

83 pct of middle school students know pocket money management: survey

Armando Neves

The Macao New Chinese Youth Association (MNCYA) hosted a press conference on Friday to present the findings of its Survey on Financial Management Concepts and Consumption Behaviours of Secondary School Students in Macau, which shows that 83 percent of respondents are aware of pocket money management.

According to a statement released after the event on Friday, the press conference took place at the group's headquarters in the Macao Daily News Building.

The survey collected a total of 1,550 valid questionnaires.

The results showed that over 85 percent of secondary school students most commonly use e-wallets for their daily spending, nearly 90 percent have online shopping habits, and over 80 percent have experience spending on the mainland.

For both online shopping and spending on the mainland, the core considerations were "lower prices" and a "greater variety of products and brands". However, the findings also showed that only 16 per cent of secondary school students set clear savings goals, 36 per cent said they never record their personal income and expenditure, and only 15 percent "often record" or "record after every purchase" their income and expenses.

According to the findings, students' financial concepts mainly come from "their own spending experience" and "the words



This handout photo provided by the Macao New Chinese Youth Association (MNCYA) on Friday shows its Vice-President Chu On Kio (right) and a fellow member posing with the survey findings during Friday's press conference at its headquarters at Macao Daily News Building

and example of parents and family members". Among them, high school students showed significantly higher recognition of school-based financial education than junior secondary students, the findings showed.

Students considered the three most important financial skills to be, in order of importance as ranked by respondents: "distinguishing between 'needs' and 'wants'", "developing saving habits", and "identifying consumer traps".

In the statement, MNCYA Vice President Chu On Kio said that the widespread use of electronic payments, online shopping, and cross-border spending has made secondary

school students' consumption decisions increasingly instantaneous.

3 recommendations

In its statement, the Macao New Chinese Youth Association put forward three recommendations:

First, parents should discuss pocket money budgeting with their children and set specific savings goals together to cultivate the habit of planning their finances independently.

Second, schools should integrate financial education into subjects such as economics, liberal studies, or life education, and design practical, real-life activities such as recording

income and expenditure and identifying promotional tactics.

Third, the local government could study the formulation of curriculum guidelines for financial education and regulate marketing practices targeting minors.

Finally, the MNCYA vowed that it will offer diverse platforms – through activities such as hands-on financial planning workshops and discussion sessions on consumer attitudes – for students to experience different consumption scenarios and learn financial knowledge, working together to create a sound financial education and consumer environment for secondary school students. ■



Overseas buyers watch a robot boxing performance during the 140th Canton Fair in Guangzhou, capital of Guangdong Province, on Sunday. The on-site exhibition of the first phase of the 140th edition of the China Import and Export Fair, also known as the Canton Fair, concluded yesterday. The first phase attracted 189,000 overseas buyers from 214 countries and regions, a 13.3 percent increase from the session of the same period last year and a new high, according to the China Foreign Trade Centre (CFTC), the organizer of the fair. – Xinhua

Portuguese housing protesters call for Iberian strike

LISBON – Housing rights protesters in Portugal said yesterday they would extend their demonstrations through the end of the year and called for a joint Iberian general strike on November 11, as protests in the northwestern city of Porto entered their 10th consecutive day.

"We are going to appeal to trade union structures for an Iberian strike. We think it makes complete sense, because these are struggles over exactly the same issues," said a spokesperson for the movement, who spoke on condition of anonymity.

Protest camps remained in place in Lisbon and Porto over the weekend, with demonstrators arguing that government housing policies had exacerbated the crisis rather than resolved it.

"Governments have to understand that they must respond to people's problems, not aggravate them as they have done," the spokesperson added.

The demonstrations form part of a broader wave of housing protests across Europe, with similar encampments in several Spanish cities and rallies also held in France.

In Portugal, protesters are demanding legislation to ban real estate investment funds, which they accuse of fuelling property speculation, alongside broader government intervention to make housing more affordable.

Median property valuations reached a record 2,240 euros per square meter in July, while rents for new leases rose 9.1 percent year-on-year in the first quarter of 2026. – (More on page 12) – Xinhua

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China's Q3 economy picks up pace, reinforcing role as global growth engine

China's economy picked up pace in the third quarter, supported by fast-growing new drivers and fresh policy support, staying on track to meet its annual growth target and remaining a leading engine of global growth.

– Story on p. 7

PM calls for curfews in France as govt grapples with unrest

France's prime minister called for partial curfews yesterday as protesters blocked the entrance to the Louvre in Paris and authorities scrambled to stem public discontent.

– Story on p. 11

'Liar,' 'clown': Lula and Bolsonaro spar in election debate

Firing off personal attacks, Brazil's leftwing President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva and rightwing senator Flávio Bolsonaro held an acrimonious first debate on Sunday, a week before a tight presidential election runoff.

– Story on p. 12

73rd Macau Grand Prix to kick off next month

Rui Pastorin

Racers will again be competing on Macau's legendary Guia Circuit for the 73rd edition of the annual Macau Grand Prix (MGP) slated to take place from November 19 through 22.

With tickets now available, there will be seven race categories that will see both new and returning racers.

