutual investment, strengthen cooperation in such areas as economy, trade and renewable energy, and deepen friendly cultural exchanges.

France welcomes more Chinese investment in France and will provide a fair and non-discriminatory business environment, Macron said.

He added that France is committed to promoting the sound and steady development of Europe-China relations, and believes that Europe and China should uphold dialogue and cooperation, and Europe should achieve strategic autonomy.

Given the global geopolitical instability and challenges to the multilateral order, cooperation between France and China is even more important and indispensable, Macron said, adding that France fully agrees with President Xi's views on reforming and improving global governance and promoting a more balanced global economy.

France stands ready to work with China to strengthen coordination, jointly shoulder the due responsibilities of major countries, uphold multilateralism, and enhance cooperation in areas such as climate response, biodiversity conservation, and AI governance, so as to contribute to world peace and prosperity, he said.

The two heads of state exchanged views on the Ukraine crisis. Xi stated that China supports all efforts that are conducive to peace and will continue to play a constructive role in the political settlement of the crisis in its own way. He said China supports European countries in playing their due role toward the establishment of a balanced, effective and sustainable European security architecture.

After the talks, the two heads of state jointly witnessed the signing of multiple cooperation documents in nuclear energy, agri-food, education, and ecological environment, among others.

Before the talks, Xi and his wife, Peng Liyuan, held a welcome ceremony for Macron and his wife, Brigitte Macron, in the Great Hall of the People.  
– Xinhua

## Top legislator meets with French president

BEIJING – Zhao Leji, chairman of the National People's Congress (NPC) Standing Committee, met with French President Emmanuel Macron in Beijing yesterday.

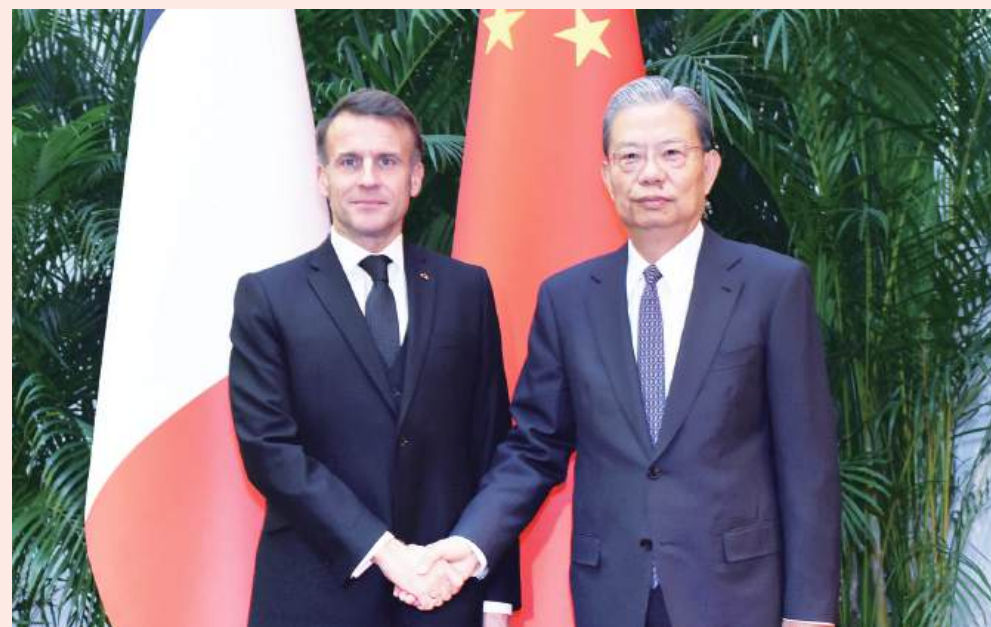
Zhao said that China stands ready to work with France to fully implement the important consensus reached between the two heads of state, carry forward the spirit of the establishment of China-France diplomatic relations, strengthen friendly exchange, deepen mutually beneficial cooperation, expand people-to-people and cultural exchange, and enhance dialogue and coordination in multilateral fields to promote the steady, positive development of bilateral relations.

He said the NPC is willing to maintain close exchange at all levels with the two

houses of the French Parliament, share work experience in such fields as legislation and supervision, and provide legal safeguards for practical cooperation between the two countries.

Macron said that France and China have maintained candid, direct and substantive dialogue, and have reached extensive consensus. France admires China's achievements in areas such as the economy, science and technology, and is willing to deepen its practical cooperation with China, strengthen exchange between legislative bodies, jointly address global challenges, and continuously promote the balanced development of France-China relations.

– Xinhua



**Zhao Leji (right), chairman of the National People's Congress (NPC) Standing Committee, shakes hands with French President Emmanuel Macron in Beijing yesterday.**  
– Xinhua



# Cultural exchanges help bridge global divides

Commentary

HANGZHOU – Amid escalating geopolitical tensions and regional conflicts, the unifying power of culture has grown increasingly vital in connecting people, fostering friendship, dispelling misunderstandings, and even bridging divides.

This will become more evident, as the recommendations for China’s 15<sup>th</sup> Five-Year Plan (2026-2030) call for efforts to promote cross-border cultural exchanges, boost cultural creativity, and advance fine traditional culture and high-standard opening up.

“We should engage in deeper exchanges and mutual learning with other cultures, carry out extensive people-to-people exchanges and cooperation...” “We should continue with the project to pass on and develop fine traditional Chinese culture. Cultural heritage protection should be systematically advanced and put under unified supervision and inspection,” according to the recommendations.

China’s long-standing dedication to cultural protection is evident via its 44 UNESCO-recognized items of intangible cultural heritage and 60 world heritage sites. Also, this year marks the 40th anniversary of China’s accession to the World Heritage Convention, underscoring the country’s sustained commitment in this regard.

A vivid example can be found in the traditional design and practices

for building Chinese wooden arch bridges – spanning a history of more than one thousand years. First inscribed in 2009 on the List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding, this tradition had declined over the years due to erosion and rapid urbanization.

On December 5, 2024, design techniques and practices for building such bridges were inscribed on UNESCO’s Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity – the result of China’s salvation and revitalization efforts. These bridges have inspired preservation endeavors by scholars around the world and gained increasing appeal for global visitors who are eager to understand traditional Chinese architecture and artistry.

Italian sinologist Gabriella Bonino has lived in China for nearly 40 years. She relocated to Zhejiang Province in 2017 after falling in love with local culture and artistry – especially the wooden arch bridges in Taishun County.

After visiting craftsmen involved in constructing such wooden arch bridges, Bonino detailed their techniques, history and significance in a book which was published in Italy. She noted that these old Chinese bridges have important historical and cultural value, and these techniques and local customs should be recognized and appreciated globally.

Chinese and overseas experts at Wenzhou-Kean University in

Zhejiang are enthusiastic about promoting wooden arch bridge culture to the world. Thanks to promotion efforts such as seminars, bridge model donations and AI video competitions, people now have more access to such traditional knowledge, as well as modern technology and innovative methods useful for safeguarding this intangible heritage.

Last week, a group of US students from Utah visited Taishun County, where they were able to engage directly with a real China and experience its unique cultural aesthetics that combines tradition and modernity.

China’s recent travel facilitation measures, including visa-free entry policies for more countries, are making it easier for international visitors to see China first-hand and in a more objective way – thus gradually reshaping their perceptions toward the country.

China’s growing cultural influence is increasingly recognized abroad. A report released by Brand Finance, a London-based consultancy, ranked China third globally in terms of “rich heritage”.

As China advances the Global Civilization Initiative, it calls for inclusive and collective efforts to protect humanity’s shared heritage and celebrate the diversity of world civilizations. It is through such sustained exchange and cooperation that humanity’s remarkable cultural tapestry endures and thrives. – *Xinhua*

# Chinese, Cuban communist parties hold seventh theory seminar

BEIJING – The Communist Party of China (CPC) and the Communist Party of Cuba (PCC) held the seventh theory seminar yesterday in Beijing, which focused on the practice and experience in promoting socialist modernization through scientific development planning.

Li Shulei, a member of the Political Bureau of the CPC Central Committee and head of the Publicity Department of the CPC Central Committee, and Gladys Martínez Verdecia, a member of Politburo of the Central Committee of the PCC and first secretary of Artemisa Provincial Party Committee, attended the seminar and delivered keynote speeches.

This year marks the 65<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between China and Cuba, Li said, noting that the top leaders of the two parties and countries have exchanged congratulatory messages on this occasion and held two meetings this year, engaging in in-depth discussions on the relations between the two parties and countries.

“These interactions have provided strategic guidance for

further strengthening the ironclad friendship and building an even closer China-Cuba community with a shared future,” Li added.

