

Xi calls for firm confidence, solid steps for China's national rejuvenation

BEIJING – President Xi Jinping yesterday called on the nation to forge ahead with firm confidence and take solid steps to achieve the great national rejuvenation.

Xi, also general secretary of the Communist Party of China (CPC) Central Committee and chairman of the Central Military Commission, made the remarks at a reception held at the Great Hall of the People in Beijing to celebrate the 77th anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic of China.

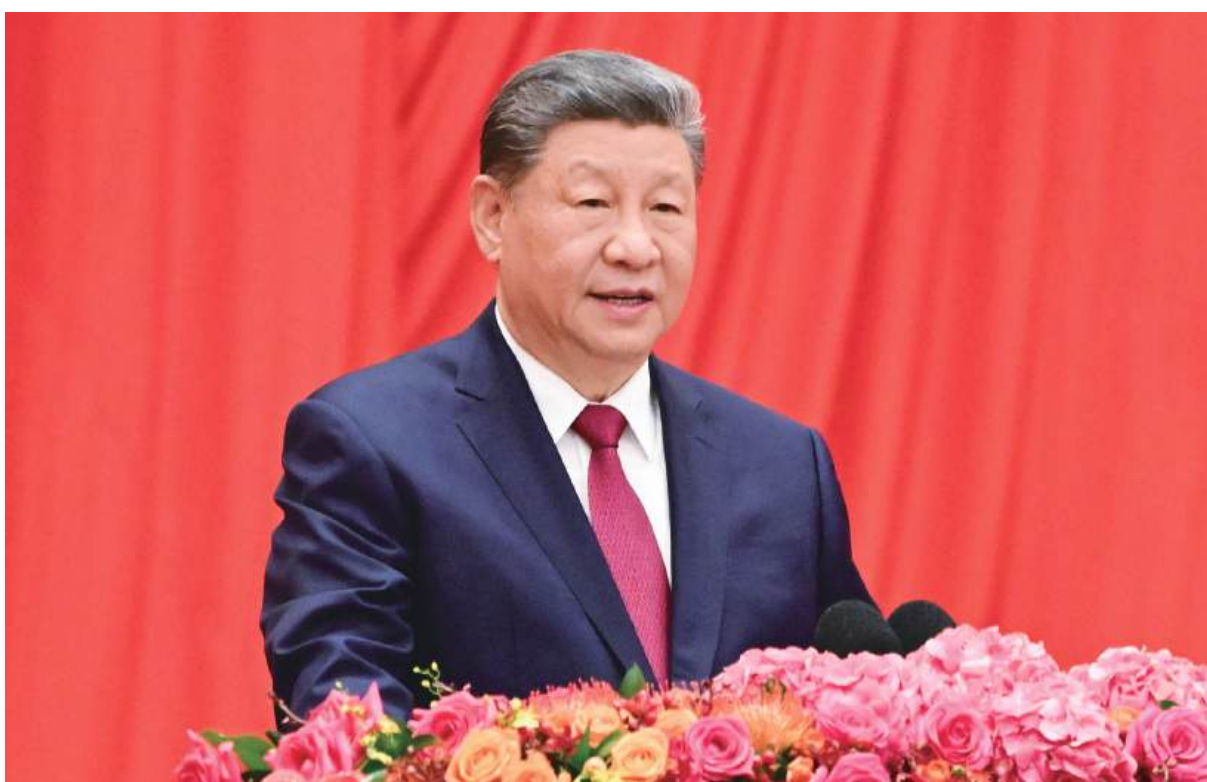
China's National Day falls on October 1.

Li Qiang presided over the reception. Zhao Leji, Wang Huning, Cai Qi, Ding Xuexiang, Li Xi and Han Zheng attended the event along with around 800 guests.

"The great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation is unstoppable," Xi said. "As long as we remain confident, stay focused on our goals and move forward steadily, step by step, success will ultimately belong to the great CPC, the great Chinese people and the great People's Republic of China."

He noted that over the past 77 years, the Party has led the Chinese people in achieving two miracles: rapid economic growth and enduring social stability.

"We take immense pride in the extraordinary achievements of New China and have full confidence in



President Xi Jinping, also general secretary of the Communist Party of China (CPC) Central Committee and chairman of the Central Military Commission (CMC), delivers an important speech at a reception to celebrate the 77th anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic of China (PRC) at the Great Hall of the People in Beijing yesterday. – Xinhua

the bright prospects of Chinese modernization," he said.

Since the beginning of this year, the Chinese economy has continued to progress despite mounting pressure and achieved innovation-driven and high-quality development, demonstrating strong resilience and vitality, he said.

Efforts should be made to sustain

this momentum, promote innovation-driven, high-quality and sound economic development, take practical steps to safeguard and improve people's livelihoods, and meet the targets and tasks set for the year, so as to ensure a good start to the 15th Five-Year Plan (2026-2030), he said.

Xi stressed the need to remain firmly committed to the policy of

"one country, two systems," under which the people of Hong Kong administer Hong Kong, the people of Macao administer Macao, and both regions enjoy a high degree of autonomy.

He went on to say that the central government will support Hong Kong and Macao in integrating more fully into the



country's overall development. The central government is committed to maintaining their long-term prosperity and stability, Xi added.

He also called for efforts to deepen exchanges and cooperation across the Taiwan Strait, resolutely fight secessionist forces seeking "Taiwan independence," oppose external interference, and promote the peaceful development of cross-strait relations to advance national reunification.

China will stick to its independent foreign policy of peace, advance the implementation of the four major global initiatives it proposed, and promote the building of a community with a shared future for humanity to contribute greater certainty and positive energy to a turbulent world, Xi said. – Xinhua

China honors 50 foreign experts with friendship award

BEIJING – China yesterday honored 50 foreign experts with the 2026 Chinese Government Friendship Award for their outstanding contributions to the country's development.

Chinese State Councilor Shen Yiqin extended congratulations to the experts at a ceremony held at the Great Hall of the People in Beijing.

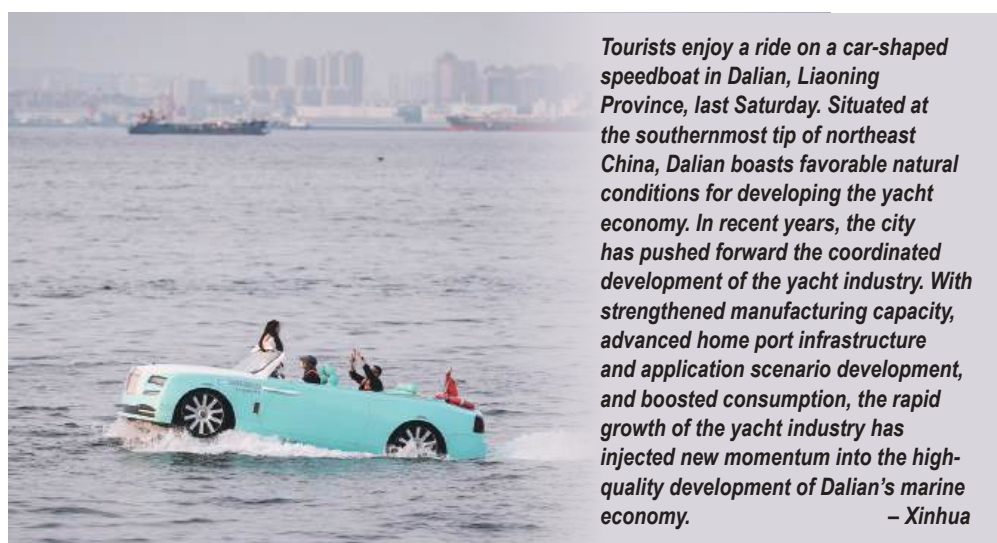
China's economy is moving toward innovation-driven and high-quality growth, injecting much-needed certainty into the world, Shen said, noting that foreign experts

play an important role in promoting China's economic and social development and enhancing friendly exchanges and cooperation between China and other countries.

More foreign experts are welcome to work with the Chinese people to create a better future during China's modernization drive, reach new heights in science, and strive for the well-being of humanity, Shen said.

She added that China will provide solid support for foreign talent seeking long-term, stable development in the country.

– Xinhua



Tourists enjoy a ride on a car-shaped speedboat in Dalian, Liaoning Province, last Saturday. Situated at the southernmost tip of northeast China, Dalian boasts favorable natural conditions for developing the yacht economy. In recent years, the city has pushed forward the coordinated development of the yacht industry. With strengthened manufacturing capacity, advanced home port infrastructure and application scenario development, and boosted consumption, the rapid growth of the yacht industry has injected new momentum into the high-quality development of Dalian's marine economy. – Xinhua

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

The Macau Post Daily

Xi pays tribute to national heroes on Martyrs' Day

President Xi Jinping and other Party and state leaders attended a ceremony to present flower baskets to fallen national heroes at Tian'anmen Square in central Beijing yesterday morning. – Story on p. 13

Netanyahu says one of the pilots of rerouted flight tried to crash plane

Benjamin Netanyahu said yesterday that one of the pilots of a Tel Aviv-bound flydubai flight had tried to crash the plane and kill its passengers, after the aircraft was forced to make an emergency landing in Saudi Arabia. – Story on p. 16

Brazil's football clubs face huge sponsorship blow from betting ban

Brazil's powerhouse football clubs are reeling after a ban on sports betting companies, their biggest sponsors, which has left multi-million US dollar deals in limbo. – Story on p. 17

CDSJ5, iFLYTEK partner to enhance AI education

Armando Neves

St Joseph Diocesan College 5 (CDSJ5) held a signing ceremony on its campus in Toi San district yesterday with iFLYTEK (MACAO) COMPANY LIMITED, aiming for the partnership to enhance the Catholic school's AI education.

According to a statement issued during the ceremony, the two parties signed a memorandum of cooperation (MoC) to deepen collaboration in the field of AI education, promote the intelligent transformation of basic education, and work together to establish a smart teaching demonstration base in Macau.

Education and Youth Development Bureau (DSEDJ) Curriculum Development and Assessment Division Chief Cheang Sek Kit said in a speech that building a strong education system is a national strategy, and that Macau needs to cultivate versatile talent equipped with technological literacy and practical skills. The collaboration deal between CDSJ5 and iFLYTEK to launch an Internet of Things (IoT) course embodies the concept of school-enterprise cooperation, integrating cutting-edge technological innovation into vocational education and building a talent pool for the digital economy, he said, adding that the bureau will continue to support the diversified



St Joseph Diocesan College 5 (CDSJ5) Principal Wong Kin Man (front row, left), iFLYTEK (MACAO) COMPANY LIMITED Executive General Manager Rain Xie Yu (front row, right), Education and Youth Development Bureau's (DSEDJ) Curriculum Development and Assessment Division Chief Cheang Sek Kit (back row, centre), Chinese Educators' Association of Macau (EDUM) President Cheang Hong Kuong (back row, left) and Macao Catholic Schools Association Chairman Fr. Joseph Chow Pak-Fai pose during yesterday's ceremony held on CDSJ5's campus.

development of non-tertiary education and encourage cross-sector collaboration.

CDSJ5 Principal Wong Kin Man noted in a speech that the school has over 2,600 students and will use AI to empower classroom teaching and administrative work. He noted that this would reduce teachers' workload and improve efficiency while laying a foundation in students' digital literacy.

Rain Xie Yu, executive general manager of iFLYTEK (MACAO), pointed out that the company

was founded in 1999 and is committed to empowering public welfare undertakings through AI technology. He expressed the hope that AI can help return to the original educational ideal of "teaching according to each student's aptitude".

According to the statement, under the agreement, the two parties



St Joseph Diocesan College 5 students use devices provided by iFLYTEK (MACAO) COMPANY LIMITED to answer questions during a demonstration lesson at the school yesterday.

— Photos: Armando Neves

will collaborate in four key areas: big data-driven precision teaching and assessment reform; classroom teaching reform to reduce workload and improve efficiency; the establishment of AI laboratories and related curriculum training; and exchange platforms at both the Greater Bay Area (GBA) and national levels.

Speaking to reporters on the sidelines of the ceremony, Lam Chan Cheong, the school's vice-principal, said that CDSJ5 has already introduced coding and AI

courses from kindergarten through to secondary level. This year, in conjunction with the Education and Youth Development Bureau's (DSEDJ) Macao Smart Education Platform, the school is using AI to analyse examination data and provide students with personalised learning suggestions, Lam added.

He emphasised that the school will teach students how to use AI responsibly, ensuring they stay grounded amid the AI wave, while helping them turn their AI knowledge into practical projects. ■

Bamboo Pagoda to become temporary space for contemplation, craft appreciation

Rui Pastorin

The around 13-metre site-specific installation "Bamboo Pagoda" is slated to kick off its seven-day run this coming Monday on the shore of Sai Van Lake in front of the Military Club's tennis courts on Avenida da República (民國大馬路), highlighting both the intangible cultural heritage of bamboo scaffolding while also creating a place of contemplation.