Among the races, the Macau Formula 4 Race – FIA F4 World Cup will feature a variety of young racers such as 16-year-old local Vernice Lao Si Lun, who will mark her MGP debut and had previously achieved impressive results in her recent seasonal debut in the FIA F4 Chinese Championship, according to a joint Friday statement by the Macau Grand Prix Organising Committee (MGPOC) and the Sports Bureau (ID).

Meanwhile, among the six local racers competing in the Greater Bay Area GT Cup (GT4), is Macanese driver Maximiano Manhão, the son of veteran racer Manuel Manhão, in his debut, the statement noted.

It will also see 21-year-old Italian Enzo Trulli, son of two-time F3 Macau Grand Prix podium finisher and former F1 star, Jarno Trulli.

Meanwhile, the Macau Grand Prix – FIA FR World Cup will feature up-and-comers vying for the top prize, among which are returning drivers such as Pinnacle Motorsport's Enzo Deligny (3rd in last year's race), R-ace GP's Emanuele Olivieri (Formula 4 runner-up last year) and Rashid Al Dhaheiri (F4 podium finisher).

The Macau GT Cup – FIA GT World Cup will feature 18 racers, and among this year's names are four-time race-winner Maro Engel, two-time race winner and last year's runner-up Raffaele Marciello, and the Chinese mainland's Ye Yifei. Other racers also include Lucas Auer, who will make his Guia Circuit debut.

The Macau Guia Race – Kumho FIA TCR World Tour Event of Macau will meanwhile mark the season finale of the world tour, seeing the biggest grid since 2020 with a 30-car field, the statement said, including Norbert Michelisz,



This undated handout photo jointly provided by the Sports Bureau (ID) and the Macau Grand Prix Organising Committee (MGPOC) shows a race during a previous FIA FR World Cup on the Guia Circuit.

Yann Ehrlacher Ma Qing Hua, Santiago Urrutia, and Thed Björk.

Headlining the 58th Macau Motorcycle Grand Prix is four-time winner Peter Hickman, who will be joined by returning riders such as Rob Hodson and Maurizio Bottalico, who the statement said made his debut last year with a top-six finish.

Lastly, the Macau Roadsport Challenge will comprise racers

across China, including seven local racers, with Hongkonger Leung Tsz Wa defending his title.

Once again, the races are supported by Macau's six integrated resort operators, with "elite sponsors" MGM China Holdings Limited, Sands China Ltd, Galaxy Entertainment Group (GEG), and SJM Resorts, each paying 20 million patacas, while "premium sponsors"

Melco Resorts & Entertainment and Wynn Macau will each pay 10 million patacas, the statement said.

A cheque presentation ceremony took place on Friday during the press conference announcing event details at the Macau Cultural Centre (CCM).

During an interview with reporters, MGPOC Coordinator Lei Si Leng highlighted that preparations for this year's races are progressing as planned, adding that FIA officials had already inspected the circuit and were satisfied.

Meanwhile, among the supporting activities is the Cultural Affairs Bureau's (IC) cross-over initiative "Macao City Culture Festival" from November 14 to 22, featuring everything from exhibitions, performances, and the "Macao Historic Centre Open Day", along with other activities, the statement said.

Meanwhile, fans can also stay tuned for the screening of the documentary "MGP: the Untamed Circuit" focusing on the 72nd Macau Grand Prix and featuring stories of several drivers, among others. ■

2 suspects awaiting trial in jail over 3.9 million pataca crèche subsidy fraud: MP

Sherwin Hng

Police recently uncovered a case involving the suspected defrauding of public funds by the head of a crèche acting in collusion with third parties, resulting in the detention of three local women. The case was transferred to the Public Prosecutions Office (MP) for investigation.

Two female defendants, including the head of the crèche, have been remanded in custody

pending trial, while the third defendant was placed under other statutory coercive measures, the Public Prosecutions Office said in a statement on Saturday.

According to the MP, the three suspects were taken to the Examining Magistracy for their initial judicial questioning. The statement alleged that the three suspects conspired to defraud the Social Welfare Bureau (IAS) by

falsely presenting two of them as full-time employees of a crèche managed by one of the suspects.

The statement did not reveal any personal information about the three defendants, such as their surnames and ages.

According to local media reports last week, the head of the crèche taken into pre-trial detention is a retired senior civil servant.

The crèche allegedly fabricated employment arrangements and paid salaries to the two purported employees, the MP statement said, adding that, after receiving the payments, they returned part of their salaries to the head of the crèche through bank transfers or cash deposits, allowing the three to jointly obtain public funds unlawfully.

The examining magistrate found that there are strong indications the three women committed several offences, including fraud involving a considerably large amount, money laundering, membership of a criminal organisation, and computer forgery, the statement said.

In deciding on the coercive measures, the examining magistrate took into account the nature and seriousness of the alleged offences, the suspects' methods and motives, the degree of unlawfulness and intent, and the risk of them fleeing to evade justice, the statement said.

The Public Prosecutions Office said it would continue to direct the investigation in accordance with the Criminal Procedure Code.

It also stressed that government funding for public welfare and social services comes from public funds, adding that it is "absolutely intolerable" that such subsidies are obtained through unlawful means. ■

Zhuhai's Gongbei Customs seizes 331,400 cigarettes hidden in lorry at HZMB



This undated handout photo provided by Zhuhai's Gongbei Customs on Sunday shows 1,657 cartons of cigarettes, seized by its officers at the HZMB Zhuhai Port (immigration and customs checkpoint) on October 8.