The fourth plenary session of the 20<sup>th</sup> CPC Central Committee has formulated the top-level design and strategic plan for China’s development during the 15<sup>th</sup> Five-Year Plan (2026-2030) period, Li said, noting that the CPC emphasizes guiding economic and social development through medium-term and long-term planning, and China has vigorously promoted the enhancement of its overall national strength and the improvement of people’s livelihoods through successive five-year plans.

Martínez spoke highly of the tremendous accomplishments made by China in the new era under the leadership of the CPC Central Committee with Comrade Xi Jinping at its core. She also expressed Cuba’s willingness to strengthen exchanges and mutual learning with China on the experience of party and state governance, and to jointly promote the building of a Cuba-China community with a shared future. – *Xinhua*

# China-South Africa human rights seminar held in Pretoria

PRETORIA, South Africa – The 2025 China-South Africa Seminar on Human Rights was held yesterday in Pretoria, South Africa’s administrative capital.

Under the theme “Multilateralism and the Realization of the Right to Development,” the event gathered around 50 representatives from both countries to discuss topics, including four major global initiatives proposed by China and global human rights governance, and China-South Africa practical cooperation and the advancement of the right to development.

Noting that the global human rights cause is facing growing challenges, Vice Chairman and Secretary-General of the China Foundation for Human Rights Development Li Hongkui urged efforts to strengthen exchanges, build greater consensus on human rights development among Global South countries, and jointly uphold true multilateralism.

Li also called for promoting high-quality Belt and Road cooperation to close the development gap between the Global South and the North, as well as ensuring that the benefits of development are shared by all countries.

David Monyae, director of the Center for Africa-China Studies at the University of Johannesburg, said that the erosion of multilateralism in recent years undermines the right to development, especially of people in the Global South.

Hailing the seminar as timely, he stressed that the right to

development must be grounded in each country’s national conditions, culture and historical experience, and that no country has the authority to impose its own standards on others.

Garth Shelton, a professor in international relations at the University of the Witwatersrand, said that the achievements of Chinese modernization offer valuable lessons for African countries.

Global governance still faces challenges in promoting equitable development and protecting human rights, Shelton said, adding that Africa and China can work together to deepen cooperation in key areas such as poverty alleviation and sustainable development, and jointly advance the building of a more just and equitable international order.

According to the participants, China and South Africa have a broad consensus in upholding multilateralism and promoting common development.

Both countries, as major members of the Global South with shared views on human rights, should deepen exchanges and mutual learning on human rights governance, jointly implement the four major global initiatives, and contribute to fostering a more just and equitable global human rights governance, they said.

The event was co-organized by the China Foundation for Human Rights Development and the Center for Africa-China Studies at the University of Johannesburg.

– *Xinhua*



South African Minister in the Presidency for Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation Maropene Ramokgopa addresses a promotional event for the English edition of “Xi Jinping: The Governance of China,” in Johannesburg on Wednesday. The event drew around 200 participants.

– AFP

# Mozambique, China maintain close cooperation in supporting persons with disabilities: official

MAPUTO – Mozambique and China enjoy a long-standing tradition of friendship, with a history of mutual support in assisting persons with disabilities, a Mozambican official has said.

Manuel Tule, governor of Mozambique’s Maputo Province, made the remarks on Wednesday during an event held in Moamba District to mark the International Day of Persons with Disabilities.

At the event, the Chinese Embassy in Mozambique donated wheelchairs, assistive devices, daily necessities, and food supplies valued at about US\$28,000 to local

persons with disabilities.

Tule said the donations will improve the living conditions of people with disabilities, adding that bilateral cooperation in this field will continue to benefit the people in both countries.

Carlos Mussanhane, administrator of Moamba District, said the event demonstrates the spirit of solidarity and inclusion, embodying the principle that “no one should be left behind.” He expressed gratitude for the unconditional support provided by the Chinese government to this cause.

Mozambique’s first lady Gueta Chapo thanked China for its support

to persons with disabilities in Mozambique. She said the International Day of Persons with Disabilities is “a moment that highlights human rights,” as well as an opportunity to promote the self-esteem, confidence, and social participation of persons with disabilities.

Chinese Ambassador to Mozambique Zheng Xuan said in her speech that China and Mozambique share the same goals in safeguarding the rights of persons with disabilities and promoting them to become participants, contributors, and beneficiaries of economic and social development. – *Xinhua*



# Singapore upholds opposition leader's conviction for lying



**Pritam Singh, secretary general of the Singaporean opposition Workers' Party, leaves the Supreme Court during an appeals hearing against his conviction and sentence for lying to a Committee of Privileges (COP) parliamentary hearing in Singapore on November 4. Singapore's High Court upheld the conviction of the city-state's opposition leader on December 4 for lying to parliament while helping a fellow party member cover up a false witness account.** – AFP

SINGAPORE – Singapore's High Court yesterday upheld the conviction of opposition leader Pritam Singh for lying to a parliamentary committee while helping cover up a false account by a fellow party member.

Pritam Singh, 49, secretary-general of the Workers' Party, had appealed a February district court ruling that found him guilty of two counts of lying to the committee investigating Raeesah Khan, then a rookie MP.

Khan had admitted to fabricating a story she told in the legislature about accompanying a rape victim to file a police report.

The district court had ruled that,

contrary to what Singh told the committee, he had not done enough to get Khan to admit to her lie in parliament.

Singh was fined Sg\$7,000 (US\$5,400) for each charge – narrowly avoiding disqualification from May's elections, in which he retained his seat.

The People's Action Party won 87 of 97 seats, extending its six-decade rule, while the Workers' Party kept 10.

Under the constitution, a person fined a minimum of Sg\$10,000 per charge or jailed for at least one year, is disqualified from running for election or holding a parliamentary seat for five years.

"The appellant's conviction on both charges is accordingly sound and his appeal is dismissed," High Court judge Steven Chong said in his ruling yesterday.

Chong said that Workers' Party leaders, including Singh, "essentially were engaged in an exercise of risk assessment and/or damage control" rather than asking Khan to quickly admit she had told a lie.

Singh said while he was "disappointed" with the decision, he respected and accepted it.

He is the first sitting opposition MP to be convicted of a criminal charge in almost 40 years, according to *The Straits Times*. – AFP

## Rain forecasts raise fears in flood-hit Indonesia, Sri Lanka

**Marchio Gorbiano and Taris Iman with Amal Jayasinghe in Colombo**

SIBOLGA – Rain forecasts yesterday raised fears of more damage in flood-hit Indonesia and Sri Lanka, after earlier deluges killed more than 1,500 people in four countries.

In Indonesia, the weather agency warned the three hard-hit provinces on the island of Sumatra would see "moderate to heavy" rain between yesterday and today.

The downpour started overnight and while it has not reached the same intensity as last week, it has frayed nerves in a region traumatised by flash floods and landslides.

"We are afraid that if it rains suddenly, the flood will come again," 54-year-old Sabandi told AFP at a shelter in Pandan, North Sumatra, [Indonesia].

The death toll in Indonesia rose to 836 yesterday, with the majority killed in North Sumatra and Aceh provinces, national disaster mitigation agency spokesman Abdul Muhari told a press briefing.

More than 800,000 people are displaced and over 500 remain missing, with patchy communications and electricity making it hard to confirm their whereabouts, the spokesman added.

Sabandi, who goes by one name, said she was stranded on her roof for two days without food or water before she could evacuate.

"My house was filled with mud," she said – so high she couldn't enter.

### Losing sleep

Seasonal monsoons bring rainfall that farmers across Asia depend on, but climate change is making the phenomenon more erratic, unpredictable and deadly.

Two separate weather systems drenched all of Sri Lanka, Sumatra, parts of southern Thailand and northern Malaysia last week.

The scale of the disaster has made relief efforts challenging.

In Indonesia's Banda Aceh, an AFP reporter said the queue for fuel at one petrol station extended four kilometres.

The provincial governor led a relief group to the devastated Aceh Tamiang region late Wednesday, delivering 30 tonnes of necessities including drinking water, rice, instant noodles, biscuits, eggs and medicine, according to a statement.

In nearby Langsa city, 49-year-old Erni sheltered with her family in an Islamic prayer hall after floods devastated their home.

They had received enough drinking water and food aid to last a few days, but power outages and irregular access to clean water were making it difficult to clean up, Erni said.

"The wardrobe, table, refrigerator – all are ruined," she told AFP.

"We honestly can't sleep, constantly thinking about what if the flood comes again."

Elsewhere, survivors reported food shortages, price gouging and looting.

### 'This village is a cemetery'

In Sri Lanka, forecasters said the northeast monsoon was due to arrive from yesterday afternoon.