Organised by Ephemera Public Space Cooperative, which aims to promote civic participation, social interaction, recreation, and a stronger relationship between people and the city, the free admission installation will be on display through October 11, being open from 11:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m., as noted in the statement by the group.

Suspended over the water, each part of the installation serves an important purpose. Created entirely of bamboo, the use of the material highlights the traditional craft of bamboo scaffolding, which was included in the Inventory of Intangible Cultural Heritage in 2017, the statement said, while its form overall evokes the "verticality of traditional pagodas and the organic qualities of bamboo as a natural material".

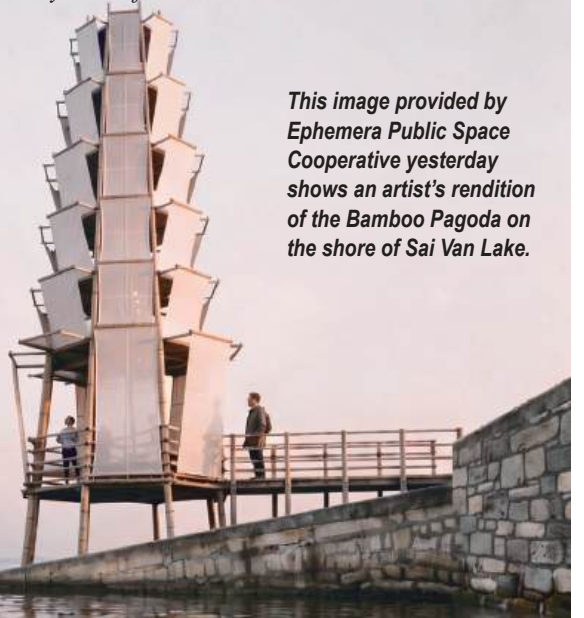
Even being situated on Sai Van Lake (西灣湖) harkens back to Macau's "close relationship with water and the landscape that has shaped its development", the statement added.

"Sai Van" means "West Bay" in Cantonese

Moreover, the project also brings together contemporary design and traditional techniques, reflecting the area's transformation.

The statement added that in one of the most densely populated places in the world, the installation will temporarily provide a place of "tranquillity, reflection, and reconnection", while also aiming to provide a place that encourages silence and slowing down. ■

Stay tuned for more next week



This image provided by Ephemera Public Space Cooperative yesterday shows an artist's rendition of the Bamboo Pagoda on the shore of Sai Van Lake.



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 – Khalel Vallo, William Chan, Ida Cheong, Armando Neves, Sherwin Hng
- 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
- Ai tools: DeepSeek, Gemini
- Wire services – AFP, Xinhua

MACAU POST

Macau Weather

VERY HOT.
FINE APART FROM CLOUDY PERIODS.
A FEW SHOWERS LATER.
FORCE 2 TO 4 SOUTH TO SOUTHWESTERLY WINDS.
RELATIVE HUMIDITY WILL RANGE BETWEEN 65% AND 95%.



26°C~32°C

Source: SMG

National Day public holiday

Due to the National Day public holiday, honouring the founding of the People's Republic of China today and tomorrow, *The Macau Post Daily's* editing and reporting teams will be off both days, returning to work on Sunday. Therefore, the print edition of your favourite newspaper will be on newsstands and delivered to your homes and offices on Monday.

Our management team will be off today and tomorrow as well.

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.

All government offices will be closed today and tomorrow, returning to work on Monday. Banks will be closed today only.





Congratulations on the 77th anniversary of the People's Republic of China



Steeds Gallop Across Auspicious Clouds as the Nation Celebrates

Wynn honors The National Day of the People's Republic of China with the boundless spirit of galloping horses crossing majestic vistas as we share our best wishes for enduring prosperity and harmony.



USJ exhibition showcases 6 years of Communication & Media students' projects

Interview by Sherwin Hng

The University of Saint Joseph (USJ) has opened an exhibition on its Ilha Verde Campus called "Greatest Hits", showcasing 20 selected graduation projects produced by students of its Bachelor of Communication and Media (BCM) programme over the past six years.

The exhibition, which opened last Wednesday, brings together works spanning photography, video, sound, interactive media, 3D modelling, and AI, providing a glimpse into the creative output of the programme's students and graduates.

João Brochado, head of USJ's Department of Media, Art and Technology and programme coordinator for Communication and Media, told the *Post* that the new gallery was part of a long-term plan to place the library and exhibition space at the heart of the university campus.

The idea dates back to 2020, when the Catholic university's former rector Stephen Morgan envisioned creating a space around the campus patio where students and staff could gather and engage with the university's cultural and creative activities.

The library was relocated to the area last year, while the gallery finally opened its doors last Wednesday, following years of restructuring and delay caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

"Greatest Hits" is the gallery's inaugural exhibition.

Brochado said the university hoped the gallery would continuously host exhibitions, with one display replacing another rather than leaving the space empty. It is open to the general public whenever the campus is open.

He noted that "Greatest Hits" was also a celebration of the BCM programme, which has produced more than 500 graduates since its first cohort in 2009.

The selected projects were chosen partly for their innovative use of technology and their suitability for the new gallery, while also reflecting issues relevant to Macau in general and students in particular.

Among the featured works is "Macau's Dirty Secrets", created by Mafalda Cândido da Silva Ramos, a 2024 BCM graduate, which explores the unseen consequences of pollution in Macau through light-reactive imagery.

Mafalda said she was pleasantly surprised when she learnt that her work had been selected, particularly because she had initially worried that the project's title and subject matter might be controversial or difficult for audiences to understand.

The idea was partly inspired by artist Helenya Apostolou, whose light-reactive work Mafalda discovered on TikTok.

"Since Macau is my home, and I care so deeply about it, I wanted to touch on a topic that would invite people to think deeper about the consequences the world suffers due to our actions," she said.

Creating the project involved repeated trial and error as she worked to meet the deadline and realise her original vision. Mafalda noted that photographing different parts of Macau and developing the project through video calls with close friends allowed her to "play tourist" in her own home town.

Having the work displayed in the gallery, she said, gave her a sense that the effort she had put into the project was being recognised.

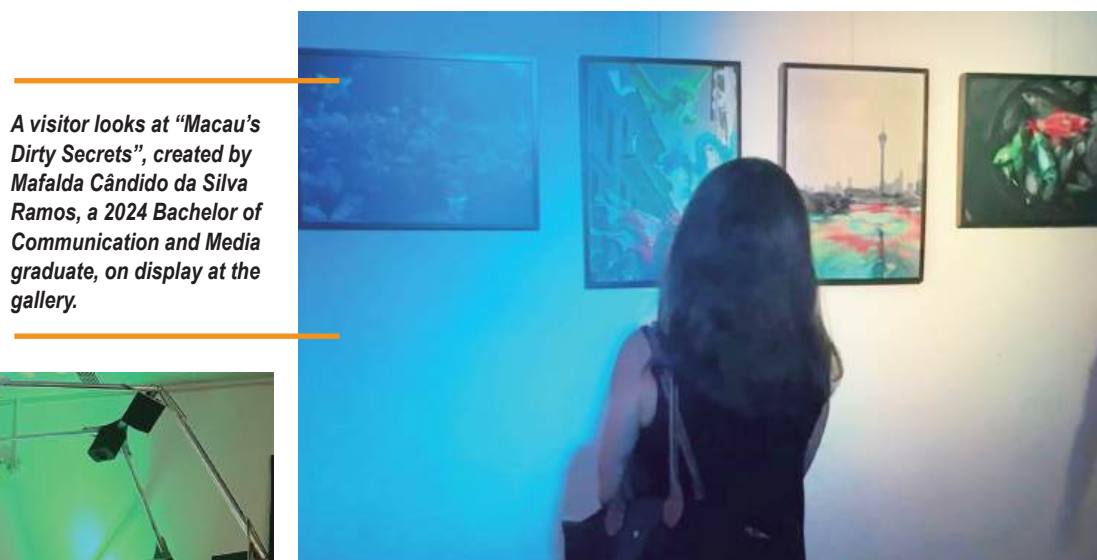
Although audiences might not see the process behind the work, Mafalda described the project as an important learning experience that helped her overcome self-doubt and gave her greater confidence to continue experimenting with new ideas.

Brochado said the university hoped the gallery would eventually become a regular venue for its graduation exhibitions, allowing students' work to be seen not only by the university community, but also by visitors passing through the campus.

He added that the university was promoting the exhibition through social media and news channels, while alumni were also encouraged to return to the campus to see how the university and the BCM programme had evolved.



A visitor uses a VR device to look at "Macao Nature Sound Map" during opening day of both the new gallery and the current exhibition. – Photos taken last Wednesday by Sherwin Hng.



A visitor looks at "Macau's Dirty Secrets", created by Mafalda Cândido da Silva Ramos, a 2024 Bachelor of Communication and Media graduate, on display at the gallery.



João Brochado, head of USJ's Department of Media, Art and Technology and programme coordinator for Communication and Media, poses at the university's new gallery on the Ilha Verde Campus.



Govt rolls out packed cultural, sporting calendar for this month



Cultural Affairs Bureau (IC) President-cum-Sports Bureau (ID) President Deland Leong Wai Man (centre) poses alongside other representatives during yesterday's 8th "Encounter in Macao – Arts and Cultural Festival between China and the Portuguese-speaking Countries" press conference at the Macao Cultural Centre (CCM) in Nape.

Khalel Vallo

The Cultural Affairs Bureau (IC) and Sports Bureau (ID) announced in a press conference yesterday at the Macao Cultural Centre (CCM) in Nape that Macau's cultural and sporting events will span international music performances, cultural exchanges between China and Portuguese-speaking countries (PSCs), major golf and basketball tournaments, community activities and National Day celebrations throughout this month.

While at the same time the 8th "Encounter in Macao – Arts and Cultural Festival between China and the Portuguese-speaking Countries" will return alongside the 29th Lusofonia Festival, featuring traditional performances, exhibitions, concerts and film screenings, running from this month to December, bringing together nearly 690 artists and performers for about 50 events across community spaces and theatres.

The term "Lusofonia" denotes the world's Portuguese-speaking countries and communities.

The Lusofonia Festival will take place at Taipa Houses from October 23 to 25, focusing on Brazilian culture with food, street art and performances by groups from Brazil, Equatorial Guinea and Timor-Leste (East Timor), alongside more than 40 local Portuguese-speaking arts groups, according to an IC statement yesterday. Cultural booths representing Macau's Portuguese-speaking communities will showcase music, handicrafts, cuisine and tourism information, the statement noted.

Traditional song and dance performances from the Chinese mainland, Equatorial

Guinea and Timor-Leste will also take place at Seac Pai Van in Coloane, Lok Yeung Fa Yuen (綠楊花園) in Fai Chi Kei district, and Nam Van Lakeside Plaza on October 24 and 25, the statement said.

In November, Mozambican singer Stewart Sukuma will perform with the Macao Chinese Orchestra (OCHM) at the CCM Grand Auditorium on November 14, with tickets going on sale this Saturday via ticketing.enjoymacao.mo.

The 38th Macao International Music Festival, themed "Silk Resonances", will present 10 programmes, one music camp and 12 citywide activities inspired by the Maritime Silk Road and cultural exchanges between East and West.

This month's major sporting events include the SJM Macao Open 2026 golf tournament from October 15 to 18, the FIBA (International Basketball Federation) 3x3 World Tour Macau 2026 on October 17 and 18 at the UNESCO World Heritage-listed Ruins of St. Paul's, and the Greater Bay Area (GBA) 3x3 Basketball Tour – Macao Finals from October 19 to 21.

IC and ID President Deland Leong Wai Man said that the October programme would provide activities for different interests and age groups, encouraging residents and visitors to enjoy the city's cultural diversity and sporting opportunities.

The two bureaux are slated to be merged next month, the government has announced recently.

Moreover, tickets for the 73rd Macau Grand Prix (MGP), slated for November 19 to 22, will go on sale at noon on October 9 through online platforms and physical outlets. ■

Sands China extends firecracker exhibition, adds guided tours

Khalel Vallo

Sands China has extended its exhibition on Macau's century-long firecracker industry until November 29 and will offer additional guided tours during the National Day "Golden Week" October 1-7 period, alongside a free seminar exploring the industry's history and cultural significance, according to a statement by the integrated resort operator on Tuesday.

The exhibition, titled "A Century of Iec Long Firecracker Factory in Radiance – An Exhibition on the Resonant History and Aesthetic Memory of Macao Firecrackers", has been on display at Sands Gallery in Cotai since March, featuring more than 400 exhibits, including historical documents, firecracker-making tools and original packaging labels, the statement said.

The company will hold a seminar titled "Behind the Exhibition: Tracing Macao's Firecracker Legacy" on October 24 at 3:00 p.m. at the Macao Museum of Art (MAM) auditorium in Nape, the statement said, adding that speakers will include exhibition curator Guilherme Ung Vai Meng, and visual designer Wilson Lam Chi Ian, chief executive officer and creative director of Macau Creations.

The seminar will explore the collection and research of firecracker artefacts, the historical context of the industry, exhibition design and the preservation of industrial heritage, the statement said, underlining that registration is free but places are limited.