Sherwin Hng

Zhuhai's Gongbei Customs announced in a statement on Sunday that its officers intercepted a cross-border lorry carrying 331,400 hidden cigarettes at the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge (HZMB) Zhuhai Port (checkpoint) earlier this month.

According to the statement, at around noon on October 8, customs officers at the HZMB outbound cargo inspection area subjected a cross-regional export transit lorry to an X-ray inspection and detected image anomalies in certain sections of the vehicle.

Upon conducting a physical inspection, officers found that the outer layers of the export item boxes were filled with products matching the packaging description. However, a detailed

examination revealed hollowed-out spaces inside the boxes filled with separately wrapped cartons of cigarettes.

Customs officers seized a total of 1,657 cartons (331,400 cigarettes) across 23 brands, including "Chunghwa", "Double Happiness", and "Liqun".

Gongbei Customs reminded the public that in line with the Chinese mainland's Tobacco Monopoly Law, the state has implemented a monopoly management system for the production, sale, import, and export of tobacco products, operating under a tobacco monopoly licence system. The export of cigarettes requires approval from the administrative department under the State Council in charge of the official tobacco monopoly and the acquisition of a tobacco monopoly licence. ■



This photo downloaded from the Public Prosecutions Office (MP) website yesterday shows the MP headquarters in Zape.

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MACAU POST

Macau Weather

FINE APART FROM CLOUDY PERIODS.
FORCE 2 TO 3 EAST TO SOUTHEASTERLY WINDS.
RELATIVE HUMIDITY WILL RANGE BETWEEN 60% AND 95%.



25°C~31°C

Source: SMG

Serbia's Ub wins FIBA 3x3 World Tour Macau 2026

Khalel Vallo

World number one Team Ub from Serbia won the FIBA 3x3 World Tour Macau 2026 after defeating Shanghai 21-15 in the final at the UNESCO World Heritage-listed Ruins of St. Paul's on Sunday, with Ub's Marko Branković named Most Valuable Player (MVP).

FIBA stands for International Basketball Federation.

The tournament concluded after bringing together 16 international teams to compete for a share of the US\$185,000 (1.5 million patacas) prize pool.

In the quarter-finals, Ub defeated the nation's DeQing, Germany's Skyliners beat the Netherlands' Amsterdam RABOBANK, while Shanghai overcame China's Taiwan region's Taipei WanBao, and Miami defeated Macau's Cotai WolfUnited.

Ub then beat Skyliners 21-15 in the semi-finals, while Shanghai edged Miami 21-18 to reach the final. Shanghai took an early lead in the championship match, but Ub adjusted their game and connected on a series of outside shots to secure a 21-15 victory.

According to a statement by the Sports

Bureau (ID), the competition also featured a shoot-out contest and a dunk contest. Toni Blazan of Austria's Team Vienna won the shoot-out, while Poland's Piotr Grabowski claimed the dunk contest title, the statement said.

The tournament was authorised by the federation, organised by the Sports Bureau and StarMac Entertainment Production Limited, co-organised by the Macau-China Basketball Association and Chaiioi Sports Company Limited, and supported by the Macao Government Tourism Office (MGTO).

The organisers also partnered with nearly 20 businesses in the Ruins of St. Paul's neighbourhood to put on basketball-themed activities and event-exclusive spending promotions, the statement said, adding that this kind of initiative aims to attract spectators to local shops and restaurants while supporting the integration of sports, tourism and cultural experiences.

The organisers said the event helped generate foot traffic and spending in the surrounding district while promoting Macau as a sports tourism destination, the statement said. ■



This handout photo provided by the Sports Bureau (ID) on Sunday shows Serbia's Ub players posing with ID President Deland Leong Wai Man (third from left) and StarMac Entertainment Production Limited CEO Rio Lou Kit Long (third from right) for a group photo after winning the FIBA 3x3 World Tour Macau 2026 at the UNESCO World Heritage-listed Ruins of St. Paul's landmark.

Players from Team Ub and Shanghai face off during Sunday's 3x3 final.
— Photo: Khalel Vallo

Wang Wei-hsuan wins SJM Macao Open after dramatic play-off



Chinese Taipei's Wang Wei-hsuan poses with the SJM Macao Open 2026 trophy after winning the eponymous golf tournament at Macau Golf & Country Club in Coloane on Sunday. — Photo: Khalel Vallo

Khalel Vallo

Chinese Taipei's Wang Wei-hsuan claimed the US\$1 million SJM Macao Open 2026 title on Sunday after defeating South Korea's Sungjae Im in a play-off, avenging his defeat at the same tournament last year.

The 27-year-old secured his first Asian Tour title outside China's Taiwan region, at the Macau Golf & Country Club in Coloane on Sunday.

Wang chipped in for an eagle* on the 18th hole in regulation** to draw level with Im at 17-under-par. He then birdied*** the same hole during the first play-off to seal the victory.

Wang made the most of the three par-five holes on the back nine, recording birdies on the 12th and 13th before his decisive eagle on the 18th. Im had moved ahead with a birdie on the 15th but surrendered the advantage on the following hole. He then birdied the final two holes before Wang's chip-in forced the play-off.