Landslide alerts were renewed for some of the worst-hit areas of the central Kandy region, and residents were advised not to return home as the saturated slopes could collapse under more rainfall.

But some were searching for the missing yesterday in the village of Hadabima, where 18 bodies have been pulled out of six homes flattened by landslides, survivor VK Muthukrishnan told AFP.

Six people remained unaccounted for, the 42-year-old electrician said.

"We can't live here anymore because this village is now a cemetery," Muthukrishnan said.

At least 479 people have been killed in Sri Lanka, and hundreds remain missing, with the president appealing for international support.

Authorities estimate they will need up to US\$7 billion to rebuild homes, industries and roads, a tough ask for a country still emerging from its worst-ever economic crisis three years ago. – AFP

**Marchio Gorbiano and Taris Iman**

SIBOLGA – Under a scorching sun, Nur Apsyah queued with hundreds of others, hoping to secure some of the food aid in short supply in Indonesia's flood-hit Sumatra.

She was one of the lucky ones on Wednesday, when soldiers in military fatigues oversaw the distribution of rice to flood survivors.

Her town Sibolga has been almost entirely cut off after damage to access routes, leaving residents with no electricity and dwindling food, fuel and water.

"It has never been like this in Sibolga before," said the 28-year-old, who waited at the state-owned rice warehouse in neighbouring Sarudik with her parents.

"There is no food, the money has run out, there are no jobs. How can we eat?" she said.

Flooding and landslides last week killed more than 770 people and buried homes, washed away bridges and severed transportation links across the island of Sumatra.

With many areas inaccessible by land and more rain expected, humanitarian groups warned the scale of rescue and recovery efforts was unprecedented.

While the seaside town of Sibolga in Central Tapanuli district escaped the worst of the flood damage, it was left without electricity and little access to the rest of the country.

Nur called the situation an "emergency," adding that people recently looted minimarkets in town.

"Imagine, people who should not have done that, did it because

## 'No food': Indonesians scrounge for supplies after flood disaster



**A villager looks around the area from his damaged house after a flash flood in Garoga, North Sumatra province, Indonesia yesterday. Rain forecasts raised fears of more damage in flood-hit Indonesia and Sri Lanka, after earlier deluges killed more than 1,500 people in four countries.** – AFP

there is no helping hand from the government," she told AFP.

Coordinating Human Development and Culture Minister Pratikno said that the rice handouts were part of its efforts to "ease the people's burden."

AFP saw the lucky recipients on Wednesday have their fingers marked with ink to prevent double distribution and hoarding. Some men tossed the 50-kilogram rice sacks on their backs, while women placed them atop their heads to carry them away.

Queues outside the warehouse and fuel pumps have begun to improve, though forecasts of fresh rain have raised fears of new damage and worsening shortages.

### 'Everything is scarce'

Many stores in Sibolga remain shuttered with no electricity supply after the disaster. The few that remain open depend on generators.

Local resident Sahmila Pasaribu

told AFP she spent hours searching for essential supplies.

Even if she had the money, she said "there is nothing that can be bought."

"It's sad that because of the disasters like this, everything is scarce: fuel, rice, cooking oil," the 55-year-old said.

At a local government-owned water company office in Sibolga, Sopian Hadi filled gallon containers as a queue stretched behind him.

He said he has regularly visited the office over the past week after landslides disrupted the water line to his house.

"We need [water] for our daily lives... water is our source of life," the grocery store owner, 30, said.

Other supplies are limited, and he described queuing for six hours to fill his motorcycle petrol tank.

Despite the circumstances, Sopian said he refused to be beaten down by the situation.

"I am not desperate, because to survive, [we] can't despair." – AFP

## 31 Western Pacific countries test pandemic readiness in annual WHO simulation

MANILA—As health emergencies emerge at an accelerating pace, 31 countries and areas across the World Health Organization (WHO) Western Pacific Region took part in this year's International Health Regulations (IHR) Exercise Crystal, an annual drill designed to test and strengthen pandemic preparedness.

In a statement yesterday, the WHO said the simulation required

participants to respond in real time to reports of a fictitious novel respiratory illness, assessing their ability to verify and share information with WHO, evaluate public health risks, and coordinate across sectors.

The exercise also tested communication capacities mandated under the IHR.

Supported by the Pandemic Influenza Preparedness (PIP)

Framework Partnership Contribution, this year's drill focused on responding to novel influenza threats and assessing coordination mechanisms embedded in national pandemic plans.

The scenario also emphasized cross-border operations, enabling participants to practise public health measures at airports, seaports, and other points of entry.

– Xinhua



# Seoul says 6 nationals held in N Korea, vows to help them

SEOUL — South Korea's presidential office confirmed yesterday that six of its citizens have been captive in North Korea for years, after President Lee Jae Myung appeared unaware of their plight during a briefing with foreign media.

Asked Wednesday about South Koreans detained in the North, Lee replied: "It's my first time ever hearing about this."

Lee's office later followed up with a statement saying that six nationals — including Christian

missionaries and North Korean defectors — have been held since their arrests "between 2013 and 2016 on charges of espionage, among others".

Four of them have been named by Pyongyang, which has accused them of espionage — a charge carrying severe penalties, including death, in the authoritarian country.

"In the current situation, where inter-Korean dialogue and exchanges have been suspended for an extended period, the suffering

of our people caused by division continues," it said.

"The government will work to address the matter through efforts to swiftly resume inter-Korean dialogue."

At Wednesday's briefing, Lee turned to his national security adviser Wi Sung-lac for help answering the question.

Wi said there had been cases of South Koreans unable to return after entering the North and "other unknown cases", but could not confirm the timing of their arrests.

Lee's apparent lack of awareness made headlines in local media, with one headline in the conservative *Chosun Ilbo* calling him "clueless".

"It was a symbolic scene that illustrates the status of the issue of South Korean detainees in North Korea," the daily said.

Seoul's Unification Ministry, which handles inter-Korean relations, said yesterday it last raised the issue with Pyongyang in 2018.

The North responded that "relevant domestic institutions are

thoroughly reviewing the issue", according to the ministry.

Pyongyang has not commented or taken any action on the matter since, it added.

Since taking office in June, Lee has proposed talks with Pyongyang without preconditions, a sharp reversal from the hawkish stance of his predecessor, who was removed from office over his disastrous declaration of martial law last year.

Pyongyang has remained silent on Lee's overtures. — AFP



**AZM Zahid Hossain (centre), personal doctor of Bangladesh's ex-prime minister Khaleda Zia, speaks with media outside a hospital in Dhaka yesterday. Critically ill Zia, a key figure in elections slated for next year, is to be flown by air ambulance to Britain, her doctor said yesterday. Zia, 80, is in intensive care in the capital Dhaka, after she was admitted to hospital last month with symptoms of a lung infection.** — AFP

## Chaos after India's biggest airline cancels 1,200 flights

NEW DELHI — Chaos gripped Indian airports yesterday after the country's biggest airline IndiGo cancelled over 1,200 flights, stranding thousands of passengers.

The company blamed the disruption on "unforeseen operational challenges," including technical glitches, bad weather and new rules for workers.

India's aviation watchdog ordered an investigation and demanded that IndiGo respond with plans to ease the interruptions, which have persisted since Monday.

Passengers vented their anger online, with one airport user on X describing "complete mayhem" with delays of up to eight hours and no staff on hand to help.

Some 1,232 IndiGo flights had

been cancelled as of Wednesday, according to the company. The number of delays was not clear.

IndiGo said it was offering customers alternative travel arrangements and refunds while restoring its services.

The company acknowledged its "significantly disrupted" operations were partly due to new crew rostering rules having a "negative compounding impact".

The rules came into effect last month and aim to give pilots and crew more rest periods to enhance passenger safety.

In a meeting yesterday with senior officials from the airline and from the Directorate General of Civil Aviation, IndiGo acknowledged that "more cancellations will continue for the next

2-3 days," according to a statement issued by the aviation watchdog.

Airline officials also said that "corrective actions are underway" with the aim of fully restoring operations by February 10, the statement added.

It said the aviation body demanded IndiGo submit "a detailed roadmap covering projected crew recruitment".

The disruption is another setback to the no-frills carrier, which has built its reputation on punctuality.

Last week, 200 of its planes were affected when Airbus issued an alert for an urgent upgrade for 6,000 aircraft worldwide.

India is one of the world's fastest growing aviation markets, hitting 500,000 daily flyers last month for the first time. — AFP

## Pakistan says to let humanitarian aid into Afghanistan

ISLAMABAD — Pakistan will temporarily allow UN relief supplies into Afghanistan, officials said yesterday, in the first partial border opening since deadly clashes erupted between the two neighbours in October.