From Tuesday to next Sunday, Sands Gallery provides additional guided tours daily from 11:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m., except today, National Day, according to the statement. Professional



This poster provided by Sands China on Tuesday promotes the upcoming "Behind the Exhibition: Tracing Macao's Firecracker Legacy" seminar, slated to be held on October 24, at the Macao Museum of Art (MAM) auditorium in Nape.

guides will offer tours in Cantonese, Putonghua and English, supplementing the regular free tours held every Wednesday and Friday, the statement said.

Moreover, the statement noted that the parallel exhibition, "Legacy of Time – An Exhibition of Historical Documents on Macao's Firecracker Industry", hosted by the private Macau University of Science and Technology (MUST) Library, has also been extended until November 29. ■

Rider hurt as taxi fails to give way: PSP



This video grab downloaded from social media platform Facebook last night shows a taxi hitting a motorbike yesterday morning at Rotunda de Pac On. The Post cannot vouch for its authenticity.

Armando Neves

A Public Security Police Force (PSP) spokeswoman confirmed to the *Post* by phone last night that a motorcyclist was injured after a taxi failed to give way.

According to a statement released by the Fire Services Bureau (CB) yesterday at 7:59 a.m., it received a report of a traffic accident at the junction of Rotunda de Pac On (北安圓形地) and Avenida do Porto de Pac On (北安港大馬路), with the caller reporting one injured person.

A CB spokesman confirmed to the *Post* by phone last night that upon arriving at the scene, firefighters found a motorbike lying on the ground alongside the victim, who had

suffered multiple abrasions but remained conscious and stable. The victim was rushed to the public Conde de São Januário Hospital Centre (CHSCJ) for treatment.

According to the PSP spokeswoman, the injured person is a local resident in his 40s, as is the taxi driver. She added that both passed breathalyser tests.

The accident occurred because the taxi driver failed to observe a give way sign and collided with the motorcycle, injuring the rider. The spokeswoman noted that the taxi driver was fined for failing to give way.

Under Article 35 of Macau's Road Traffic Law, the taxi driver faces a fine of 900 patacas. ■

Congratulations on
the 77th Anniversary of the
Establishment of the
People's Republic of China

With Compliments



Govt to streamline monetary regulator

Tony Wong

The government will streamline the organisational structure of the Monetary Authority of Macao (AMCM), reducing the number of members on its board of directors from five to three.

The number of departments will be reduced from eight to six. The streamlined structure will take effect in three weeks time.

Macau's quasi-central bank is a bureau-level public entity.

Bureaus are the top-level administrative entities of the local government. While bureaus consist of departments, the latter consist of divisions. However, divisions performing the duties and functions of providing administrative or technical support are directly under a bureau – not its departments.

Secretary for Administration and Justice Wong Sio Chak, who is also the spokesman for the government's top advisory body – the Executive Council, made the announcement during a press conference at Government Headquarters yesterday.

The mergers and restructuring of public entities are among the major initiatives under the local government's current campaign to deepen public administration reform.

According to the current decree-law governing the AMCM's organisational structure, the board of directors – the authority's top management body – shall consist of three to five members, including a president.

During yesterday's press conference, Wong said that the AMCM's streamlined structure, which will take effect on October 22, aims to enhance its administrative efficiency while adhering to the principles of



Secretary for Administration and Justice Wong Sio Chak (right) and Monetary Authority of Macao (AMCM) President Simon Vong Sin Man address yesterday's press conference at Government Headquarters. – Photo courtesy of TDM

promoting Macau's appropriate economic diversification and maintaining strict financial security oversight.

The authority's restructuring will be formalised by government-drafted amendments to the current AMCM decree-law, which was promulgated in 1996.

Government-drafted administrative regulations, also known as by-laws, do not require the legislature's approval.

Wong said that according to the amended organisational structure, the AMCM's board will consist of three members, including a president – a change from the current structure, which comprises up to five members.

Wong noted that the AMCM currently comprises eight departments and 10 divisions. The restructured authority will comprise six departments and 12 divisions, he said.

The restructured authority's six departments will be respectively tasked with currency issuance and reserve management, banking supervision, insurance supervision, secu-

rities supervision, financial development, and financial infrastructure.

In addition, Wong said, the regulations governing the AMCM's audit committee and advisory council will also be amended.

Currently, the audit committee consists of three members from civil society appointed by the government. The advisory council – an AMCM consultative body – comprises all members of the board of directors, the president of the audit committee, and representatives from the city's banking and insurance sectors appointed by the government.

During the press conference, AMCM President Simon Vong Sin Man said that while the number of members on the audit committee will remain unchanged at three, they will be formally subject to a three-year tenure for each appointment – a change from the current practice, where no fixed duration is stipulated.

According to Vong, the advisory council will add members from the securities sector. ■

2 Indonesian maids moonlighting as loan sharks target compatriots: police

Sherwin Hng

Two Indonesian domestic helpers have been arrested for helping an overseas ringleader to run a loan-sharking operation targeting their compatriots in Macau, Judiciary Police (PJ) spokesman Chao Teng Hin said during a special press conference yesterday.

According to Chao, the suspects are aged 43 and 41.

The Judiciary Police have identified at least 11 victims – all of them Indonesian women – while the mastermind behind the syndicate remains at large.

The investigation began in July after the Judiciary Police received an anonymous email reporting that foreigners were operating a usury ring in Macau and unlawfully withholding borrowers' passports. The Public Security Police Force (PSP) subsequently referred a similar case involving an Indonesian domestic helper who reported in March that her passport had been seized after she took out a loan, preventing her from leaving Macau.

Chao said an investigation revealed that the mastermind had meanwhile fled Macau after being implicated in at least two similar

document retention cases last year. However, the Indonesian mastermind continued to direct and control several compatriots in Macau via phone and social media, including the two suspects intercepted on Tuesday, to grant loans and seize passports.

The two suspects had reportedly been assisting the ringleader since early this year, receiving between 50 and 100 patacas for each loan transaction processed or document retained, Chao added.

Chao said the syndicate typically issued loans ranging from 2,000 to 3,000 patacas at monthly interest rates of 10 to 20 per cent. The

loans were arranged through verbal agreements without formal receipts or written contracts.

Chao also said that the two suspects were intercepted in the central district on Tuesday. They were formally arrested later that day. The Judiciary Police are continuing their manhunt for the fugitive mastermind, other accomplices, and the missing passports.

The two suspects face charges of organised crime membership and improper retention of others' passports. The case has been transferred to the Public Prosecutions Office (MP) for further investigation. ■



Judiciary Police (PJ) officers escort the two hooded Indonesian suspects from the PJ headquarters in Zape to a PJ vehicle en route to the Public Prosecutions Office (MP) yesterday. – Photo: Sherwin Hng

Macau govt extends interest-free loans to Hengqin

Tony Wong

The Macau government announced yesterday that it has amended its two current programmes respectively offering interest-free loans to local small- and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and young local entrepreneurs. According to the amended programmes, local SMEs and young local entrepreneurs running their business in Hengqin can also benefit from the two programmes.

The two programmes were rolled out in 2003 and 2013 respectively.

In the programme for local SMEs, an applicant can obtain an interest-free loan of up to 600,000 patacas.

The programme for young local entrepreneurs provides an interest-free loan of up to 300,000 patacas. The programme benefits local residents aged between 21 and 44 who have operated their companies for less than two years.

Secretary for Administration and Justice Wong Sio Chak, who is also the spokesman for the government's top advisory body – the Executive Council, made the announcement during a press conference at Government Headquarters yesterday.

The government has drawn up

amendments to the two administrative regulations governing the operations of the two programmes.

Government-drafted administrative regulations, a.k.a. by-laws, do not require the legislature's approval.

The amendments will take effect on the day after their promulgation in the Official Gazette (BO).

In addition to the two programmes, the local government has also amended its current programme offering an interest subsidy to local businesses to obtain a bank loan – also extending the scheme to local businesses operating in Hengqin.

Wong said that the three programmes' amendments aim to strengthen the alignment of rules and mechanisms between Macau and Hengqin.

With the aim of increasing flexibility and resilience in operations for local businesses and providing more space for them to upgrade their operations, the local government decided to extend the scope of application for the three programmes, allowing local businesses who expand their Macau operations to Hengqin to apply for an interest-free loan or a bank loan interest subsidy from the local government, Wong said. ■



Secretary for Administration and Justice Wong Sio Chak (right) and Economic and Technological Development Bureau (DSED) Director Yau Yun Wah address yesterday's press conference at Government Headquarters. – Photo: Tony Wong

'Studio Creepy 3' to open next week, featuring escape challenges

Rui Pastorin

The third edition of Studio City's "Studio Creepy" will kick-off next Friday at the integrated resort in Cotai.

Launching ahead of Halloween, "Studio Creepy 3" will have participants take on the cinematic horror escape room challenges, while featuring film-inspired storytelling, special effects, character makeup, mechanical installations and interactive gameplay, according to a recent Studio City statement, inviting participants to solve the mystery behind the whereabouts of a serial killer's final victim – by diving into his subconscious.

The event will be open from Friday to Sunday during its run, with three sessions daily from

October 9 through November 22 from 4:00 p.m. to 10:30 p.m., with standard tickets priced at 144 patacas, the statement said.

This year's programme also features Hong Kong special effects makeup artist Gary Chan, whose film credits include "Port of Call" and "Colony", and his team to create the themed characters, according to the statement.

Meanwhile, the statement noted that there will be a variety of Halloween-themed dining offerings from October 24 to November 1, with food and drinks created by the resort's culinary team set to bring a "spooky festive flair", while special offers are also available at the Studio City Cinema by presenting a same-day Studio Creepy 3 ticket. ■

BRICS Summit: Sharing common ambitions, advancing development, building political trust and reforming global institutions

Commentary by Francisco José Leandro*

The latest BRICS Summit stands as one of the most consequential diplomatic events of the year, highlighting the growing role of emerging powers in influencing the future trajectory of international relations. At a time marked by geopolitical tensions, economic uncertainty, technological disruption, and increasing skepticism towards globalization, the summit reaffirmed the collective ambition of BRICS to advance development, build political trust among diverse actors, and promote reforms in global governance institutions. More importantly, it reinforced the notion that the Global South is no longer a peripheral actor in world affairs but an increasingly influential force in defining the priorities and norms of the international system.

The significance of BRICS extends beyond its economic weight. As a grouping that now represents a substantial share of the world's population, economic output, and natural resources, BRICS has evolved into a platform through which emerging and developing countries can articulate common concerns and coordinate positions on critical international issues. In doing so, the bloc seeks not only to increase its influence in global decision-making, but also to contribute to a more representative and balanced international order.

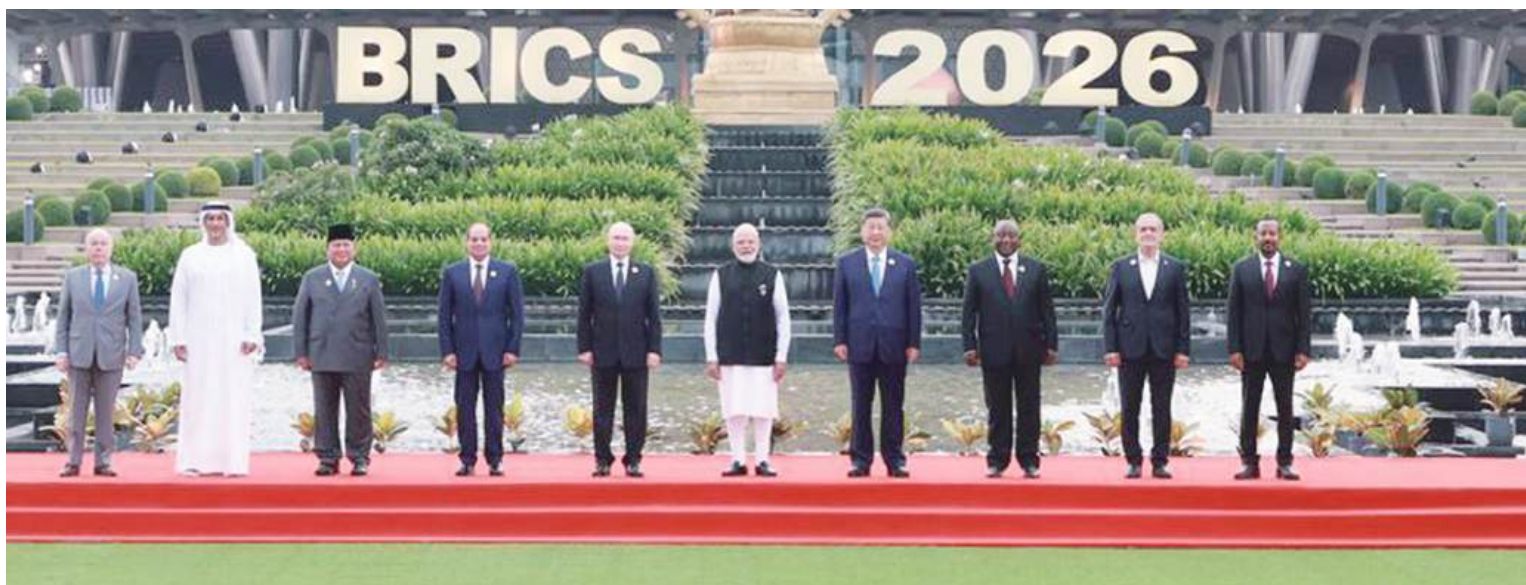
Emphasis on political trust-building

One of the summit's most notable achievements was its emphasis on political trust-building. In an era characterized by strategic rivalries, growing protectionism, and declining confidence in multilateral institutions, BRICS continues to position itself as a facilitator of dialogue among states with varying political systems, economic models, and regional interests. The ability of the grouping to accommodate diversity while maintaining a shared commitment to cooperation is increasingly viewed as one of its principal strengths. More importantly, political trust within BRICS has acquired a transformative dimension. Unlike traditional alliances built upon ideological convergence or security commitments, BRICS demonstrates that meaningful cooperation can emerge from diversity rather than uniformity.