Last year, Wang had tied with Germany's Dominic Foos at the same score before losing on the second extra hole, a statement by SJM Resorts noted on Sunday.

Addressing his victory, Wang dedicated his victory to his mother. "After I chipped in on the 18th and then went to the scoring

and then back to the 18th tee for the extra hole, I could only think of my playoff last year. I'm very really happy that I could do it again now in the playoff and win, and I'm really happy that I could do it in front of my wife and family," he added.

He also elaborated on how he prepared for the decisive shot, saying he asked his caddie, Ray, to check the green's slope before executing the chip exactly as planned.

Meanwhile, the United States' Charles Porter finished third at 14-under-par after shooting the tournament's lowest round of nine-under-par 61, despite battling illness, the statement said, adding that his compatriot Austen Truslow finished fourth, one stroke behind, while the Chinese mainland's Wu Ashun and Thailand's Danthai Boonma shared fifth place after both carding 65. ■

*An eagle in golf is a score of two strokes under par (-2) on a single hole. — Gemini

** "In regulation" means a golf shot or score occurred during the standard, scheduled holes of a tournament, rather than in a post-tournament playoff. — Gemini

***A birdie in golf means scoring one stroke under par on an individual hole. — Gemini

CHRISTMAS FLAIR BANQUET PACKAGE

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ABOUT The Young Post

The Macau Post Daily's The Young Post will be published every Monday to present and discuss topical issues that may interest not only the younger but also all the other generations.

Youths highlight tech innovation, cultural heritage in Hengqin contest

Armando Neves

The Centre for International Cooperation in Education (CICE MACAU) hosted the Individual Category Semi-Final and Tech Team Category Final of the 5th National Youth English Proficiency Show at the Hengqin Culture & Art Complex on Saturday and Sunday.

According to Micaela de Senna Fernandes, one of the CICE MACAU founders, who told the *Post* on the sidelines of Sunday's contest that the Tech Team Category aimed to enable students to recount the historical traditions of Chinese cities whilst showcasing contemporary creativity, demonstrating a seamless link between culture and technology.

Senna Fernandes noted that CICE MACAU hopes that students' video clips in the "SHINE LIKE STARS National Education E-Book" will be used by teachers in classrooms to spark discussions, encourage students to talk about their own experiences and explore how traditions differ from city to city. She expressed hope that it would become a lasting classroom resource to deepen students' understanding of their shared cultural heritage and diversity while strengthening their sense of identity. Looking ahead, the organisers plan to enable winners to travel internationally to tell their stories. The ultimate goal, Senna Fernandes added, is to build a global platform where Chinese youths worldwide can gather to make their voices heard.

Speaking to the *Post* on the sidelines of the contest, three tech teams from local schools showcased innovative concepts designed to enhance quality of life in Macau.

Elvis Lou Cheok Kuan and Jason Cheong Chi Hang from Chan Sui Ki Perpetual Help College designed a reward-based walking app to encourage eco-friendly travel among tourists and stimulate the local neighbourhood economy.

Maires Máximo do Rosário and Kyle Chu Tsz Wang from Pui Va Middle School of Macau developed "Food Guardian AI", a smart refrigerator system that tracks expiry dates to combat food waste. The project utilises artificial intelligence (AI) to reflect traditional Chinese values of diligence and thrift.

Meanwhile, Nicole Pak Kam Hei and Koko Wong Ka Chon from Saint Paul School created an app to boost urban cultural tourism, drawing on Macau's visitor flow management alongside the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals for Health and Sustainable Cities (SDG 3 and SDG 11).

During their presentations, the students used QR codes, Near Field Communication (NFC) tags, and relatable real-world examples to help the jury grasp their core concepts. The participants expressed a shared conviction that young people should actively embrace technology and culture to support smart city development and effectively tell China's story on the world stage.

Competition judge Herbert Ramos underlined that adaptability was the key quality assessed during the semi-finals' on-the-spot design task – specifically, students' ability to transform unfamiliar materials into clear and creative ideas, and articulate them

meaningfully in English. He emphasised that the event sought to foster independent thinking and genuine connection rather than rote recitation. For the finals' 30-second impromptu segment, Ramos noted he wanted to see contestants listen attentively, evaluate their peers' strengths, or respectfully offer differing views to demonstrate critical thinking through constructive exchange.

2 individual category contestants speak to the *Post*

Makayla Wong, a Grade 5 student at Escola Secundária Luso-Chinesa de Luís Gonzaga Gomes, based her project on the ancient A-Ma Temple and the Macao SAR Government Headquarters to highlight the city's unique blend of East and West.

Having thoroughly prepared her project across five research topics with her parents, Wong said that should she reach the grand finals, she hopes to complement her English presentation with a performance of Chinese swordplay or a classical Chinese piece on the violin.

Huang Linxin from Guangzhou Hawk School told the *Post* that as a teenager, telling her hometown stories in English on Macau's international stage is meaningful. English is a bridge to share our culture with others, Huang said, adding that preparing her speech helps her learn more about her hometown and love it more.

"Macau blends Eastern and Western cultures, and I can be a young cultural messenger, showing my hometown's beauty to the world. This makes me braver, more confident, and proud to tell warm Chinese stories", according to Huang.