The countries have been locked in an increasingly bitter dispute since the Taliban authorities retook control in Kabul in 2021. Islamabad accuses its neighbour of harbouring militants that launch cross-border attacks, charges the Afghan government denies.

"In response to formal requests from UN agencies... the government of Pakistan has approved a limited and specific humanitarian exception to allow movement of their containers to Afghanistan," a government official not authorised to speak to the media told AFP on condition of anonymity.

The supplies include food, medicine and medical equipment, and "other essential goods related to health and education", the official said.

The aid transfers will take place in "three phases", though the official did not specify when the first phase would begin.

A United Nations official also confirmed that the aid would soon be allowed to enter Afghanistan.

However, the head of the information department in Spin

Boldak, an Afghan city near a key border crossing, told AFP: "We have no information about this yet and the gate at the border is closed."

The border has been closed since the conflict in October, with only Afghans being expelled from Pakistan allowed to cross.

The Pakistani official said that the border would remain closed to all trade, and that the partial reopening for aid was "conditional".

"Pakistan has not reopened the border for general trade or immigration with Afghanistan, nor has it restored Afghan Transit Trade," the official added.

Dozens of Afghan trucks were stranded with rotting produce and other items when the frontier was shut on October 12 due to deadly cross-border fire, which was followed by a fragile truce.

Losses have topped US\$100 million on both sides and up to 25,000 workers in the border regions have been affected, according to the Pakistan-Afghanistan Joint Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PAJCCI), which seeks to promote trade.

Pakistan is landlocked Afghanistan's biggest trading partner, supplying rice, pharmaceuticals and raw materials, while taking in 45 percent of Afghan exports last year, according to the World Bank.

— AFP

## Meta says starting to remove under-16s from social media in Australia

SYDNEY — Tech giant Meta said yesterday it is starting to remove under-16s in Australia from Instagram, Threads and Facebook ahead of the country's world-first social media ban.

Australia is obliging social media platforms including Facebook, Instagram and TikTok to remove and block users younger than 16 by December 10, when the law comes into force.

Platforms face fines of Aus\$49.5 million (US\$32 million) if they fail to take "reasonable steps" to comply.

"While we are working hard to remove all users who we understand to be under the age of 16 by 10 December, compliance with the law will be an ongoing and multi-layered process," a Meta spokesperson said.

Younger users can still save and

download their online histories, the spokesperson said.

"Before you turn 16, we will notify you that you will soon be allowed to regain access to these platforms, and your content will be restored exactly as you left it."

Meta said it was committed to complying with the Australian law, but it called for app stores to be held accountable for checking ages instead of the social media platforms.

"The government should require app stores to verify age and obtain parental approval whenever teens under 16 download apps, eliminating the need for teens to verify their age multiple times across different apps," the spokesperson said.

"Social media platforms

could then use this verified age information to ensure teens are in age-appropriate experiences."

YouTube has also attacked the social media ban.

The video-streaming giant said this week the new law would make young Australians "less safe" because under-16s could still visit the website without an account but would lose YouTube features including safety filters.

But the government described its argument as "weird".

"If YouTube is reminding us all that it is not safe and there's content not appropriate for age-restricted users on their website, that's a problem that YouTube needs to fix," Communications Minister Anika Wells said. (More on Meta on p.11) — AFP



**In this handout photograph released by the Indian Press Information Bureau (PIB) yesterday, India's Prime Minister Narendra Modi (right) and Russia's President Vladimir Putin sit in a car as they depart Palam Air Force Base after the latter's arrival in New Delhi. Putin landed in India yesterday for a two-day visit aimed at deepening defence ties, as New Delhi faces heavy US pressure to stop buying oil from Moscow.** — AFP



## Trump despair drives folk icon Joan Baez back to the studio



US singer-songwriter and activist Joan Baez speaks to journalists on the red carpet upon arrival for the film 'Joan Baez I Am A Noise' screened in the Panorama section of the 73rd Berlinale, Europe's first major film festival of the year, on February 17, 2023 in Berlin. — AFP

Adam Plowright

PARIS — Legendary American folk singer Joan Baez has told AFP that the return of Donald Trump to the White House has pushed her to go back to the studio where she has just recorded a protest song.

The 1960s icon, a famed anti-war and social justice campaigner, will appear on a duet with American folk singer Jesse Welles, performing his anti-Trump track "No Kings".

"I love singing with younger people, and that song is perfect for my voice. It was just a treat," the 85-year-old told AFP in Paris, adding that it would be released in the next 10 days.

"It's fresh, and he's 33 and he's writing this stuff, and I haven't heard anything like that," Baez added of Arkansas-born Welles, whom she has performed with several times.

"What's needed is an anthem, something that everybody can sing. They don't have to worry about all the verses. Just sing the 'No Kings, no Kings, no Kings' part," the pacifist campaigner added.

Baez's last recording was "Whistle Down the Wind", released in 2018.

Welles's other recent release is "Join Ice", which mocks the beefed-up department of Immigration and Customs Enforcement.

The shaggy-haired singer-songwriter, known for his witty lyrics and nasal voice, invites immediate comparisons with Baez's ex, Bob Dylan.

"There isn't any comparison so I wouldn't pretend there was, but similarities? For sure," said Baez.

"But I'm happy to keep Dylan on the pedestal where he belongs."

### 'Huge thing'

The Baez-Dylan love story was back in the spotlight in last year's well-received Dylan biopic

"A Complete Unknown", starring Timothee Chalamet.

Baez was broadly happy with her portrayal by actress Monica Barbaro, with the Oscar-nominated actress consulting her several times during her research.

"The film was a huge thing," Baez explained, saying she was recognised on the street much more now. "There was a huge spike and it's still going on."

When not worrying about US democracy, indulging her passion for painting or tending to her chickens at her south California home, Baez's focus in recent years has been releasing more autobiographical material.

She opened up her personal video archives for the 2023 documentary "Joan Baez: I Am a Noise", revealing her struggles with depression, substance abuse, and her belief she had suffered child abuse from her physicist father.

After writing two sets of memoirs, her latest contribution is a book of poems, collected from scraps of paper, notebooks and old computers, all composed over decades.

Some of them were written during her time struggling with dissociative identity disorder, a condition that sees sufferers assume multiple personalities.

Although she suffers from nightmares and sometimes struggles to keep the "darkness and gloom" out, she says her last decade has been her happiest.

"Isn't that nuts?" she laughed. "For whatever reason, I'm just giving up a lot of shit. At 85, who cares?"

She did her last tour in 2019 and no longer plays guitar.

"I really want to leave an honest legacy, whether it's the poems, the music, the documentary. I'm going to close it out in an honest way," she said. — AFP

## South Africa says wants equal treatment, after US G20 exclusion

JOHANNESBURG — South Africa responded yesterday to a US bar on its participation in G20 events under Washington's presidency by saying it was a fully-fledged member of the forum and expected to be treated equally.

The United States took over this month the presidency of the group of leading economies after largely boycotting South Africa's tenure, including the November summit, in an escalation of a months-long standoff with Pretoria.

In a blistering attack on Wednesday of Pretoria's G20 run, Secretary of State Marco Rubio repeated President Donald Trump's statement a few weeks ago that it would not be invited to G20 events in the coming year, including a summit due in Miami.

Asked about the statement, President Cyril Ramaphosa told reporters: "We are yet to receive it in writing and we will deal with that when it comes."

South Africa was "fully fledged member of the G20" and its presidency had been internationally described as successful, he added.

"All we want, really, as South Africa is to be treated as an equal,

sovereign country, a country that respects other countries, a country that fosters the success and prosperity of other countries," he said.

The G20 group of nations includes the world's top economies as well as the European Union and the African Union regional blocs. It accounts for 85 percent of the world's GDP and two-thirds of its population.

### Not invited

Rubio said in a Substack post that South Africa's G20 summit was an exercise in "radical agendas" that ignored US objections.

The "United States will not be extending an invitation to the South African government to participate in the G20 during our presidency," he said.

Rubio repeated criticism of South Africa's domestic and international policies, including unfounded allegations of discrimination against the white Afrikaner minority that led Washington to offer them refugee status.

Presidential spokesman Vincent Magwenya said South Africa had anticipated US announcements that it would not be invited and was looking ahead to the next presidency

to be held by Britain.

"About this time next year, the UK will be taking over the G20 Presidency," Magwenya said on social media.

"We will be able to engage meaningfully and substantively over what really matters to the rest of the world. For now, we will take a commercial break until we resume normal programming," he said.