The transformative nature of political trust also lies in its capacity to shift the focus of international relations from competition to collaboration. By creating spaces for sustained dialogue, BRICS enables member states to identify common interests in areas such as development, financial governance, technological cooperation, climate action, and global security. This process contributes to the gradual construction of shared norms and expectations, strengthening the resilience of cooperation even during periods of geopolitical tension.

Focus on Global South

The summit's focus on the Global South was equally significant. Leaders emphasized the need to amplify the voices of developing countries in international affairs and to ensure that global governance structures reflect contemporary realities, rather than the distribution of power that emerged after the Second World War. This message resonates strongly across Africa, Latin America, Asia, and parts of the Middle East, where demands for greater representation in international institutions have intensified. The expansion of BRICS itself reflects this broader aspiration



Leaders of the BRICS countries pose for a group photo during the Session I of the 18th BRICS Summit in New Delhi, India, on September 12, including Chinese President Xi Jinping (fourth from right).

— Xinhua

for a more inclusive international system in which developing countries can participate more meaningfully in shaping global rules and norms.

Development at the core

Development remained at the core of the summit's agenda. Member states renewed their commitment to sustainable economic growth, poverty reduction, industrialization, infrastructure development, technological cooperation, and human capital formation. The discussions reflected a shared understanding that development is not merely an economic objective, but also a prerequisite for political stability, social cohesion, and long-term prosperity. By prioritizing connectivity, investment, innovation, and capacity-building, BRICS seeks to strengthen development pathways across the Global South while reducing structural inequalities that continue to characterize the global economy.

Perhaps the most strategic dimension of the summit concerned the reform of global institutions. The final declaration of the summit strongly reaffirmed the central role of the United Nations as the cornerstone of the multilateral system. However, it also stressed that the effectiveness and legitimacy of the UN require meaningful reforms, including within the Security Council. For BRICS members, a reformed Security Council should better reflect the geopolitical realities of the 21st century and provide greater representation for developing countries.

Discussion on economic resilience

Among the most closely watched issues was the continuing discussion on economic resilience. Although BRICS leaders did not advocate replacing the US dollar as the dominant global reserve currency, they reaffirmed their commitment to expanding the use of local currencies in trade, investment, and financial transactions. This approach reflects a pragmatic effort to strengthen economic resilience, rather than a revolutionary attempt to overturn the existing monetary system. The rationale is rooted in the desire to reduce transaction costs, limit exposure to exchange-rate volatility, and enhance the financial autonomy of developing economies.

Another notable aspect of the summit was its emphasis on institution-building within BRICS itself. As membership expands and policy coordination deepens, BRICS increasingly faces the challenge of transforming political declarations into effective governance mechanisms. The preparations for China's chairmanship

in 2027 were therefore presented as an opportunity to consolidate existing initiatives, strengthen institutional capacity, and enhance cooperation across economic, technological, financial, and diplomatic domains.

Ultimately, the summit demonstrated that BRICS is evolving beyond its original identity as a coalition of emerging economies. It is increasingly positioning itself as a political platform capable of fostering dialogue, facilitating trust, promoting development, and advocating reforms to the global governance architecture. While significant challenges remain, including internal diversity and differing national priorities, the summit highlighted the

group's determination to shape a more inclusive, representative, and resilient international order. More than a diplomatic gathering, the 18th BRICS Summit reaffirmed a powerful idea: development, trust-building, and institutional reform are no longer peripheral demands of the Global South, but central imperatives for constructing a stable, representative, and sustainable international order.

*The author is an associate professor at the University of Macau (UM).

Editor's note: The article was originally published by People's Daily Online on Tuesday; minor edits and subheadings added by the Post.

Macao Water
Celebrates the 77th Anniversary of
the Founding of
the People's Republic of China



CONGRATULATIONS ON THE 77TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA



CONGRATULATIONS ON THE 77TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA



銀娛 GEG

銀河度假
GALAXY RESORT

銀河會展
GALAXY ICC

銀河綜藝
GALAXY ARENA

銀河時尚
GALAXY PROMENADE

星際酒店
StarWorld Hotel

澳門百老匯
BROADWAY MACAU

WWW.GALAXYENTERTAINMENT.COM

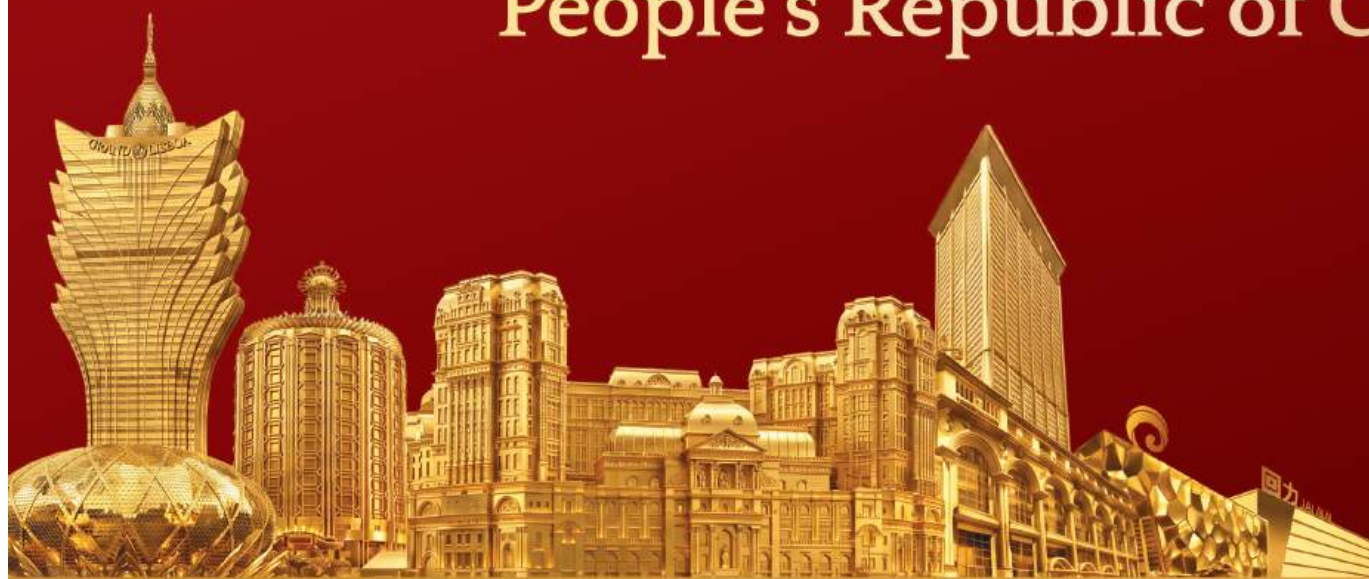
CONGRATULATIONS ON THE 77TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE FOUNDING OF THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA



Congratulations on the

77th

Anniversary of the
People's Republic of China



Congratulations on the 77th Anniversary of the People's Republic of China



MELCO
新濠

CCD
新濠天地
CITY OF DREAMS

8
新濠影匯
STUDIO CITY

ALTIRA
新濠鋒 MACAU

www.melco-resorts.com

Xi pays tribute to national heroes on Martyrs' Day

BEIJING – President Xi Jinping and other Party and state leaders attended a ceremony to present flower baskets to fallen national heroes at Tian'anmen Square in central Beijing yesterday morning.

The event was held to mark Martyrs' Day. Observed on September 30, one day before National Day, the day commemorates those who gave their lives for national independence and prosperity.

Since Martyrs' Day was established in 2014, Xi, also general secretary of the Communist Party of China (CPC) Central Committee and chairman of the Central Military Commission, has maintained the tradition of paying homage to fallen heroes on the day.

The other leaders who attended the ceremony yesterday included Li Qiang, Zhao Leji, Wang Huning, Cai Qi, Ding Xuexiang, Li Xi and Han Zheng. They were joined by

representatives from all walks of life.

At 10:00 a.m., all attendees sang the national anthem, followed by a moment of silence in tribute to the heroes who sacrificed their lives for the liberation of the Chinese people and the development of the People's Republic of China.

Nine large flower baskets were placed in front of the Monument to the People's Heroes.

Xi and other leaders walked up to the foot of the monument, where he straightened the ribbons on the baskets. Then, they walked around the monument to pay their tributes.

The baskets, with ribbons reading "Eternal Glory to the People's Heroes," were presented in the name of the CPC Central Committee; the National People's Congress Standing Committee; the State Council; the National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference; the Central Military Commission; non-

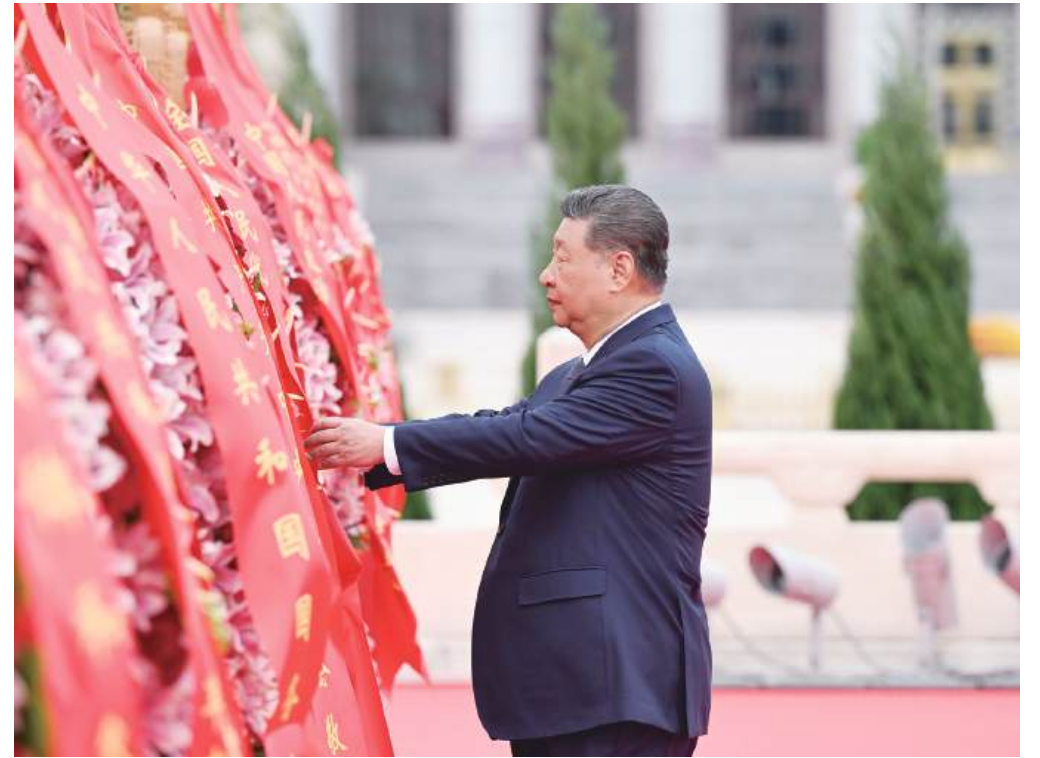
Communist parties, the All-China Federation of Industry and Commerce, and patriots without party affiliations; people's organizations and people from all walks of life; veterans, retired senior officials and the relatives of martyrs; and Chinese Young Pioneers.

Yin Li, a member of the Political Bureau of the CPC Central Committee and secretary

of the CPC Beijing Municipal Committee, presided over the ceremony.

This year marks the 105th founding anniversary of the CPC and the 90th anniversary of the victory of the Long March, which lasted from 1934 to 1936. The arduous journey helped lay the foundation for the eventual victory of the Chinese revolution.

– AFP



President Xi Jinping straightens the ribbon on a flower basket during a ceremony to present flower baskets to fallen national heroes at Tian'anmen Square in Beijing yesterday. Xi Jinping and other leaders of the Communist Party of China (CPC) and the state including Li Qiang, Zhao Leji, Wang Huning, Cai Qi, Ding Xuexiang, Li Xi and Han Zheng attended the ceremony yesterday morning. The event was held to mark Martyrs' Day. Observed annually on September 30, one day before National Day, the day commemorates those who gave their lives for national independence and prosperity.