Danny Chan Ho Ki, president of the Mutual Progress Association Tong Tou, a supporting organisation, said this ongoing initiative aims to be a bridge between the youths from Macau and the Chinese mainland, broadening their horizons and cultivating international vision. Chan noted that by combining English fluency, national awareness, and technological innovation, the competition empowers youths to share China's narrative globally while building cultural confidence and interdisciplinary problem-solving skills.

Pui Va Middle School of Macau STEAM* panel head teacher Zhao Qi Chao and English panel head teacher Monica Yang Huan expressed pride in their students' performance following months of refinement on their smart refrigerator project, which was developed through cross-curricular learning between the STEAM and English subjects, and over a month of presentation rehearsals. They also thanked the school for its steadfast backing.

Pui Ching Middle School (Coloane Campus) English teacher Winnie Liu Yingyu praised her students after they secured three awards. She attributed their success to persuasive English expression, innovative thinking, and cross-disciplinary guidance that links technology to practical business applications.

*STEAM is an acronym for Science, Technology, Engineering, the Arts, and Mathematics. – Gemini



Mutual Progress Association Tong Tou President Danny Chan Ho Ki speaks to the *Post* on the sidelines on Sunday's contest.



Centre for International Cooperation in Education (CICE MACAU) founder Micaela de Senna Fernandes (third from right), Mutual Progress Association Tong Tou President Danny Chan Ho Ki (left), and other representatives pose during Sunday's contest's launch ceremony at Hengqin Culture & Art Complex. – Photos courtesy of the group.



Escola Secundária Luso-Chinesa de Luís Gonzaga Gomes student Makayla Wong give a speech at Sunday's competition.

Pui Va Middle School students (fourth and third from left), Saint Paul School students (fourth and third from right), Chan Sui Ki Perpetual Help College students (both on the left), and Hou Kong Middle School students pose for group photo on the sidelines of Sunday's contest.



Pui Ching Middle School (Coloane Campus) English teacher Winnie Liu Yingyu (second from left) poses with teachers and students from the school on the sidelines of Sunday's contest.

Micaela de Senna Fernandes (third from right), Pui Va Middle School English panel head teacher Monica Yang Huan (third from left), and students including Maires Máximo do Rosário (second from right) and Kyle Chu Tsz Wang (second from left) pose on the sidelines of Sunday's contest Sunday's contest.



Teachers and students from St Joseph Diocesan College 5 (CDSJ5), Pui Va Middle School and Hou Kong Middle School pose on the sidelines of Saturday's contest.



Tenants moving into first social housing in Zone A

Tony Wong

Tenants of the first completed social rental housing estate in the Zone A new urban area have started to move into their flats, the Housing Bureau (IH) has announced.

Construction of the estate was completed in July this year.

Zone A, a new land reclamation area primarily being developed for public housing projects, is located between the peninsula's northeastern coast and the man-made island where the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge (HZMB) Macau checkpoint is located.

Most of the public housing projects in Zone A will be subsidised home-ownership scheme (HOS) estates, while the district is earmarked to have only four social rental housing estates.

HOS flats are allocated to successful applicants to buy after

every new application round is launched. Those who have not been allocated a flat will have to submit another application next time when the government launches a new round.

Conversely, applications for social rental housing units can be made by eligible residents at any time throughout the year. Eligible applicants will be allocated a flat once units become available – either existing flats become vacant or newly built flats are completed.

Construction of the first three HOS estates in Zone A was completed in 2024, comprising a total of 3,017 flats. Afterwards, successful applicants started in September last year to move into the three estates – Tong Seng Building (東城大廈) on plot B4, Tong Chong Building (東創大廈) on plot B9, and Tong Kai Building

(東啟大廈) on plot B10.

An IH statement on Friday said that the bureau started on that day to arrange for successful applicants to sign their tenancy agreements and move into their flats in the first completed social rental housing estate in Zone A – Tong Hong Building (東康樓) on plot A11.

According to the website of the Public Works Bureau (DSOP), construction of the social housing estate on plot A11 was completed in July this year, providing 560 flats.

Afterwards, the social housing project on plot A10 –providing 728 flats – was completed in August, while the one on plot A6 –providing 1,064 flats – was completed earlier this month.

The last social housing project – on plot A5 – is scheduled to be completed in January next year, providing 1,736 flats, according to the DSOP website.

Friday's IH statement noted that Tong Hong Building on plot A11, which has 32 storeys plus three underground levels, provides 560 social housing flats, comprising 448 one-bedroom units, 56 two-bedroom units, and 56 three-bedroom units.

The estate is equipped with a public carpark and spaces to be used as commercial facilities and social service facilities, the statement said.

The statement said that the four social rental housing estates in Zone A will provide a total of 4,088 flats – Tong Fu Building (東富樓) on plot A5, Tong Kuai Building (東貴樓) on plot A6, Tong On Building (東安樓) on plot A10, and Tong Hong Building (東康樓) on plot A11.

The statement said that while construction of Tong Fu Building on plot A5 is still underway,

construction of Tong Kuai Building on plot A6 and Tong On Building on plot A10 has been completed. The Housing Bureau is now examining the conditions of these two estates and rectifying possible deficiencies before being able to arrange for successful applicants to move into their flats in due course, the statement said.