The Trump administration has lashed out at South Africa over a range of policies, expelling its ambassador in March and imposing 30 percent trade tariffs, which Pretoria is still seeking to overturn.

Foreign Minister Ronald Lamola replied to Rubio's comments in a statement that defended South African policies to "redress" apartheid-era discrimination against the black majority.

He said Rubio's claims of racism and the tolerance of violence against Afrikaners, who are descendants of the first Dutch settlers, "could not be further from the truth".

"We do not seek your approval for our path," Lamola wrote. "But we do seek — and we will always extend — a hand of respectful partnership." — AFP

## Meta shares jump on report Facebook slashing VR spending

NEW YORK — Shares in Meta rose sharply yesterday following a report that the Facebook parent company is significantly cutting back on virtual reality (VR) investments as it pivots toward artificial intelligence.

In 2021, CEO and founder Mark Zuckerberg bet heavily on virtual reality's promise, even rebranding his company from Facebook to Meta — a signal of his confidence that the future belonged to the metaverse, an artificial world accessible through VR headsets.

Reality Labs, the division largely devoted to VR products, has since 2021 burned through US\$80.6 billion while generating just US\$9.7 billion in revenue.

According to Bloomberg, Meta plans to cut metaverse costs by 30 percent — news that drove its share price up as much as 4 percent in trading on Wall Street yesterday.

The shift comes as Zuckerberg has dramatically increased resources allocated to AI and reorganised the dedicated teams internally.

The 41-year-old CEO has

launched an aggressive recruitment campaign, attracting executives from OpenAI, Apple and Google with multibillion-US-dollar offers.

The latest hire, announced Wednesday, is Alan Dye, one of Apple's top design executives. Zuckerberg has tasked him with leading a new lab dedicated to integrating AI into products.

Meta is now focusing more on augmented reality (AR) through its connected glasses (Meta Ray-Ban and Oakley Meta) rather than VR.

— AFP

## German court denies copyright protection for Miss Moneypenny

BERLIN — Miss Moneypenny might be as much of a James Bond movie fixture as spy gadgets and vodka martinis, but a German court has ruled the fictional MI6 secretary does not warrant copyright protection.

In a decision released yesterday, Germany's highest civil court rejected a lawsuit challenging the use of the advertising tagline "My Moneypenny" by a company that offers secretarial and bookkeeping services.

The hard-working secretary to British spy chief M plays a small recurring role in almost all Bond films, where she maintains a flirtatious relationship with the super spy.

But despite being a household

name to Bond fans, the Federal Court of Justice ruled that she has "neither a specific visual appearance nor particular character traits to give the fictional character... sufficiently individualised character with a distinctive personality".

That means that Miss Moneypenny does not meet the requirements to be considered a protected "working title" under German trademark and copyright law, according to the court.

A US company that previously managed the rights to the films sued the German company for using the name.

Earlier this year, US tech giant Amazon bought distribution rights and artistic control of the "James

Bond" franchise in a deal reportedly worth around US\$1 billion.

Presiding judge Thomas Koch explained that film characters need to have a distinctive profile of their own outside the underlying films in order to receive legal protections.

Miss Moneypenny appeared in all but two of the 25 Bond movies released since 1962 and has been played by a number of actresses, from Lois Maxwell to Naomie Harris.

She was left out of the 2006 film "Casino Royale" and 2008 film "Quantum of Solace," but was reintroduced in the 2012 film "Skyfall", where — for the very first time — she was given more of a backstory and a first name, Eve.

— AFP



## Spain, Morocco pen deals in latest boost to ties



Spain's Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez (second from right) and Morocco's Prime Minister Aziz Akhannouch (second from left) talk during a signing ceremony with Spain's Foreign Minister José Manuel Álbarez (right) and Morocco's Foreign Minister Nasser Bourita at the Moncloa Palace in Madrid yesterday. – AFP

MADRID – Spain signed 14 cooperation deals with Morocco in Madrid yesterday, strengthening ties with the European Union's North African neighbour that were long poisoned by the disputed Western Sahara.

Morocco mostly controls the vast, resource-rich former Spanish colony, where the Algeria-backed Polisario Front seeks independence for the territory.

Ties improved in 2022 after Spain supported Morocco's plan to grant the Western Sahara autonomy but under Rabat's sovereignty, a stance also supported by the United States and France.

Spanish Prime Minister Pedro

Sánchez hosted his Moroccan counterpart Aziz Akhannouch for talks in Madrid before presiding over the signing of 14 agreements.

These included cooperation in education, sport, agriculture, fishing, and natural disasters, according to a statement from Sanchez's office.

A joint declaration reaffirmed "both countries' desire to strengthen political dialogue", the statement added.

Sánchez also urged both countries to seize the "economic, cultural and social opportunities" offered by the 2030 football World Cup, which Spain and Morocco will host alongside Portugal.

The statement omitted any mention of the Western Sahara. Morocco is seeking to manage its airspace, controlled by Spain from the Atlantic archipelago of the Canary Islands.

Immigration is another major topic of common interest. Morocco is a key EU partner in managing irregular migration, sharing the bloc's only land border with Africa at the Spanish exclaves of Ceuta and Melilla.

Moroccan Trade Minister Ryad Mezzour had told *El Mundo* newspaper that his country was "making every effort" to combat illegal immigration.

– AFP

## Colombia's ELN rebels free 28 hostages near Venezuela border

BOGOTÁ – Colombia's National Liberation Army (ELN) guerrillas on Wednesday freed 28 people who were taken captive in January after fighting another rebel group near the Venezuela border, the country's Ombudsman's office said.

Five minors were among the hostages as they were handed over to a humanitarian commission, according to the Ombudsman.

Images shared by the Ombudsman showed the 17 men and 11 women "in good health" – except for one injured person among them – and waiting for their release.

The released hostages sat on plastic chairs in a community centre and were conversing with delegates from the UN and the Catholic Church.

Beside them appeared the guerrilla group's main commander in the area, alias "Ricardo," surrounded by hooded men armed with automatic rifles.

"We ask for and hope for more releases," the Ombudsperson, Iris Marin, wrote on X.

The 28 hostages had been held since January, when the ELN launched an offensive in the northeast Catatumbo region against a dissident faction of the former rebel group Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) for control of the borderland region by the Venezuelan frontier.

The conflict led to more than 100 deaths.

The ELN offensive was the bloodiest incident under the leftist government of Colombian President Gustavo Petro, and put an end to ongoing peace talks with the guerrilla group.

According to experts, the Che Guevara-inspired group finances itself through drug trafficking, illegal mining, and kidnappings for extortion.

The ELN is also the oldest guerrilla group in the Americas.

It was engaged in two years of peace negotiations with the Petro government, but these were suspended due to the intensification of attacks carried out by the rebels. – AFP

Celebration of 26th Anniversary of the Establishment of the Macao Special Administrative Region

## CULTURAL AFFAIRS BUREAU ONLINE BOOK SHOP

20%

1/12 - 31/12  
2025

Limited offer for all books

off on All Books



文化局  
INSTITUTO CULTURAL



文化局  
網上書店  
Livraria Online  
do Instituto  
Cultural  
Online Book  
Shop of Cultural  
Affairs Bureau

[www.icm.gov.mo/bookshop](http://www.icm.gov.mo/bookshop)





Leeds United's Japanese midfielder Ao Tanaka (centre) celebrates after scoring Leeds' second goal during the English Premier League match against Chelsea at Elland Road in Leeds, northern England, on Wednesday. Chelsea's Premier League title challenge suffered a huge setback in a shock 3-1 defeat at lowly Leeds on Wednesday. — AFP

## Football shorts

### Real's Alexander-Arnold out for 2 months with thigh injury

MADRID — England full-back Trent Alexander-Arnold has suffered a thigh injury, his club Real Madrid said yesterday, with Spanish media speculating that he faces two months out.

The former Liverpool right-back set up Real's opening goal in a 3-0 win at Athletic Bilbao on Wednesday - his first La Liga assist - but then left the field in the second half with an injury.

Madrid said in a statement that following tests, Alexander-Arnold had been diagnosed with "a muscle injury to the front of the thigh" on his left leg.

Daily newspaper *Marca* said that the 27-year-old would miss at least two months of the season due to his injury.

*Marca* said he would miss at least 10 matches, including Champions League clashes with Manchester City, Monaco and Benfica, who are coached by Real's former boss Jose Mourinho.

It is the second injury that Alexander-Arnold has suffered this season, having picked up a hamstring problem earlier in the campaign.

His unavailability is a blow to Madrid, who have a shortage of right-backs with Dani Carvajal also injured and not expected to return for another month. — AFP

### Troubled Nice hit with stadium ban over crowd trouble

PARIS — Nice were ordered by French football authorities Wednesday to play a match behind closed doors after repeated crowd disturbances that disrupted their 5-1 loss to Marseille.