– Xinhua

China's sci-tech self-reliance matters at home and beyond

Commentary

BEIJING – The Ministry of Science and Technology said yesterday that the country is rapidly moving from being a participant and contributor in global science and technology to a pioneer and leader, emerging as one of the countries with the fastest-growing innovation capacity.

The message is clear: China is determined to achieve greater self-reliance and strength in science and technology, a national imperative firmly embedded in its modernization drive.

For decades, China's growth was powered by low-value-added manufacturing, energy-intensive heavy industry and a booming property sector. That model has run its course. As the world's largest manufacturing nation pivots toward high-quality development, it must foster new growth drivers through innovation.

Science and technology lie at the heart of that transition. The 15th Five-Year Plan, China's development roadmap for 2026-2030, positions sci-tech self-reliance as a strategic underpinning, aimed at cultivating new quality productive forces – growth driven by innovation and rising productivity rather than by traditional inputs.

This shift is backed by hard numbers. In 2025, China's total R&D spending exceeded 3.92 trillion yuan, accounting for 2.8 percent of GDP. The country now has the world's largest cohort of science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) graduates, a vast digital consumer market that fuels innovation, and leading positions in 5G, quantum communication and drones. In 2025, the added value of high-tech manufacturing above designated size grew by 9.4 percent, far outpacing overall GDP growth of 5 percent.

Behind these figures lies a deeper transformation. China is reshaping its industrial landscape – moving from isolated technological breakthroughs to coordinated progress across entire industrial chains, and from original innovation in key core technologies to large-scale application and industrial upgrading. It also aims to deliver tangible benefits for its people: better products and services, stronger agriculture, cleaner air and water, safer food, and healthier lives.

This drive is fueled by domestic economic needs, while remaining gaps in critical technologies underscore its urgency.

Despite remarkable progress, China still relies on imports for some of the most vital technologies. Advanced semiconductors, high-end manufacturing equipment and certain key materials remain vulnerable to external supply disruptions. Recent years of export controls and technology restrictions have made one lesson clear: core technologies must be developed through its own efforts.

This is why China is placing heavy emphasis on original innovation and breakthroughs in frontier fields such as artificial intelligence (AI), quantum technology, 6G and ultra-large-scale intelligent computing clusters. It is also prioritizing the localization of semiconductors and key materials, aiming to raise yields and capacity in advanced processes.

Yet China's sci-tech drive is often misread as both threatening and inward-looking. In reality, the country continues to create new opportunities for global development.

It expands the global supply of innovation. China's open-source AI models are increasingly adopted by developers, alongside U.S. models, while its advances in batteries and clean energy have made it indispensable in the global climate effort. Deeply embedded in global supply chains and capital markets, its tech-driven growth also serves as an anchor in a world facing fragmentation: expanding high-tech manufacturing creates demand for components, materials and services worldwide.

It widens the global frontiers of knowledge. China's achievements in quantum computing, AI and space science are expanding humanity's shared scientific base. A development plan recently released by the Chinese Academy of Sciences also pledges to step up AI-enabled scientific research – a move that could accelerate discovery and benefit the world.

It embraces shared progress. China's development brings opportunities, not threats. It has established sci-tech cooperation with more than 160 countries and regions, and will continue to pursue an open, inclusive and mutually beneficial approach.

A more innovative China, deeply woven into the global technology ecosystem, is not a zero-sum challenge but a shared opportunity. China's technological innovation will not only shape its own growth trajectory, but also influence the global economy for decades to come.

– Xinhua

Congratulations on the 77th anniversary of the establishment of the People's Republic of China



Scholars explore how Confucian wisdom illuminates challenges in AI age

Analysis

JINAN – Standing before a virtual image of Confucius, Jonah Dunch posed a question that the ancient Chinese thinker could hardly have imagined: In the age of artificial intelligence (AI), what would he make of the development of society and rapid advance of technology?

Dunch, a Canadian Yenching Scholar from the 2025 cohort at Peking University, was not alone in asking how an ancient intellectual tradition might speak to a fast-changing technological world.

Questions like Dunch's were among those explored as hundreds of guests from around the world gathered for the 12th Nishan Forum on World Civilizations from September 28 to 29, held in the Nishan area of Qufu, east China's Shandong Province, where Confucius is believed to have been born more than 2,500 years ago.

Themed "Civilization, Order and Justice," the forum covered a broad range of issues concerning humanity's future. With AI emerging as a recurring subject, there are queries not only with regard to how technology should be governed, but also what values should guide its development and what place human beings should occupy in an increasingly intelligent physical world.

AI is being integrated into production and everyday life at an unprecedented pace, while posing new challenges for global governance. Some participants said the world is at a critical juncture for building institutions to govern technology, as technological risks rise alongside a growing willingness to cooperate internationally, even amid intensifying competition among major powers.

Xue Lan, dean of the Institute for AI International Governance at Tsinghua University, said global AI governance is being hampered by fragmented mechanisms, diverging approaches among major countries and an inadequate supply of safety governance.



Artistes dressed in traditional attire take part in a grand ceremony honoring Confucius in Qufu, Shandong Province, on Monday. A grand ceremony honoring the ancient Chinese sage Confucius was held on Monday in Qufu, his hometown, to commemorate the 2,577th anniversary of his birth. – Xinhua

Amid accelerating global changes, rising unilateralism and protectionism, and the intertwining of civilizational divides and technological barriers, how to coexist and how to cooperate have become shared concerns. At Nishan, participants looked to ancient traditions for perspectives on confronting such global challenges.

For Dimitra Amarantidou, associate professor at the Advanced Institute for Confucian Studies of Shandong University, the value of the Analects of Confucius, like that of classical texts from other traditions, lies not in providing ready-made answers to today's problems, but in helping people rethink the questions themselves.

"Confucius cannot answer the question of how to regulate AI agents who turn rogue," she said. "He may not have an answer to that question, but I think he can help us reformulate the question and say, for example: What is humanity? What does it mean to be human?"

"His focus is on ren – on humaneness. So he connects humanity with goodness,"

Amarantidou said. "He helps us keep that in mind: when we are considering these questions, keep the humans at the center."

The discussion of Confucian thought at Nishan also went beyond AI, touching on how traditional ideas continue to find expression in contemporary concepts and practices.

For Eduardo Daniel Oviedo, principal research fellow at the Argentine National Council for Scientific and Technical Research and professor at the National University of Rosario, understanding China's traditional culture, particularly Confucianism, is important to understanding the ideas behind the country's foreign policy.

"China's four global initiatives, the Belt and Road Initiative and the vision of a community with a shared future for humanity all have certain connections with Confucian thought," said Oviedo.

As participants discussed how to respond to the multiple challenges facing the international community, another theme came repeatedly to the fore: dialogue.

Suos Yara, chairman of the Commission on Foreign Affairs, International Cooperation and Information of Cambodia's National Assembly, said the Nishan forum provides a platform for turning broad principles of civilization, order and justice into meaningful dialogue and for exploring how people can work together to build a shared future.

Jin Mingqing, director of the Institute of Contemporary China Studies under the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences (CASS), called for rejecting notions of civilizational superiority and civilizational conflict, and for respecting the historical traditions, values and development paths of different civilizations.

He also called for following the principle of extensive consultation, joint contribution and shared benefits in global governance, building consensus on rules through mutual respect among civilizations, upholding the common values of humanity – peace, development, fairness, justice, democracy and freedom – and promoting a community with a shared future for humanity, as well as common development and lasting peace and prosperity.

The significance of the forum indicates that dialogue lies not in eliminating differences, but in enabling different civilizations to listen to one another. Since it was first held in 2010, the Nishan Forum on World Civilizations has developed into an important platform for implementing the Global Civilization Initiative and promoting exchanges and mutual learning among civilizations.

"Great civilizations can transcend time and borders and engage in dialogue with all humanity," Syed Yousaf Raza Gilani, chairman of the Senate of Pakistan, said in a video address at the opening ceremony, describing Confucius as a thinker who transcends his era.

"The most enduring bridges are not built only with bricks and steel, but with knowledge, friendship and people's hearts," Gilani added. – Xinhua

Chinese mainland welcomes public suggestions on 'two systems' solution to Taiwan question: spokesperson

BEIJING – A Chinese mainland spokesperson yesterday welcomed people on both sides of the Taiwan Strait to offer opinions and suggestions on the solution to the Taiwan question under the "one country, two systems" framework.

Zhang Han, spokesperson for the State Council Taiwan Affairs Office, made the remarks at a media conference in response to a question about recent discussions on the "two systems" solution to the Taiwan question.

Zhang said that peaceful reunification and "one country, two systems" remain the basic policy for resolving the Taiwan question and the best way to achieve national reunification, serving the interests of compatriots on both sides of the Taiwan Strait and the Chinese nation as a whole.

"The reunification of the motherland is an unstoppable historical trend," she noted.

The Taiwan question stems from China's civil war fought between the forces led by the Communist Party of China (CPC) and the Chinese Kuomintang (KMT) about eight decades ago. In 1949, the defeated KMT retreated to Taiwan, and

the People's Republic of China (PRC) was founded under the leadership of the CPC.

The unresolved civil war, combined with foreign interference, has kept the two sides of the Taiwan Strait in a prolonged state of political confrontation. However, the fact that Taiwan is an inalienable part of China's territory has never changed.

Zhang said that an increasing number of people in Taiwan have begun discussing the specific content of the solution.

They are also envisioning prospects for a better future following reunification and considering the major opportunities reunification would bring to Taiwan's social and economic development, as well as the tangible benefits it would bring to the people of Taiwan, she added.

"We welcome compatriots on both sides of the Taiwan Strait to pool their wisdom and contribute more opinions and suggestions on the solution," Zhang said.

She called on people on both sides to work together to create the historic achievement of national reunification and share in the great glory of national rejuvenation. – Xinhua

Japan should be urged to abide by Three Non-Nuclear Principles: FM spokesperson

BEIJING – The international community should urge Japan to abide by the Three Non-Nuclear Principles, faithfully fulfill its obligations under the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), and completely abandon its attempts at "remilitarization" and nuclear possession, a foreign ministry spokesperson said in Beijing yesterday.

Spokesperson Guo Jiakun made the remarks at a daily press briefing after the incumbent head of Japan's defense department said that discussions on Japan's possession of nuclear weapons and nuclear submarines should be made "without taboo."

The possession of nuclear weapons is not an issue that Japan can "allow discussion" if it wants to, Guo said, adding that Japan is a non-nuclear-weapon state party to the NPT and therefore has a bounden duty under international law to not receive, manufacture, acquire or transfer nuclear weapons, and there is no room for negotiation.

Guo pointed out that in February, Japanese Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi reiterated Japan's commitment to the three non-nuclear principles, and Japan's representative reaffirmed multiple times at the Review Conference of the Parties to the NPT this year that the three non-nuclear principles would not be changed.

"The 'no-nuclear-taboo' remark by the

incumbent head of Japan's defense establishment is a blatant provocation and serious stomp on the NPT and the postwar international order. It is diametrically opposed to the three non-nuclear principles that Japan claims to uphold. His remark once again revealed the Japanese right-wing pursuit of a nuclear Japan," Guo said.

In recent years, Japan has been accelerating remilitarization and attempting to revise the three non-nuclear principles by strengthening the so-called "extended deterrence" arrangement, seeking nuclear weapon deployment in Japan, attempting to progressively ease nuclear restrictions, and challenging the red line drawn by the international community, Guo added.

Noting that this year marks 80 years of the opening of the Tokyo Trials, Guo said that history has not and will not forget the calamities brought by Japanese militarism onto the people in Asia and elsewhere in the world.

"As Japanese right-wing forces keep challenging the postwar international order and the non-proliferation regime and moving further down the wrong path, the international community needs to call on Japan to strictly observe the three non-nuclear principles, fulfill its obligations under the NPT, abandon remilitarization and nuclear attempt, and earnestly respond to the concerns of the international community," Guo said. – Xinhua

Lost shark becomes viral star in S Korea

SEOUL — A wayward shark has become an unlikely celebrity in South Korea, drawing massive crowds, earning plaudits from the local mayor and even moving the stock market.

The predator — believed to be a bull shark — popped up in an artificial waterway in the port city of Busan on South Korea's southeast coast this month.

Coast guard boats tried to guide the animal back to the sea by spraying water on it, but the shark — affectionately nicknamed 'Bukhang-i' by fans after the port — did not budge.

And while authorities wonder what to do next, the 3.5-metre visitor and the crowds it has drawn have provided an unexpected boon to the local economy.

Sales of shark-shaped ice

cream bars jumped nearly 30 percent at nearby convenience stores.

Busan Mayor Chun Jae-soo has thanked the shark for publicity that would otherwise have cost "trillions".

In tribute to its contributions, Bukhang-i was elected an honorary public relations ambassador for the city with a stonking 91 percent of the vote.

Others are cashing in — shares in The Pinkfong Company, the studio behind the viral "Baby Shark" song, briefly surged more than seven percent.