Meanwhile, construction of five more HOS estates in Zone A was completed between November

last year and August this year, comprising a total of 5,254 flats. Afterwards, the Housing Bureau started last month to arrange for successful applicants to choose their flats in the five estates – Tong Veng Building (東榮大廈) on plot A1, Tong Keong Building (東強大廈) on plot A2, Tong Man Building (東民大廈) on plot A3, Tong Tat Building (東達大廈) on plot A4, and Tong Ip Building (東業大廈) on plot A12. ■



This handout photo released on the Public Works Bureau's (DSOP) website earlier this year shows the completed Tong Hong social housing estate (front) in Zone A.

Macau logs 146,000 visitor arrivals on Chong Yeong Festival, up 31 pct

Tony Wong

Macau recorded 146,124 visitor arrivals on this year's Chong Yeong Festival on Sunday, according to immigration statistics released by the Public Security Police Force (PSP) yesterday.

The Chong Yeong Festival, also known as the Double Ninth Festival, is a public holiday in Macau. Civil servants and bank employees were also on holiday yesterday as this year's Chong Yeong Festival fell on a Sunday.

On this holiday, residents visit the graves of their ancestors to pay their respects.

The festival each day falls on the ninth day of the ninth month of the Chinese lunar calendar.

Last year, the Chong Yeong Festival fell on October 29, when Macau recorded 111,518 visitor arrivals, according to PSP immigration statistics at that time.

Consequently, this year's Chong Yeong Festival visitor arrivals represented an increase of 31.0 percent from the Double Ninth Festival last year.

The Chong Yeong Festival is

not a public holiday in the Chinese mainland. In Hong Kong, yesterday was a public holiday for the general public, not just, as in Macau, for civil servants and bank employees.

According to yesterday's PSP immigration statistics, 54,602 visitors, or 37.4 percent of the total, entered Macau via the Barrier Gate checkpoint on the Chong Yeong Festival, followed by 41,001 via the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge's (HZMB) Macau checkpoint and 26,129 via the Hengqin checkpoint, while 8,782

visitors entered Macau via the airport – only 6.0 percent of the total.

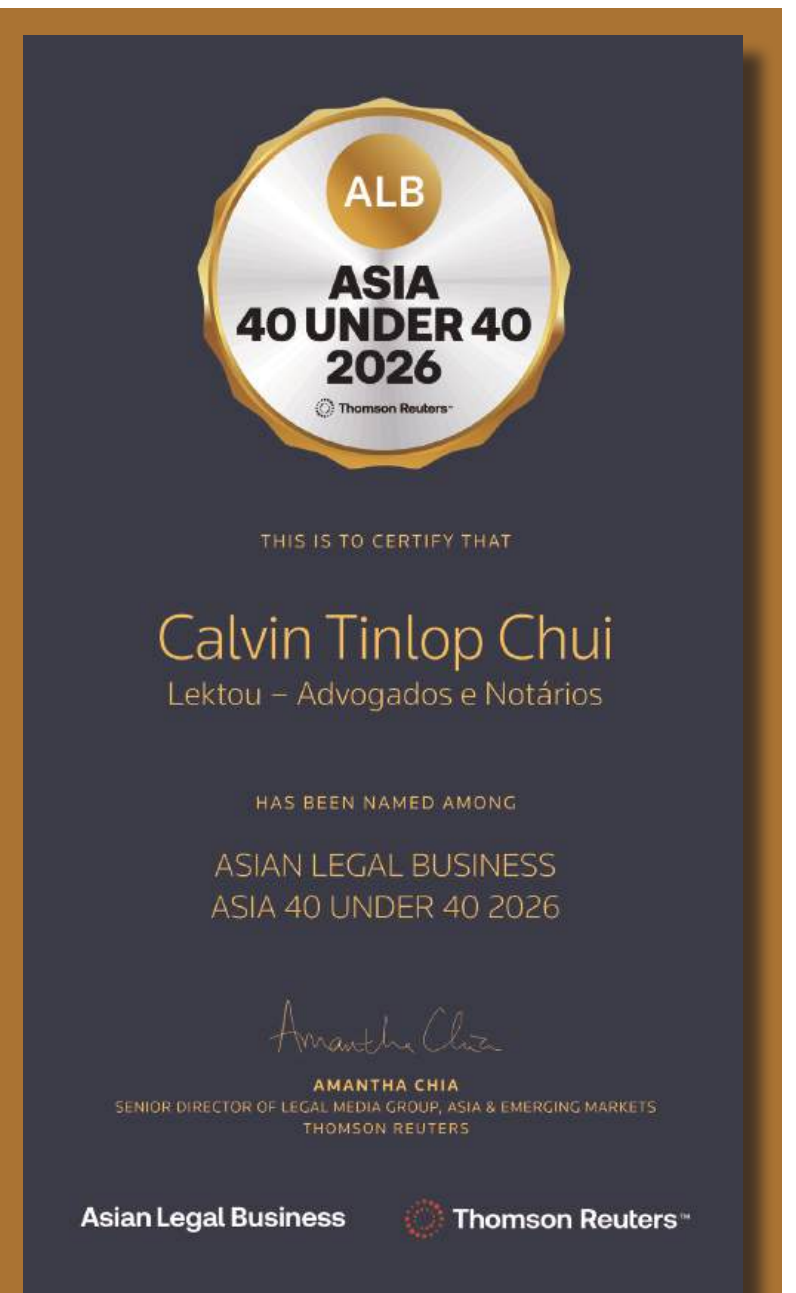
Macau recorded 40.069 million visitor arrivals in 2025, the highest annual number on record.