The Ligue 1 game at Nice's Allianz Riviera stadium last month was stopped twice, after a lighter was thrown at a Marseille player and then for a second time when Nice fans let off a series of fireworks.

A blanket ban on supporters will apply to Nice's French Cup tie against Saint-Etienne in the round of 64 on December 21.

The French league's disciplinary committee also imposed a partial stadium closure on Nice for the top-flight game at home to Strasbourg at the start of January.

Nice have lost six matches in a row and an investigation into aggravated assault was opened this week after a confrontation between players and supporters at the team's training centre Sunday following their return from the 3-1 loss in Lorient.

Two players subsequently lodged complaints with the police. Nice said Terem Moffi, Jeremie Boga and Jonathan Clauss were victims of physical and verbal assaults. Moffi and Boga have both been placed on sick leave by the club. — AFP



Flamengo's fans display a tifo ahead of the the Brasileirao Serie A match against Ceara at Maracana Stadium in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, on Wednesday. Four days after beating Palmeiras to win their fourth Copa Libertadores, Flamengo secured the Brazilian title with a 1-0 success against Ceara at Rio de Janeiro's iconic Maracana stadium on Wednesday. It was a ninth Brazilian crown for the country's most popular football club, and their third in the last seven seasons. — AFP

# Salah does not have 'unlimited credit' at Liverpool, Van Dijk says



LIVERPOOL — Virgil van Dijk says Mohamed Salah's omission from Liverpool's team for a second successive match shows no player at the club has "unlimited credit".

The Egypt international was an unused substitute for Sunday's win at West Ham and was on the bench for the 1-1 draw at home to Sunderland on Wednesday.

It was the first time in his Anfield career that he had not started in back-to-back league matches.

The forward was brought on for the second half against Sunderland but struggled to make an impact and is now goalless in five matches.

Salah has scored just four Premier League goals for the struggling defending champions this season, in stark contrast to his

haul of 29 last season.

Liverpool captain Van Dijk was asked after the Sunderland draw whether Salah's omission had sent a message to the dressing room.

"That's always been the case," he said. "It's not like you have unlimited credit, everyone has to perform."

"Mo has been doing that but the manager made that decision in the last two games. We all want the best for the club."

"I am pretty sure Mo will still be a big part of what we are trying to achieve because he is an amazing player and he has shown it consistently."

Van Dijk praised playmaker Florian Wirtz, whose shot deflected in off Sunderland defender Nordi Mukiele for a late Liverpool equaliser that left them eighth in the table.

The German, who joined Liverpool from Bayer Leverkusen in the summer transfer window for £116 million (US\$155 million), is showing encouraging signs after a tough start to life at Anfield.

"There's a very good reason why a club like us bought him," said Van Dijk. "He's an outstanding, world-class player, in my eyes, who can only become even better but it will take a bit of time."

"For him he has to stay level-headed. Don't get dragged into the outside world of when it's very good or very bad and don't get dragged into the numbers game."

"Nowadays there are a lot of eyes on you if you score goals or have an assist or keep clean sheets but it is also about what you see and the contribution you have for the team."

— AFP

## Celtic reel in Hearts on O'Neill's farewell



GLASGOW — Martin O'Neill enjoyed a dream end to his interim spell as Celtic manager as a 1-0 win over Dundee took the Scottish champions level on points with Hearts at the top of the table.

Just hours before kick-off, Celtic announced that Frenchman Wilfried Nancy will take over at Parkhead from yesterday after a successful spell at MLS side Columbus Crew.

O'Neill was given a hero's reception at full-time after masterminding seven wins in eight games since returning to the club he first managed between 2000 and 2005.

Daizen Maeda scored the only goal as Celtic failed to hit top gear but ended the night in a stronger

position as their title rivals stumbled once more.

"To get a reception like that was pretty special" said O'Neill, 73.

"The bottom line is not only have the players done it, they've made me feel very young, which I'm not. Restoration of confidence was most important and they really stepped up."

"I'm relieved to win. I thought we could have put the game to bed earlier and it got a bit nervy at the end, but we've won, which keeps the club going."

Nancy's first match in charge will be a top-of-the-table clash against Hearts on Sunday.

But after a blistering start to the campaign raised hopes of ending the Old Firm's 40-year stranglehold on Scottish football,

the Jambos have won just once in their last six games.

Bruce Anderson's 90th-minute equaliser salvaged a 1-1 draw for Kilmarnock at Tynecastle.

Hearts now lead Celtic only on goal difference, having played a game more than the defending champions.

Rangers are nine points behind the top two after needing a 98th-minute penalty to salvage a 2-2 draw at Dundee United.

Zac Sapsford and Amar Fatah twice put United in front at Tannadice.

Jayden Meghoma's long-range strike levelled before half-time but Rangers were headed for a first league defeat on the road for nearly a year until Nedim Bajrami converted a controversial stoppage-time penalty. — AFP

## Müller family rallies as Thomas prepares for MLS Final clash with Messi

Oliver Trust



BERLIN — Excitement is running high in Thomas Müller's family this week.

While the 36-year-old has already collected 35 titles in his career, the chance to face Lionel Messi in tomorrow's MLS Cup final between Inter Miami and the Vancouver Whitecaps stands out as a special moment for his father, Gerhard. The 70-year-old is flying from Munich to Miami with his younger son, Simon, determined not to miss the occasion.

Only Müller's wife, Lisa, will be absent as she competes at the Amadeus Horse Indoors dressage event in Salzburg. "She is in the middle of the dressage season, it doesn't make sense," Müller said, adding that TVs are set up at home so she and other relatives can follow along.

The family's excitement has rubbed off on Müller himself.

The two-time UEFA Champions League winner and 2014 World Cup champion said few things compare to the thrill of going up against Messi. "Is there anything better than playing against the GOAT and beating him," he said. "In the end, we play a team of great quality and not a single player."

Speaking to his social media followers, Müller reminded them that "the job is not done yet. One step is missing."

Inter Miami enter the final as the favorites, but the former Bayern Munich forward praised Vancouver's postseason grit. "Comebacks in extra time and successful penalty shootouts, we've been through a lot together. And confidence isn't just talk, we've built that in a strong way."

He said a bit of Bayern spirit travels with him. "It's all about the trophy. A semifinal is great, but not the final goal."

Müller credited Vancouver's quality and resilience across the field, stressing that mentality matters most. Since joining the club a few months ago, he has scored nine goals with four assists in 11 games.

He also said he is proud of how the Whitecaps have energized supporters. "In the ice hockey nation of Canada, you have to catch up as a football team."

With a 36th career title within reach and his family cheering from afar, Müller said he isn't driven by adding to his trophy count. "Of course we will be fighting for the title, but first we want to play good football. Content comes before the result," he said, noting that his minor muscle issues should be healed before meeting Messi again.

History is on Müller's side, as he has won seven of eight meetings with the Argentine, including the 2014 World Cup final. — Xinhua



## Norris rejects idea of team loyalty before F1 title showdown



Red Bull Racing's Dutch driver Max Verstappen (left), McLaren's British driver Lando Norris and McLaren's Australian driver Oscar Piastri (right) attend a press conference ahead of the Abu Dhabi Formula One Grand Prix at the Yas Marina Circuit in Abu Dhabi yesterday.

— AFP

### F1

ABU DHABI – Lando Norris yesterday rejected the idea of asking title rival and McLaren team-mate Oscar Piastri to support him this weekend in the decisive season-ending Abu Dhabi Grand Prix even if it is the only way he can beat Red Bull's Max Verstappen to the title.

The 26-year-old Briton, who holds a 12-point lead on four-time champion Verstappen and a 16-point advantage on Piastri, said he would welcome help in certain scenarios, but would not seek it - because it was not how he, personally, felt about it.

He and Piastri made clear that McLaren had not discussed team orders for the race and would continue racing under 'papaya rules' that encourage them to race each other with equal team backing.

"I don't think I would ask for it because - and I don't know - it's up to Oscar, if he would allow it," Norris told reporters before Sunday's showdown.

"I don't think it's necessarily down to me.

"It's the same if it's the other way around. Would I be willing to or not? Personally, I think I would - just because I feel like I'm always like that and that's just how I am."

### 'Not a fair question'

The three drivers sat together answering questions of which some focused on the possibility that if Verstappen was leading with Piastri third and Norris fourth, it would mean the Dutchman took his record-equalling fifth consecutive title unless the two McLaren men swapped positions.

"I'm not going to ask it," he continued.