Bull sharks are usually found in subtropical and tropical waters.

Sharks venturing into South Korean waters is "not common at all", said Kim Jin-koo, a professor of global fisheries at Pukyong



This aerial view photo taken on Tuesday shows visitors watching a 3.5-metre shark trapped in an artificial waterway in the southeastern port city of Busan, South Korea. — AFP

National University.

"As water temperatures around South Korea have risen, it appears to

have moved closer to the country's coast," Kim said.

The fish's fame has also been

accompanied by a flood of false rumours.

A few days after its appearance, authorities said that a second fish had been spotted in the area — prompting some social media users to suggest it was Bukhang-i's child and share AI-generated images purporting to show the pair.

An official at Busan's park policy division told AFP that no additional sharks have been spotted since Bukhang-i's appearance.

They also said authorities would make another attempt at moving the shark tomorrow.

The shark joins a list of unlikely animal celebrities in South Korea — most notably Neukgu, a young wolf that escaped from a zoo in April.

The lost pup spent nine days on the lam before being recaptured.

— AFP

Singapore launches dating service for public servants

SINGAPORE — Singapore has launched a dating platform for public officials, in the city-state's latest experiment meant to tackle declining marriage and historically low fertility rates.

The algorithm-powered pilot initiative, unveiled on Tuesday and named FirstDate, targets employees aged between 21 to 35 and promises to end "swipe fatigue", associated with some dating apps, while building a "thoughtful connection".

Public officials can fill out details including interests, habits, religious preferences and "dealbreakers".

The platform promises absolute privacy, saying "only your match sees your profile, and you decide if your contact details are shared".

It does, however, also ask users to "Tell us how your date went!" with a star rating and an optional feedback box.

Applications to take part in the pilot close on Monday.

Singapore, which has a population of just over six million people, saw record-low fertility rates last year.

Fewer Singaporeans are getting married, with official figures showing that marriage registrations fell for the third consecutive year in 2025.

In August, Prime Minister Lawrence Wong announced a robust package encouraging larger families, including generous financial incentives.

Singapore also officially became a super-aged society this year, where at least 21 percent of the population is aged 65 and above.

In Japan, an AI-powered dating app launched by the Tokyo government in 2024 to lift Japan's low birthrate led to 265 marriages.

— AFP

Japanese hospital performs first surgery using heart muscle stem cells

TOKYO—A hospital in Japan has carried out the world's first surgery using sheets of commercially available heart muscle stem cells after the ground-breaking therapy was approved this year, one of the surgeons said.

Sheets of muscle cells derived from regenerative products known as induced pluripotent stem cells, or iPS cells, were transplanted into the heart of a woman in her 50s during the hour-long surgery performed on Tuesday.

It marked the first clinical use of the regenerative therapy since it received conditional government approval in March.

"Our hope is that this will improve the patient's quality of life," surgeon Yoshiki Sawa, the

head of Osaka Keisatsu Hospital, told reporters after the surgery.

Trials of the regenerative therapy were conducted on eight patients suffering from ischemic heart disease — damage caused by narrowed heart arteries.

All eight experienced an easing of their symptoms, including four whose heart functions improved, Japanese media said.

Sawa developed the technology in collaboration with Japanese scientist Shinya Yamanaka, who won the Nobel Prize in 2012 for his research into iPS cells, which have the potential to develop into any cell in the body.

Sawa's therapy is primarily designed for heart patients who have exhausted other treatment options.

It is expected to improve heart

muscle function, resulting in improved heart failure symptoms, cardiac performance, and exercise tolerance.

His team plans to conduct similar operations on 75 patients by 2033 and to report on the treatment's efficacy, media reports said.

The treatment would then be fully authorised after its benefits and safety are proved over the next seven years, the *Asahi Shimbun* daily said.

Japan also gave conditional approval in March for a Parkinson's disease treatment that transplants iPS cells into a patient's brain, following a successful clinical trial.

iPS cells are created by stimulating mature, already specialised cells back into a juvenile state — basically cloning without the need for an embryo.

— AFP

Indonesia razes poolside prison 'villas' where whisky, TVs seized

CIBINONG, Indonesia — Indonesian authorities razed luxury prison "villas" outside Jakarta yesterday where whisky and a big-screen TV were seized from a complex, complete with a pool and a gym, in which inmates were allegedly paying to live.

Officers raided the prison and emptied several "villas" of furniture, bottles of alcohol and at least one big-screen TV, before taking an excavator to 10 of the units and smashing them to the ground.

The Indonesian ombudsman's office said last week an inspection uncovered a cluster of indulgently furnished apartments inhabited by inmates on the grounds of the Cibinong men's prison in Bogor, south of the capital.

The inmates allegedly paid rent for the accommodation complete with couches, large beds, TVs, fridges and even dining tables.

Photos released by the ombudsman's office after an unannounced visit showed bottles

of beer, whisky and other alcohol in a fridge door of one of the units described by the team as "villas".

An unlocked access gate linked the yard around the units to a bamboo forest, making it possible for the prisoners to enter and exit at will.

There was a "luxury car parking area" on the grounds, according to ombudsman official Syafrida Rachmawati Rasahan, as well as a swimming pool and a gym.

A golf simulator was also being built for the residents.

"We found (the premises) occupied by inmates," Syafrida told a news conference last Thursday.

"So we strongly suspect that in Cibinong correctional facility, there are special facilities for some inmates."

'Illegal'

The prison houses more than 1,800 inmates, many times its capacity. They are detained for a mix of crimes, including violent and white-collar offences such as corruption.

Money for the structures were "not sourced from the state budget... and there is no permit," the prison ministry's inspector general Rudi Setiawan told reporters.

"Some (inmates) had inhabited these buildings... We have received information on who were there, and we will follow up on who allowed it to happen."

Prison staff emptied the housing units of couches, fridges, coffee tables, beds and other comforts yesterday, stashing them to one side before razing 10 structures described by officials as "illegal".

The prisons ministry said it would report the findings of a preliminary investigation to parliament next week.

The inspector general said 52 inmates had been questioned so far.

The head of the prison and four other senior officials have been suspended.

Authorities have not divulged which inmates had inhabited the luxury accommodation, nor said what will happen to them now.

— AFP



Jeepney drivers and various groups walk along a street to protest against high fuel prices in Manila yesterday.

The Philippines has been struggling to deal with soaring fuel costs from the Middle East war, and as an import-dependent country it declared a national energy emergency in March, forcing it to cast an ever-wider net for fuel, including purchases of oil from Russia.

— AFP

Netanyahu says one of the pilots of rerouted flight tried to crash plane

TABUK, Saudi Arabia – Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said yesterday that one of the pilots of a Tel Aviv-bound flydubai flight had tried to crash the plane and kill its passengers, after the aircraft was forced to make an emergency landing in Saudi Arabia.

Passengers gave a similar account of the incident on board, describing a fight for control after the plane suddenly plummeted, losing around 17,000 feet of altitude in the span of a minute, according to the Flightradar24 website.

Flydubai said all the passengers – of whom 166 out of 174 were Israeli, according to media reports – were safe, adding that the reasons for the altercation were unknown.

AFPTV images later showed another flydubai plane carrying the passengers touch down at Tel Aviv airport, hours after their initial flight was diverted to Saudi Arabia's Tabuk.

"During the flight, as they approached the country, one of the pilots stabbed the other pilot, and apparently tried to crash the plane with everyone on board," Netanyahu said in a video message.

He said he spoke to an Israeli passenger who broke into the cockpit as the plane started to plunge and fought the pilot who was trying to bring down the aircraft.

"I salute these heroes," he added, saying "they prevented a major disaster".

The flight was rerouted to Tabuk

"at 9:45 a.m. (local time) and its captain and co-pilot were found to have injuries and were transported to hospital", a statement from the company operating the airport said.

'Out of control'

Passenger Miryam Shira Ohayon said the plane was "pretty much out of control" after one of the pilots tried to stab the other while they were flying over Jordan.

"So the co-pilot tried to murder the pilot and basically carry out a suicide attack on the plane," she told reporters by speakerphone held up by her mother, who was waiting at Ben Gurion Airport near Tel Aviv.

"It was really on the way to crashing, and it was simply the resourcefulness of many people who took control of the co-pilot and neutralised him," she said, adding a doctor on board provided first aid.

"Other than the pilot, there were no injuries, but the bigger fear was really a crash, which is exactly what he was trying to do."

The airline later said it was another "on-duty flydubai crew travelling on the flight, who diverted and landed the aircraft safely".

Netanyahu said the pilot who allegedly stabbed his colleague was being interrogated by Saudi authorities.

Israeli Defence Minister Israel Katz described the incident as "an attempted jihadist terror attack", but did not identify his source for assigning a motive.



Passengers from an earlier diverted flydubai flight walk into the arrival hall after landing at Israel's Ben Gurion Airport in Lod yesterday.

– AFP

Like a 'rollercoaster'

Describing the flight's sudden plunge, passenger Almog Italie told AFP said it was like "we were having very big turbulence, but there was no turbulence", likening it to riding a "rollercoaster".

But there was no "hysteria" among passengers, Italie noted, even as fighting erupted near the cockpit.

"The other passengers from the front took over control," he told AFP via video call from Saudi Arabia.

Israel's Kan public broadcaster and Channel 12 reported that the Israeli military had scrambled fighter jets after fears of a possible hijacking.

In a video from inside the plane

that was reposted by Israeli social media users, one passenger – blood dripping from an open wound on his head – pleaded for assistance and said they were descending into Saudi Arabia, with which Israel has no formal ties.

"We are here during an attack on the plane. We just subdued the terrorists and are preparing to land," the man said.

"Anyone who can hear me, we need help."

Bloodied T-shirt

An AFP correspondent in Tabuk, where the plane landed, saw heavy security near the airport, with several police vehicles and an ambulance parked at the terminal.

Access to the terminal remained open.

In photos sent to AFP by one of the passengers, travellers, including children, were seen gathered in an airport lounge, with some sitting on the floor.

One man was wearing a white T-shirt and jeans stained with blood.

The incident comes months into a regional war that erupted in late February with US-Israeli strikes on Iran.

It also comes just ahead of Israeli elections due to be held at the end of October.

On Tuesday, Netanyahu said there were "indications" that Israel's enemies could try to attack ahead of elections, and was accused of "fear-mongering" by the opposition chief.

Following yesterday's incident, Netanyahu said he had "instructed the security services to prepare for additional potential threats".

Netanyahu meets with passengers

Meanwhile, Netanyahu met yesterday evening (local time) with passengers of the flydubai flight diverted earlier in the day, a spokesman for the prime minister told AFP.

A video shared by the premier's office showed Netanyahu at Ben Gurion Airport meeting and hugging a man named Yaniv, describing him as one of the passengers who managed to break into the aircraft's cockpit.

– AFP

Court halts Tennessee's first execution of woman in 200 years

WASHINGTON, DC – A US court yesterday halted the lethal injection of a 50-year-old female killer that would have been Tennessee's first execution of a woman in more than 200 years.

Barely an hour before Christa Pike was due to die by lethal injection, the Sixth Circuit Court of Appeals issued a ruling to stay the execution, three decades after she murdered a classmate.

Pike was 18 when she and her boyfriend beat and killed Colleen Slemmer, 19, at a job training camp for young people.

The killing gained national attention after Slemmer's body was found with a pentagram, often seen as a satanic symbol, carved in her chest.

In the United States, only 18 women have been executed since 1976, according to the Death Penalty Information Center.

"The interests of justice and the finality of Pike's impending execution compel the entry of a short stay of execution in order to properly analyse the parties' fully briefed arguments," the court order said.

The court is set to review whether allegations that Pike was sexually abused as a child were fully considered.

The case has sparked debate over capital punishment for young criminals.

Pike's lawyers argue she should be granted clemency due to her young age and mental health issues at the time of the killing.

"She was 18 when she committed her crime, and she was deeply mentally ill," they wrote in a clemency petition to Tennessee Governor Bill Lee, who said he would not intervene.

The US Supreme Court rejected on Tuesday an application for a stay of execution, which had argued that Pike's history as a victim of sexual assault, post-traumatic stress disorder and a blood condition meant a lethal injection would cause "needless suffering."

Pike, the only woman on Tennessee's death row, had been set to die by lethal injection at 10:00 a.m. (local time) yesterday at the Riverbend Maximum Security Institution in Nashville.

Independent UN rights experts have urged the US government and Tennessee authorities to "immediately halt" the execution and commute her death sentence.

"Pike's execution would mark the culmination of a trajectory of severe physical and psychological suffering



This handout picture dated January 12, 2023 provided by the Tennessee Department of Correction shows convicted US murderer Christa Pike. A US court yesterday halted the execution of Pike shortly before she was due to die from lethal injection, three decades after she murdered a classmate. The Sixth Circuit Court of Appeals issued a last-minute ruling to stay until further notice the execution of Pike, in what would have been the first execution of a woman in Tennessee in more than 200 years.

– AFP

marked by childhood abuse and nearly three decades of solitary confinement on death row," they said.