Macau's previous record of visitor arrivals of 39.406 million was achieved in pre-pandemic 2019.

According to the latest available statistics, Macau recorded 4.478 million visitor arrivals in August, setting a new monthly record. The previous record stood at 4.219 million in August last year. ■



Residents and visitors alike walk in Largo do Senado, the city's main square, yesterday. – Photo: Tony Wong



Calvin Tinlop Chui Named to Thomson Reuters' Asian Legal Business "Asia 40 Under 40" List

Calvin Tinlop Chui, Co-Managing Partner at Lektou, has been named to Thomson Reuters' Asian Legal Business (ALB) "Asia 40 Under 40" list, becoming one of this year's 40 selected young legal professionals across Asia and the first-ever representative from Macau's legal sector to receive this honor.

The ALB "Asia 40 Under 40" is a prestigious industry accolade. It annually recognizes 40 outstanding legal professionals aged under 40 throughout Asia, covering both private practice lawyers and in-house counsel, to celebrate rising legal talent in the region.

Qualified in Macau, New York State, and the Greater Bay Area, Chui specializes in Macau financial law, providing advice to banks, insurers and fund managers on matters such as investment fund structuring, bond insurances, corporate M&A, US and Hong Kong IPOs, and financial institution licensing.

This honor recognizes his robust expertise and strong market reputation. Going forward, he will draw on his cross jurisdictional experience to support Macau's specialized finance growth and boost HengqinMacauGreater Bay Area cross border financial cooperation.

3-day Lusofonia Festival to start Friday



This undated handout photo provided by the Cultural Affairs Bureau (IC) on Friday shows a large crowd watching a performance at the outdoor theatre near the Taipa Houses.

Rui Pastorin

Three days of food, music and performances, among a variety of other activities, will take place from this Friday through Sunday at the Taipa Houses for the 29th Lusofonia Festival, which this year highlights Brazilian culture, coinciding with the “China-Brazil Cultural Year”.

This year’s performances are headlined by Brazilian singer Fafã de Belém, while her compatriots will also be showcasing their talents at the event, namely dishes prepared by chef Rose Ávila, and artworks by urban artist Fábio Panone Lopes, as noted in a statement on Friday by the Cultural Affairs Bureau (IC).

Attendees can win prizes at the “Giveaway Check-in Station”, while food, music, craft, customs, among others, will be presented by the Cultural Exhibitors of 10 Portuguese-speaking communities residing in Macau who are from Angola, Brazil, Cape Verde, Guinea-Bissau, Mozambique, Portugal, São Tomé and Príncipe, Timor-Leste (East Timor), Goa, Damão and Diu, and the Macanese community, the statement highlighted.

In terms of performances, at the Amphitheatre

of Taipa Houses and Largo do Carmo, the statement noted that aside from Fafã de Belém, groups such as EPO Dance from Equatorial Guinea and Timor Furak from Timor-Leste are also performing, along with over 40 local Portuguese-speaking artistes.

Foodies can also discover Portuguese delicacies and grilled food in a temporary restaurant at Taipa Municipal Garden, while dinner from various Portuguese-speaking communities, along with performances, will be available Largo do Carmo, according to the statement. Snacks and drinks will be served at a kiosk next to the Taipa Houses entrance.

The statement added that attendees can also take part in games at the venue, while performances by Fumei Yingge Dance Troupe of Guangdong’s Puning City, the EPO Dance Troupe from Equatorial Guinea, and Timor Furak Dance Troupe from East Timor will take place across various districts for “Where Culture Flourishes, Happiness Happens – Traditional Music and Dance Performances in the Community” that weekend.

One can find more details on: www.icm.gov.mo/FCP. ■

China’s satellite internet links Arctic, Antarctica, Qinghai-Tibet Plateau for first time

BEIJING – China’s 16th Arctic Ocean expedition team said yesterday that its polar icebreaker Jidi had completed a pre-operational application test of domestically developed satellite internet along Arctic shipping routes.

The voyage marked the first successful verification of networked communications across the Arctic, Antarctica and the Qinghai-Tibet Plateau, also known as the “Third Pole” of Earth, closing the last communications coverage gap in the world, the expedition team said.

Organized by the Ministry of Natural Resources, the expedition set off on July 3. The Jidi, meaning “polar region” in Chinese, is one of the expedition’s four research vessels.

According to the expedition team, voice and video were clear and smooth during a video link connecting the icebreaker in the Arctic, Qinling Station in Antarctica, the Lhasa River test station in the Xizang Autonomous Region and a ministry bureau based in the eastern coastal city of Qingdao.

The link enabled global low-latency, high-bandwidth communications through the Chinese satellite internet, verifying its stability under harsh conditions such as extreme low temperatures, severe sandstorms, and ice fog.