"I don't want to ask it because I don't think it's necessarily a fair question, but at the same time if that's how it ends and Max wins, then well. That's it.

"Congrats to him and look forward to next year. It doesn't change anything. It doesn't change my life. He will deserve it over us."

Verstappen, who has won five of the last eight races, appeared to be the most relaxed of the trio while Norris seemed understandably tense and Piastri, who was deprived of a likely victory by bungled team strategy last weekend in Qatar, composed if edgy.

"It's not something we've discussed," said the 24-year-old Australian, bidding to be his country's first champion since Alan Jones in 1980.

"Until I know what's kind of accepted, I don't really have an answer."

McLaren team chief Andrea Stella said they had no plan to change their approach as they aim to secure the drivers' title and complete a first double since Mika Hakkinen in 1998.

"I think for us it is important that we are in a condition to beat Verstappen with one of our drivers," said Stella, having guided the team a second consecutive constructors' title with months to spare.

Verstappen enjoyed a chance to relax with his baby daughter this week while his rivals were playing golf or simply resting.

"I didn't expect to be here and in the title fight," he said.

"But here we are! My dad is rallying in Africa and my mum is happy with the dogs.

"Of course, they always support me - my mum always lights a candle before every race. I guess they trust their son," he added.

— AFP

## 2026 Winter Olympics flame lands in Italy



ROME – The flame for the 2026 Milan-Cortina Winter Olympics arrived in Rome yesterday for a two-month torch relay around Italy before the sprawling Games open on February 6.

The flame arrived at Rome's Fiumicino airport at around 5 p.m. local time after it was handed to the host city organisers in an earlier ceremony at the Panathenaic Stadium in Athens, where the first modern Olympics were revived in 1896.

It was carried off the airplane at 5 25 p.m. local time by Italian tennis player Jasmine Paolini, doubles champion at last year's Summer Olympics in Paris, and president of the Milan-Cortina organising committee Giovanni Malago.

The flame will then be presented to the President of Italy, Sergio Mattarella, at his official residence the Quirinal Palace, where it will spend the night.

A torch-lighting ceremony is scheduled for this morning at the Quirinal Palace in the presence of International Olympic Committee President Kirsty Coventry.

The torch relay itself begins tomorrow in Rome at the Stadio dei Marmi at the foot of the Olympic Stadium, passing in the first leg through some of the Italian capital's most famous

landmarks like St. Peter's Square, the Pantheon, the ancient Imperial Forum, and the Colosseum.

Carried in total by 10,001 torchbearers, the torch will travel 12,000 kilometres over 63 days, passing through more than 300 cities across Italy before arriving in Milan on February 5, the day before the opening ceremony at the city's San Siro football stadium.

The Winter Olympics take place over February 6-22 with the Paralympic Winter Games following from March 6-15.

They mark a return to its spiritual home of the Alps after a long spell of being held in places without a

strong tradition of winter sports.

As with many past Olympics the Games are experiencing some delays to the construction of venues, with a leading International Ski Federation (FIS) official saying this week the body was worried about delays at the site for the snowboarding and freestyle skiing events.

The International Ice Hockey Federation (IIHF) and National Hockey League (NHL) have also expressed concerns about delays in the construction of the Games' main ice hockey arena on the outskirts of Milan.

Local organisers insist the venues will be ready in time. — AFP



Italian tennis player Jasmine Paolini (left) and the President of the Italian National Olympic Committee and CEO of the Milan Cortina 2026 Giovanni Malago arrive with the Olympic flame at Rome's Fiumicino airport yesterday.

— AFP

## Believe. Belong. Become': Brisbane 2032 Olympics unveils motto

### Olympics

BRISBANE – Organisers of the 2032 Brisbane Olympics have unveiled the Games' official motto: "Believe. Belong. Become".

The Queensland state capital was awarded the Olympics and Paralympics in July 2021, returning the Games to Australia for a third time after Melbourne 1956 and Sydney 2000.

The slogan culminated a process that involved more than 6,000 Australians having their say.

Andrew Liveris, head of the 2032 organising committee, said it underpinned the core beliefs of what the Games would represent.

"When our time arrives on the world stage our local belief, grit and spirit will shine through, our sense of belonging will be celebrated and shared," he said.

"And we will rise to become an even greater city, state and nation to visit, invest in and be part of, thanks to the gift of the Games."

"Believe" represented the

power of sport and the Australian spirit, he said, while "Belong" was Brisbane's vision in which everyone was welcome at the Games.

"Become" was the opportunity for Brisbane, Queensland and Australia to harness the Olympics and move into a new era.

The Olympics are scheduled to take place from July 23 to August 8 in 2032, followed by the Paralympics on August 24-September 5.

The 2028 Summer Olympics are in Los Angeles. — AFP

## China beat S Korea, France to continue winning streak at ITTF Mixed Team World Cup

### Table tennis

CHENGDU – China beat South Korea and France successively with an unbeaten record at the International Table Tennis Federation (ITTF) Mixed Team World Cup yesterday.

In the face of arch-rival South Korea, Chinese pair Kuai Man and Lin Shidong swept Kim Na-yeong and Park Gang-hyeon 11-5, 14-12, 11-8 in the mixed doubles.

China's Wang Manyu then seized an 11-7, 11-7, 11-8 win over Lee Eun-hye, and world No.1 Wang Chuqin of China added another two games 11-9, 11-4 against An Jae-hyun to seal victory 8-0 in the overall score.

"My teammates had a great start, which relieved the pressure on me. An also performed well, but I

managed to take the win with fewer mistakes," said world No.1 Wang Chuqin after the match.

Later in the day, China took on France in a clash in which the home team's dominance was challenged by Felix Lebrun.

In the mixed doubles, China's Wang Chuqin and Sun Yingsha defeated Alexis Lebrun and Yuan Jianan 11-7, 12-10, 11-5, and Wang Manyu cruised past Prithika Pavade 11-9, 12-10, 11-2. However, Felix Lebrun then rallied past China's Liang Jingkun 6-11, 13-11, 11-7, after which Wang Chuqin and Lin clinched the team's victory 8-2 after seeing off Felix Lebrun and Alexis Lebrun 11-9 in the men's doubles.

"In front of difficulties, we still need to keep focused and be

patient to forge ahead," noted Wang Manyu.

Also yesterday, Hong Kong claimed victory over Sweden 8-6 but lost to South Korea 8-5, while Germany eased past Croatia 8-1 but was defeated by Japan 8-3.

The ITTF Mixed Team World Cup adopts a best-of-15 format, with each match beginning with mixed doubles, followed by women's singles and men's singles. The men's and women's doubles, if required, will see their order of play determined by the team captain of the lower-ranked team.

The round-robin second stage competition will continue today, as China will confront Germany, while South Korea will take on Japan.

— Xinhua



## ‘Peter Hujar’s Day’ tops Spirit Award nominations

LOS ANGELES – Biopic “Peter Hujar’s Day” on Wednesday topped the nominations for the Spirit Awards, which also saw singer SZA given a nod for her debut film role.

The awards honour lower budget movies and are among the first significant pre-Oscars galas to unveil their shortlists.

“Peter Hujar’s Day,” which premiered at Sundance this year, bagged five nods, including best feature, best director and best lead performance.

It stars American Ben Whishaw as the titular character, a photographer in 1970s New York, in conversation with his friend, played by Rebecca Hall.

There were four nominations each for “Train Dreams,” “Blue Sun Palace,” “Sorry, Baby,” “Lurker,” and “One of Them Days.”

Netflix’s “Train Dreams” – based on Denis Johnson’s novella – charts the flux of early 20<sup>th</sup> century America through the life of a logger and railroad worker. It scored nominations for best feature, best director and best lead performer Joel Edgerton.

“Blue Sun Palace,” a best first feature and best first screenplay

nomination for Constance Tsang, recounts the bond between two Chinese migrants in New York as they grapple with tragedy.

“Sorry, Baby” – nominated for best feature, screenplay and best director – is a black comedy drama about the aftermath of an assault at a liberal arts college.

“Lurker,” a psychological thriller set around a rising star, will compete for best first feature and for the gender-neutral best lead performance for Theodore Pellerin.

Comedy “One of Them Days” scored a best breakthrough performance nod for singer SZA, one of two friends – opposite Keke Palmer – who has to scramble to come up with the rent after an irresponsible boyfriend splurges it.

Movies with budgets over US\$30 million are not considered for the Film Independent Spirit Awards, which aim to celebrate independent movies.

The awards will be handed out at a ceremony at the Hollywood Palladium on February 15<sup>th</sup>.