– AFP

Macron slams antisemitic comments attributed to Le Pen ally

MADRID – President Emmanuel Macron yesterday condemned "extremely serious and unacceptable" antisemitic comments attributed to French far-right leader Jordan Bardella that have harmed presidential candidate Marine Le Pen's campaign.

News website Mediapart reported Bardella made remarks disparaging Jewish people dating back to 2013, when he was a teenager, based on comments in private chats that it said it had authenticated.

Bardella has denied the allegations and denounced "a total war" aiming to "destabilise" the 2027 presidential election campaign of the far-right National Rally (RN) party that he leads.

"The comments that have been reported are obviously extremely serious and unacceptable," Macron told reporters in Madrid during a state visit to Spain.

"They do not allow for any kind of comment, they call for the strongest condemnation," said the centrist president, who will leave office next year after serving two consecutive terms since 2017.

Macron called on the RN to "clarify" its members' positions.

Bardella hit back at Macron on X, saying he had marched through Paris in a rally against antisemitism after the October 2023 Hamas attacks on Israel, unlike the president.

A poll published on Monday suggested Le Pen would win the first round of next year's election and defeat her challenger in the second round, which would send shockwaves throughout Europe.

In that scenario, Bardella, 31, would be tipped to be her prime minister.

Le Pen has said Bardella has her "total confidence" and slammed opponents for doing "absolutely anything – including the most disgusting things – to try to derail this momentum" ahead of the vote.

– AFP

US further tightens sanctions on Cuba

WASHINGTON, DC – The United States announced on Tuesday a further tightening of sanctions against Cuba, clamping down on certain financial transactions and travel by US citizens to the island.

The sanctions, announced by the Treasury Department's Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC), prohibit indirect financial transactions with sanctioned Cuban entities, particularly those linked to state security services and to Gaesa, the Cuban military's economic conglomerate.

OFAC has banned so-called U-Turn transactions, which allowed US banks to process US dollar payments related to Cuba provided that the origin and destination were outside the United States and did not involve American citizens.

The new regulations remove authorisation for US banks "to open and maintain accounts solely in the name of a Cuban national who is an independent private sector entrepreneur."

Access to the US banking system for private entrepreneurs had been authorised during Democrat Joe Biden's 2021-2025 presidency as part of measures aimed at supporting Cuba's nascent private sector.

The new regulations also limit categories of travel that were permitted for US citizens under president Barack Obama (2009–2017).

Cultural exchange or "people-to-people" trips as well as business conferences and meetings will now require authorisation.

Relations between Washington and Havana have worsened since President Donald Trump returned to power in January 2025.

The Republican leader says Cuba, located just 150 kilometers from Florida, represents an extraordinary threat to the United States.

Since January Washington has imposed a de facto oil embargo on the island of 9.4 million inhabitants plunging the country into a deep economic and energy crisis.

– Xinhua

Milei threatens arbitration over Falklands oil project

BUENOS AIRES – Argentina's President Javier Milei threatened this week to sue the United Kingdom over an oil project near the Falkland Islands, the British-administered territory over which Buenos Aires claims sovereignty.

Britain and Argentina fought a brief but bitter 10-week war in 1982 over the South Atlantic islands, known to Argentines as Las Malvinas, with 255 British troops and 649 Argentines killed during the conflict.

The companies developing a major oil field off the Falklands, Israel's Navitas and Britain's Rockhopper, have shrugged off Argentina's threats, insisting they have valid exploration licences issued by the United Kingdom. The project is called Sea Lion.

"I instructed the Foreign Ministry and our legal teams to initiate arbitration proceedings against the United Kingdom for the illegal sacking of our resources through the Sea Lion Project in the North Falklands Basin," Milei said in a post on X on Monday.

The Sea Lion oil field is located around 220 kilometres from the islands.

"If within two weeks the United Kingdom does not stop the illegitimate exploitation, we will go to the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea," the libertarian president continued.

Milei's administration has already taken legal action against the project authorised by Britain, arguing it violates a UN resolution calling for both sides to desist from unilateral actions in the islands until their dispute is resolved.

Buenos Aires has doubled down on its claim over the Falklands since US President Donald Trump said that Washington was open to reviewing its historically neutral stance on the territory.

The British government for its part has said it stands behind the businesses operating near the Falklands, arguing it had the "right to develop their natural resources as they see fit."

Falkland business representatives on Monday also arrived in Punta Arenas, Chile, to relaunch a maritime route between the two ports.

Louise Ellis, deputy director of economic development in the Falklands, told AFP in Punto Arenas that the new shipping route "has absolutely no" relation to the transportation of critical cargo needed for the Sea Lion project.

"This project [for a new route] began before [Sea Lion] and has always had to do with what the Falkland Islands and our communities need now," she said.

The route, which aims to open later this year and had ended in the 2000s after being deemed unfeasible, will mainly involve the transport of construction materials and fresh products like food and beverages.

– AFP

Brazil's football clubs face huge sponsorship blow from betting ban



Brazil's President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva (centre) speaks during a ceremony to sign a provisional measure banning online sports betting platforms, in São Paulo last Friday. Lula banned online sports betting platforms, major sponsors of Brazilian football clubs, just days before a closely contested election in which he is seeking a fourth term. – AFP

David Salazar

SÃO PAULO – Brazil's powerhouse football clubs are reeling after a ban on sports betting companies, their biggest sponsors, which has left multi-million US dollar deals in limbo.

Flush with cash from their betting sponsors, Brazilian clubs have in recent years dominated their South American rivals, winning the last seven Copa Libertadores titles.

President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, who on Sunday is facing a tight election race against right-wing senator Flávio Bolsonaro last Friday signed a provisional measure banning online betting companies, dubbing the industry a "cancer."

This is what is at stake:

How much do clubs rake in?

Fourteen of the 20 clubs in Brazil's top-flight Brasileirão have a betting company as their main sponsor.

That money accounted for 34 percent of clubs' commercial revenue in 2025, or around US\$200 million, according to investment firm Galapagos Capital.

Flamengo, the reigning Libertadores and Brasileirão champion, has the biggest annual sponsorship deal in South American football history with Betano, worth US\$46 million.

That is equivalent to what the team paid this year for midfielder Lucas Paqueta, setting a new benchmark in the South American market.

"How am I going to pay for Paqueta?" Flamengo president Luiz Eduardo Baptista said on a podcast following the ban.

The measure "puts future revenue, the contracts we have signed and the payments we have to make at risk," he said.

What happens now?

Lula's measure orders betting adverts to be removed after October 5.

A meeting between the government and clubs this week was postponed until after Sunday's first-round election, a Sports Ministry source told AFP.

The Senate has 120 days to decide whether to turn the provisional measure into law.

The main betting industry associations on Monday asked the Supreme Court to suspend the measure, alleging that it is unconstitutional.

Lula has doubled down saying either he "puts an end to betting, or betting will put an end to Brazil."

The president argues that betting companies account for "just" seven percent of clubs' revenues.

What are the risks for clubs?

Experts warn that clubs face a possible devaluation of their commercial assets and potential legal action.

"An indebted company, a company without legal certainty that cannot honour its commitments, suffers a devaluation," said Fabiana Bentes of sports industry institute Sou do Esporte.

The loss is "very large," said Cruzeiro owner Pedro Lourenço.

"We are looking at the situation and reviewing the accounts. It is not easy to quantify the scale of the loss today," he added.

The Belo Horizonte club will nevertheless receive financial support from the Minas Gerais state government, which announced assistance for local clubs that have lost their sponsors.

Fluminense president Matheus Montenegro said it will not be easy for clubs to replace these sponsors.

"It is obvious that this devalues the asset, because any company interested in sponsoring a football club will have almost all the clubs available at the same time," he told CNN Brasil.

How will this impact Brazil's regional dominance?

Flamengo said in a statement that revenue from online betting has "propelled Brazilian football to the point of dominating" South American competitions.

Betting sponsorships of Brazilian clubs emerged in 2019, filling a space left by state-owned bank Caixa Econômica Federal.

Sincethen, 12 of the 14 Libertadores finalists have been Brazilian teams.

According to specialist website Transfermarkt, nine of the 10 most valuable clubs in the region are in the Brasileirão.

– AFP

Millions of children in LatAm at risk from El Niño: UNICEF

PANAMA – Millions of children in Latin America are at risk from severe droughts and flooding unleashed by an historic episode of the El Niño ocean-warming pattern, the UN's children's agency UNICEF said yesterday.

El Niño is a naturally occurring climate variation that warms surface temperatures in the equatorial Pacific Ocean, causing worldwide changes to wind and rain patterns.

This year's El Niño is projected to be the strongest on record.

UNICEF warned that 25.8 million Latin American children, or one in seven, "face growing risks" from droughts and flooding already causing havoc across South and Central America.

The effects "threaten to push even more children into deeper vulnerability

and increase existing inequalities," said Roberto Benes, UNICEF's Regional Director for Latin America and the Caribbean, said in a statement.

The impact varies across the region.

In the Central American nations of Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras and Nicaragua, the drought affects harvests, increasing the risk of malnutrition for children, who already face difficulties accessing food and safe water, UNICEF said.

Parts of Bolivia, Colombia, Chile and Venezuela face elevated risk of wildfires, while in the Amazon basin, riverside communities may become cut off due to dwindling river levels.

Further south, on the Pacific coast of Mexico and South America, increased rainfall will lead to a

greater risk of flooding and damage to schools and health infrastructure, according to UNICEF.

The agency also warned of even more misery for Cuba and Haiti.

The effects of El Niño are also in evidence in this year's unusually intense Pacific hurricane season.

A single "major storm can cause widespread destruction" and "disrupt the lives" of hundreds of thousands of children, Benes stressed.

UNICEF said that it had requested US\$53.8 million to respond to El Niño emergencies in Latin America, but as of June 30 had only raised half that amount.

UNICEF, like other UN agencies, has suffered major funding cuts since US President Donald Trump returned to power last year.

– AFP

China extends 52-year unbeaten record as Games organisers say sorry

Peter Stebbings

NAGOYA – China’s divers extended their remarkable Asian Games unbeaten record stretching back to 1974 as a top Japanese official apologised yesterday for “inconveniences” that have dogged the continent’s premier sporting event.

Chinese divers were unstoppable once more as the country’s massive overall tally of gold medals swelled to 151 with four days left.

Hosts Japan are a distant second with 50 golds, ahead of South Korea with 24.

Chen Yiwen and Lian Junjie each won gold in the final two diving events to give China a 14th consecutive clean sweep in the sport.

China has won every diving gold medal since their first Asian Games appearance 52 years ago.

“Girls are every bit as capable as boys. We are pushing ourselves to perform more difficult dives, too,” said Chen, a double Paris Olympics champion.

“We do not train any less than the boys,” she added.

In tennis, Philippines star Alexandra Eala stormed into the semi-finals, cheered on by fans who had come from far and wide to see their hero in action.

The world number 18 and favourite for women’s singles gold had to work hard early on to beat Chinese Taipei’s England-born Joanna Garland 7-5, 6-0 in her second outing in Nagoya.

The winner of the tournament qualifies for the 2028 Los Angeles Olympics.

“Representing my country and playing these types of games, SEA Games, Asian Games and hopefully the Olympics, they’re very close to my heart and a big part of my dreams,” said Eala.

She plays China’s Wang Xiyu, ranked 85, next.

Chinese Taipei’s boxer Lin Yu-ting, the Olympic champion who found herself embroiled in a major gender row at Paris 2024, is guaranteed at least a silver medal.

Lin outclassed Sitora Turdibekova of Uzbekistan 5-0 in the women’s 60kg class to surge into the final, putting her one win from a second Asian Games gold.



Wang Yudong (right) of China interacts with Eom Jisung of South Korea during the men’s football semifinals between China and South Korea at 20th Asian Games Aichi-Nagoya 2026 in Osaka, yesterday.

The 30-year-old thanked the medical team afterwards for treating the cut to her nose she suffered in the quarter-finals.

In football, South Korea scored an 82nd-minute winner in a 2-1 victory over China in the men’s semi-finals.

They will face Japan for gold after the hosts pulled through against Uzbekistan 9-8 on penalties, the game having ended 1-1 after 120 minutes.

‘Mishandling’

Nagoya’s mayor apologised to athletes for “inconveniences” at the Games following a string of complaints.

The event has been marred by problems including a shortage of beds and issues with transport.

There are over 17,000 athletes and officials, more than the Olympics, and countries have accused local organisers of mismanagement.

“We must offer our apologies to the athletes and others affected by these inconveniences,” said Mayor Ichiro

Hirosawa, who is also acting chairman of the local organising committee.

“We must sincerely reflect on the mishandling that occurred,” he added.

Unlike past Games, there is no athletes’ village in a bid to save money, with participants instead sleeping in temporary wooden units, on a cruise ship and in hotels.

Sleep-deprived

With days of rain finally giving way to warm sunshine in Nagoya, Tom Kim defied jet-lag and just six hours’ sleep in two days to shoot a three-under par 67 as the golf began.

South Korea’s Kim flew in from the Presidents Cup to be in a share of seventh place on his Games debut.

“I’ve had six hours of sleep in the last 48 so I’m hanging in there,” Kim, a four-time US PGA Tour winner, told AFP.

Taichi Kho, the defending champion, had a hole-in-one in his round of one-under par 69.

20th Asian Games Aichi-Nagoya 2026				
Medal table				
				ToTal

1		China	151	67	59	277
2		Japan	50	77	73	200
3		Republic of Korea	24	30	49	103
4		Uzbekistan	16	19	19	54
5		Thailand	12	10	12	34
6		Islamic Republic of Iran	11	16	12	39
7		Bahrain	11	5	5	21
8		India	10	21	29	60
9		Kazakhstan	9	16	31	56
10		Democratic People's Republic of Korea	7	6	7	20
11		Malaysia	6	5	12	23
12		Hong Kong, China	5	12	18	35
13		Indonesia	4	7	20	31
14		Kuwait	4	1	4	9
15		Chinese Taipei	3	10	26	39
16		Qatar	3	6	4	13
17		Philippines	3	3	12	18
18		Singapore	2	6	3	11
19		Tajikistan	2	3	5	10
20		Vietnam	2	1	18	21
21		Macao, China	1	4	1	6
22		Jordan	1	1	2	4
23		Myanmar	1	1	1	3
24		Sri Lanka	1	1	0	2
24		UAE	1	1	0	2
26		Mongolia	1	0	4	5
27		Kyrgyzstan	0	2	6	8
28		Saudi Arabia	0	2	5	7
29		Iraq	0	2	2	4
30		Turkmenistan	0	2	0	2
31		Afghanistan	0	1	2	3
32		Lebanon	0	1	1	2
32		Oman	0	1	1	2
34		Pakistan	0	0	5	5
35		Cambodia	0	0	4	4
36		Nepal	0	0	2	2
37		Bangladesh	0	0	1	1
37		Brunei	0	0	1	1
37		Laos	0	0	1	1
37		Syria	0	0	1	1

In Manchester, people say City scandal is ‘shame for football’

Premier League Mark Naftalin & Kieran Canning with Anna Malpas in London

MANCHESTER - On the streets of Manchester, people voiced shock and dismay at the scale of financial wrongdoing by Manchester City, with some calling for the football club to be relegated from the Premier League.

“It’s a shame for football. Football is such a great sport and we can’t have stories like that,” said Karem Fagega, a 21-year-old student in the northwest city, shaking his head in disbelief at the downfall of “such a good team”.

An independent commission found the Abu Dhabi-backed club arranged “sham” contracts with a number of commercial partners to artificially inflate its revenues and reduce costs by more than £900 million (US\$1.2 billion) between 2009 and 2018.

In that time, City won the Premier League title three times and also lifted one FA Cup and three League Cups.

“They do have the money to do everything right, but they decided to do everything wrong. So I was kind of shocked when I learnt about it,” said Sabrina Lodi, a 33-year-old account manager, after the news broke Tuesday.

She said, however, that in her view, Manchester City “are not the only ones that do it from around the world,” but were “just the ones that got caught”.

For Connor Emery, a 25-year-old retail worker who supports City’s Premier League rivals Liverpool, the “damning” verdict came as a surprise.

“I can’t believe it, to be fair. I never thought the club would get in trouble for anything”, he said, admitting he had expected the scandal to be “brushed under the carpet”.

Asked about possible consequences for the club, some said they wanted relegation but expected the club to avoid this.

British sports minister Lisa Nandy warned “the ultimate sanction is very serious indeed” and a club “can be expelled from the Premier League”.

“I personally think it should be a relegation,” said Corey, an 18-year-old student who is a fan of Manchester’s other club, United, but the outcome “depends on what the Premier League have in place”.

“I would want a relegation, probably a points deduction to get them relegated,” said Emery.

But he was sceptical this would happen, adding with a shrug: “It’s probably going to be a fine, let’s face it”.

In initial reactions from those close to the club, former City defender Micah Richards told The Rest is Football podcast he was “absolutely devastated” by the revelations about the club where he started playing aged 14.

“I feel saddened. I feel angry. I feel a little bit confused,” he added, citing a lack of information and conflicting accounts after the club’s CEO Ferran Soriano slammed the verdict as a “Premier League conspiracy theory” and insisted the club would “be vindicated”.

Former manager Pep Guardiola threw his weight behind the club yesterday broke his silence in a post on X.

“I want every single @ManCity fan to know I am here, more than ever,” said the Spaniard, who won six Premier League titles and the Champions League in a golden decade at the helm.

“I am, always have been, always will be, behind my club, my owner, my chairman, (CEO) Ferran (Soriano), the players, staff, (manager) Enzo (Maresca) and you, our unique supporters.

“Let me be clear: we will get through this together. I love you all.”

Former Manchester United captain Roy Keane said, if he were a City player, he would throw away all the medals.

“They knew it would hurt a lot of people, but they’ve still done it, and, if I was a player, I’d be 100 per cent sticking those medals in the bin,” he told ITV television.

– AFP

Beninese singer Angelique Kidjo urges Africans to ‘create together’

JOHANNESBURG – Five-time Grammy Award winner and newly cemented Hollywood Walk of Fame honouree Angelique Kidjo called on Tuesday for Africans to set aside their differences and “create together”.

Speaking at a Spotify gathering in Johannesburg, 66-year-old Kidjo wore a red headwrap, glasses and a printed blazer as she lauded the power and potential of Africa’s youth.

“We are the only continent where we are fighting with each other and within ourselves,” said the Beninese singer and activist who was in the city for a jazz festival.

“The youth today is hungry for new things,” she said. “We need to come together and set aside our differences and create together, tell our story together.”

Kidjo urged Africans to take ownership of how the continent is represented.

“We have so much culture in Africa. It’s frightening. It’s scary. It is so big that even we are overwhelmed, but we have to be strategic. We have to be focused,” she said.

The “Agoro” and “Afirika” hitmaker – whose career spans more than four decades, 18 albums and countless international collaborations – became the first black African to receive the Hollywood star in August.

Kidjo danced in her seat at the event to songs from her latest album “Hope”, which features artists Pharrell Williams and Ayra Starr – crediting

social media and “DMs” for forging her relationships with them.

“Art is a form of resistance, and we do that so well in Africa, in painting, in storytelling, books, theatre, whatever form of art we have, we always transcend it,” said the humanitarian, named one of *Time* magazine’s 100 most influential people.

Kidjo strives to empower girls and young women in Africa through her Batonga Foundation and has been a UNICEF Goodwill ambassador since 2002.

“I’m going to empower everybody on the continent to tell their own story,” she said.

– AFP



Beninese singer Angelique Kidjo poses during a photo session with the media following her performance at the 27th edition of the Joy of Jazz Festival in Johannesburg on Tuesday.

– AFP

Thai teen rocker Nene aims to tour, write music... and return to school

BANGKOK – Rising Thai teen rock star Nene Royal, fresh off her win on a top US TV talent show, told AFP yesterday she planned to write her own songs, tour – and “go back to school”.

The 16-year-old, whose real name is Rattikarn Amloy, took home the US\$1 million prize as winner of “America’s Got Talent” last month, after wowing judges and viewers with blistering guitar solos and rock ballad shrieks.

Hailing from Phuket, she has become a national figure in the Southeast Asian nation since entering the US competition.

“My plan is... writing my own songs, you know, and also making some tours, and also go back to school,” Nene told AFP after a performance at a Yamaha music showroom in Bangkok.

The teen singer and guitarist said she was “shocked” and “fainted”, dropping to the stage floor, when she was announced the champion on September 23.

Next month, she is set to open for US band Avenged Sevenfold in Singapore, after playing with Linkin Park in the final episode of “America’s Got Talent”.

Videos of her televised renditions of alternative rock classics such as “Zombie” by The Cranberries and “Black Hole Sun” by Soundgarden had gone viral in Thailand and beyond.

She performed both songs yesterday with her backing Ozone Band – three teen performers who matched Nene’s chops on bass guitar, keyboard and drums.

Asked about her band after the gig, Nene said: “I really missed them, because they’re kind of like my brothers.”

The boys travelled to California while she filmed “America’s Got Talent” to cheer her on, she said.



Rising Thai teen rock star Nene Royal performs during a showcase in Bangkok yesterday. The 16-year-old, whose real name is Rattikarn Amloy, took home a US\$1 million prize as winner of “America’s Got Talent” last month, after wowing judges and viewers with blistering guitar solos and rock ballad shrieks.

– AFP

“They’re always supporting me.”

Nene, who says she started playing guitar at age seven and learned mostly by watching online videos, earned a music scholarship to a private international school.

In July, she played alongside Prime Minister Anutin Charnvirakul, who congratulated her win and praised her talent and dedication, saying it “brought pride to Thai people”.

Appreciative of the outpouring of support from Thai fans, Nene said she did not expect the raucous homecoming.

“When I went back to Thailand, everyone went crazy,” she said.

– AFP

Swift concert attack plan convict fails to get Disney damages

Vienna, Austria

VIENNA – An Austrian convicted for planning to attack a 2024 Taylor Swift concert in Vienna yesterday failed to win damages from Walt Disney over the publication of his family’s address in a documentary series on the US megastar’s tour.

Disney has been screening the series on Swift’s record-breaking “Eras” tour since last year, which included sequences on three concerts being cancelled in Vienna after authorities warned of an Islamic State group (IS) plot.

In May, an Austrian court sentenced Beran A., 21, to 15 years in jail after he admitted plotting a foiled jihadist attack on the Swift concert.

In the documentary series on Disney+ titled “The End of an Era” Beran A.’s residential address was briefly seen, leading to the Austrian to demand damages.

His lawyer, Ulrike Zeller, argued her

client’s personal sphere and security had been endangered through the publication “to an audience of millions”.

But judge Nicole Baczak dismissed the claim, saying “a concrete endangerment” of Beran A. was unsubstantiated.

She also added neither Beran A. nor the address could be recognised through what has been published.

Zellner said she would appeal the verdict.

Georg Kresbach, the lawyer representing Walt Disney, argued that the disputed material had been removed in May, shortly after the complaint was received.

He also said Beran A.’s parents, who still live at the address, were compensated 3,000 euros (US\$3,400) each.

Beran A. went on trial in April on terror offences and other charges in Wiener Neustadt outside Vienna. He was arrested the day before the cancelled concert and has been detained since.

– AFP

World Weather

CHINA		ASIA-PACIFIC		WORLD		LUSOPHONE	
Beijing 9°C~24°C	Shanghai 20°C~25°C	Manila 24°C~33°C	Bangkok 25°C~35°C	New York 19°C~25°C	London 10°C~21°C	Lisbon 15°C~26°C	Rio de Janeiro 21°C~27°C
Hong Kong 23°C~32°C	Taipei 22°C~34°C	Tokyo 17°C~26°C	Singapore 25°C~31°C	Frankfurt 13°C~22°C	Vancouver 12°C~16°C	Luanda 21°C~25°C	Maputo 14°C~23°C
Guangzhou 23°C~35°C	Nanjing 16°C~21°C	Kuala Lumpur 23°C~34°C	Jakarta 24°C~33°C	Paris 10°C~22°C	Moscow 3°C~13°C	Dili 21°C~32°C	São Tomé 24°C~31°C
Guilin 19°C~32°C	Xi'an 9°C~18°C	Seoul 10°C~22°C	Sydney 16°C~28°C	Las Vegas 21°C~34°C	Monte Carlo 20°C~25°C	Praia 23°C~31°C	Bissau 23°C~33°C

Congratulations on the
77th anniversary
of the establishment of
the People’s Republic of China

賀定一

崔世昌

澳門中華總商會

澳門土木工程實驗室

澳門街坊會聯合總會

澳門生產力暨科技轉移中心



Anastassiya Ananyeva of Kazakhstan competes during the women's canoe slalom final at the 20th Asian Games Aichi-Nagoya 2026 in Toyota of Aichi Prefecture, yesterday. – Xinhua



Vietnam's Thi Ngan Ha Lam (blue) and Japan's Fujishiro Kokoro compete in the women's 52kg judo quarterfinals at Aichi International Arena during the 2026 Asian Games in Nagoya yesterday. – AFP



Japan's Taizo Yoshida (right) competes with Kyrgyzstan's Asan Kurbanovich Zhanyshov in the men's Greco-Roman 87kg final match of the wrestling during the 2026 Asian Games at the Inae Sports Centre in Nagoya yesterday. – AFP



Japan's Ami Ishii celebrates beating North Korea's Pak Sol-gum in the women's wrestling 68kg final during the 2026 Asian Games at the Inae Sports Centre in Nagoya yesterday. – AFP



Uzbekistan's Igor Myalin competes in the men's 10m platform final diving event during the 2026 Asian Games at the Tokyo Aquatics Centre in Tokyo yesterday. – AFP



Anraku Sorato of Japan competes during the men's boulder final of sport climbing at the 20th Asian Games Aichi-Nagoya 2026 in Nagoya, yesterday. – Xinhua