Oscars voting ends on March 5, and the season-capping 98<sup>th</sup> Academy Awards take place on March 15. – AFP

## Doctor jailed for supplying ketamine to ‘Friends’ star Matthew Perry

Huw Griffith

LOS ANGELES – A doctor who supplied “Friends” star Matthew Perry with ketamine in the months before he fatally overdosed, musing to a fellow physician over “how much this moron will pay” for the drug, was jailed in California on Wednesday.

Salvador Plasencia, 44, is the first of five people to face justice over Perry’s 2023 death in the hot tub of his Los Angeles home.

Plasencia was ordered to serve 30 months in prison for supplying the drug to the actor – who had well documented struggles with addiction – at grossly inflated prices.

In a victim impact statement filed with the court, Perry’s mother Suzanne Perry and his stepfather, Keith Morrison, said Plasencia – who did not supply the fatal dose of the drug – had neglected his duty as a doctor.

“Matthew’s recovery counted on you saying NO,” they wrote.

“Your motives? I can’t imagine. A doctor whose life is devoted to helping people?”

Plasencia’s attorneys, Karen Goldstein and Debra White, who had argued for a probationary sentence, said their client, who has surrendered his medical licence, was filled with regret.

“He is not a villain. He is someone who made serious mistakes in his treatment decisions involving the off-label use of ketamine – a drug commonly used for depression that does not have uniform standards,” they said after the sentencing.

“The mistakes he made over the 13 days during which he treated Mr. Perry will stay with him forever.”

Another doctor, Mark Chavez, pleaded guilty in October to conspiring to distribute ketamine to Perry.

Plasencia allegedly bought ketamine off Chavez and sold it to the American-Canadian actor at hugely inflated prices.

“I wonder how much this moron



American-Canadian Matthew Perry’s mother Suzanne Perry (left) and Perry’s stepfather Keith Morrison (centre) arrive for the sentencing hearing for Salvador Plasencia, on charges of supplying ketamine to Matthew Perry, at the United States District Court in Los Angeles, California, on Wednesday. – AFP

will pay,” Plasencia wrote in one text message presented by prosecutors.

The four other people who have also admitted their part in supplying drugs to the actor will be sentenced over the coming months.

They include Jasveen Sangha, the alleged “Ketamine Queen” who supplied drugs to high-end clients and celebrities, who could be jailed for up to 65 years.

Perry’s live-in personal assistant and another man pleaded guilty in August to charges of conspiracy to distribute ketamine.

### Addiction struggles

The actor’s lengthy struggles with substance addiction were well-documented, but his death at age 54 sent shockwaves through the global legions of “Friends” fans.

A criminal investigation was launched soon after an autopsy discovered he had high levels of ketamine – an anaesthetic – in his system.

In a plea deal with prosecutors, Plasencia said he went to Perry’s home to administer ketamine by injection and distributed 20 vials of the drug over a roughly two-week

period in autumn 2023.

Perry had been taking ketamine as part of supervised therapy for depression.

But prosecutors say that before his death he became addicted to the substance, which also has psychedelic properties and is a popular party drug.

First airing between 1994 and 2004, the televised comedy “Friends” followed the lives of six New Yorkers navigating adulthood, dating and careers, drew a massive following and made megastars of previously unknown actors.

Perry’s role as the sarcastic man-child Chandler brought him fabulous wealth, but hid a dark struggle with addiction to painkillers and alcohol.

In 2018, he suffered a drug-related burst colon and underwent multiple surgeries.

In his 2022 memoir “Friends, Lovers and the Big Terrible Thing,” Perry described going through detox dozens of times.

“I have mostly been sober since 2001,” he wrote, “save for about sixty or seventy little mishaps.”

– AFP

## Netflix airs Diddy doc despite imprisoned mogul’s legal threat

NEW YORK – An explosive docuseries about Sean “Diddy” Combs – produced by his longtime rival 50 Cent – has been released on Netflix, despite the disgraced music mogul’s attempts to block its airing.

The four-part “Sean Combs: The Reckoning” chronicles the career and dramatic fall of the 56-year-old rapper and record executive, who was sentenced in October to 50 months in prison for prostitution-related crimes.

During his trial, a New York court heard how he coerced his former girlfriend Casandra Ventura into performing so-called “freak offs” – sexual marathons with hired men that Combs directed and sometimes filmed.

The Netflix series features interviews with other associates who detail his allegedly predatory behaviour, as well as with two people who claim that the hip-hop

star sexually assaulted them.

Combs’s lawyers had sought to halt the show’s Tuesday release, sending a cease-and-desist letter to Netflix a day earlier claiming an apparent copyright violation.

They point to footage in the show of Combs speaking with his legal team days before his September 2024 arrest, in which he urges them to “find somebody that will work with us, that has dealt in the dirtiest of dirty business of media and propaganda.”

Juda Engelmayer, Combs’s spokesperson, told AFP that the artist had been capturing the video to “tell his own story, in his own way.”

“It is fundamentally unfair, and illegal, for Netflix to misappropriate that work.”

Netflix, in a statement cited by *The Washington Post*, said the footage

of Combs was legally obtained.

Engelmayer also complained that rapper Curtis “50 Cent” Jackson was allowed to executive produce the documentary series, calling him a “longtime adversary with a personal vendetta who has spent too much time slandering Mr Combs.”

The pair have a feud that dates back to the mid-2000s, when 50 Cent released a diss track accusing Combs of knowing who murdered famed rapper The Notorious B.I.G. in 1997.

Combs was convicted in July of two counts of transporting people across state lines for prostitution. But a jury acquitted him of the most serious charges: sex trafficking and racketeering.

He is currently being held in a low-security federal prison some 130 kilometres south of New York. He is due to be released in May 2028. – AFP



Spanish actress Carmen Sánchez poses upon arrival for the world premiere of the Disney+ original series “Percy Jackson and the Olympians” season 2 at the Academy Museum of Motion Pictures in Los Angeles on Wednesday. “Percy Jackson and the Olympians” is a US fantasy television series based on the book series of the same name by Rick Riordan. – AFP

World Weather			
CHINA	ASIA-PACIFIC	WORLD	LUSOPHONE
Beijing -5°C~5°C	Manila 21°C~31°C	New York 0°C~2°C	Lisbon 14°C~18°C
Shanghai 4°C~14°C	Bangkok 23°C~31°C	London 7°C~10°C	Rio de Janeiro 19°C~26°C
Hong Kong 15°C~22°C	Tokyo 0°C~12°C	Frankfurt 1°C~5°C	Luanda 24°C~28°C
Taipei 16°C~22°C	Singapore 23°C~33°C	Vancouver 7°C~9°C	Maputo 19°C~30°C
Guangzhou 13°C~23°C	Kuala Lumpur 23°C~33°C	Paris 5°C~7°C	Dili 23°C~32°C
Nanjing 0°C~13°C	Jakarta 23°C~32°C	Moscow 0°C~2°C	São Tomé 25°C~29°C
Guilin 6°C~16°C	Seoul -3°C~3°C	Las Vegas 5°C~17°C	Praia 21°C~27°C
Xi'an -1°C~11°C	Sydney 22°C~34°C	Monte Carlo 7°C~14°C	Bissau 19°C~32°C





## 1. Protect artisans

Children watch as women weave colourful Senegalese handicraft baskets in Mborine, on 12 November. While the women of Mborine village rarely leave this corner of Senegal, their popular creations travel in much wider circles, having become trendy in places like the United States or France. Flip over the price tag on a Senegalese-style basket in a Western box store, however, and there is a high chance it was made in Vietnam, a large exporter of knockoffs. Meanwhile, the price for authentic handmade Senegalese baskets can be astronomical abroad, with little of the markup going to the weavers. While a large laundry-style basket might sell for 13,000 CFA francs (US\$23) at a market after passing through a middleman, those exported abroad go for well over US\$150. — AFP

## 2. Little drummer boy

A floral installation is on display during the Fleurs de Villes NOËL event in Toronto, Canada, on Wednesday. Featuring 25 floral installations created by local florists, this annual event kicked off here on Wednesday and will last until Sunday. — Xinhua

## 3. Wrong festival – bunny!

Visitors are seen next to a holiday light installation in the Old Town in Warsaw, Poland, on Wednesday. Christmas decorations bring strong festive vibe to the city. — AFP



## 4. Up late!

A full moon is seen behind a murmuration of starlings in Rome yesterday. — AFP

## 5. Let's get out of here!

Humboldt penguins are released after being vaccinated against avian influenza at the Paris Vincennes Zoological Park in Paris, on Tuesday. — AFP

## 6. Hot Huskie!

A woman looks on as she sits with her dog on a bench at Nong Bon lake park in Bangkok yesterday. — AFP