The voyage also marked the first use of domestic satellite internet for polar medical support. The Arctic Ocean expedition team said the Jidi held high-definition ship-to-shore video consultations with hospitals and experts in Qingdao, enabling timely medical assessment for its members.

Another achievement during the voyage was a homegrown ocean drifting buoy, called Zhigan, which for the first time enabled the Chinese survey equipment to fully control data collection and transmission. Since the transmission speed and quality met practical requirements in the tests, it offered an alternative to the traditional use of international satellites for real-time ocean sensing data transmission.

Zhang Meng, an expedition member and on-site tester, said the Jidi vessel had sent and received more than 300 files totaling more than 100 gigabytes of data and supported more than 40 video consultations during the voyage.

“The communications tests have helped address the information isolation, a challenge in polar expeditions, and verified full-voyage communications support based on China’s satellite internet,” Zhang said.

– Xinhua

China’s retail sales strengthen in first three quarters as consumption upgrading continues

BEIJING – China’s retail sales strengthened in the first three quarters of 2026, with retail sales of services growing faster than sales of goods and new forms of consumption continuing to emerge, official data showed yesterday.

The country’s total retail sales of goods and services, a major indicator of consumption spending, rose 2.6 percent year on year in the January-September period, according to the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS).

In September, total retail sales of consumer goods, which cover sales of physical goods and revenue from catering services, grew at the fastest pace in six months, rising 1.1 percent year on year and 0.7 percentage points faster than in August, the data showed.

Final consumption expenditure contributed 46.7 percent of overall economic growth in the first three quarters, up 0.7 percentage points from the first half of the year.

Consumption is a key driver of economic growth and a tangible reflection of people’s pursuit of a better life, said Wang Guanhua, an NBS spokesperson, noting that with consumption-boosting policies implemented this year, consumption has effectively played its foundational role in economic growth.

Spending on services has become an increasingly important driver of consumption growth, Wang said. Retail sales of services grew 5 percent year on year in the first three quarters, 4 percentage points faster than sales of goods.

In terms of services consumption, the categories of communication and information services, tourism consulting and leasing services, and cultural, sports and leisure services posted rapid growth, the NBS data showed.

Cultural and tourism activities such as study tours, intangible cultural heritage experiences, and exhibitions and sporting events flourished, while immersive and experiential consumption gained popularity, Wang said.

Goods consumption is shifting toward newer, higher-quality and greener products, she said. In the first three quarters, retail sales of energy-efficient home appliances grew more than 20 percent, and retail sales of new energy passenger vehicles topped 7.7 million units.

Online retail sales of goods and services exceeded 15.1 trillion yuan, up 4.4 percent year on year. Of the total, online sales of goods rose 3.8 percent, while online sales of services increased 5.3 percent.

Wang said online shopping formats were expanding and online supply was becoming more diverse, with instant retail maintaining double-digit growth and brick-and-mortar retail shifting toward one-stop, experiential and high-quality formats.

As rural supermarkets and logistics improve, consumption potential in county-level markets continues to be unlocked, Wang said. Retail sales of consumer goods in urban areas rose 0.9 percent in the first three quarters, compared with a 2.3 percent increase in rural areas.

Inbound consumption is also expanding as travel to China becomes more convenient, Wang said. In the first eight months, visa-free foreign arrivals rose 26.8 percent year on year, while departure tax refund applications and refund amounts grew rapidly in many places.

In July, China released its first five-year plan dedicated exclusively to expanding consumption. The plan aims to unlock the full potential of the country’s super-large market, optimize the consumption structure, and improve people’s livelihoods through targeted measures.

Looking ahead, Wang said China’s consumer market is expected to further unlock its potential, supported by sustained economic development, rising living standards, improved supply of goods and services, and the emergence of new business forms and consumption scenarios. – Xinhua



A farmer works at a cold chain distribution center in Yongkang Town of Shapotou District, Zhongwei City, Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region, on Sunday. Spreading along the southern edge of the Tengger Desert and the Yellow River, Shapotou has ushered in a bumper harvest season for its drought-enduring apples recently. Apple plantation now covers 80,200 mu (about 5346.67 hectares) in the district, with an estimated yield of 144,000 tonnes worth over 1.0 billion yuan (US\$150 million) this season. – Xinhua

China's Q3 economy picks up pace, reinforcing role as global growth engine

Analysis

BEIJING – China's economy picked up pace in the third quarter (Q3) of 2026, supported by fast-growing new drivers and fresh policy support, staying on track to meet its annual growth target and remaining a leading engine of global growth.

Gross domestic product (GDP) grew 4.5 percent year on year in Q3, higher than the second quarter's reading of 4.3 percent, data from the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) showed yesterday.

The world's second-largest economy generated about 107.11 trillion yuan in output during the January-September period, expanding 4.6 percent year on year, according to the NBS.

"The national economy forged ahead against pressure and continued to shift toward innovation-driven, high-quality development, with growing positive changes in major indicators," the NBS said in a statement.

China has consistently contributed around 30 percent of global economic growth, with IMF Managing Director Kristalina Georgieva saying in January that this contribution is expected to stay at roughly the same level in the coming years.

GROWING RESILIENCE

Noting that the GDP growth of 4.6 percent in the first three quarters is in line with the country's annual growth target, NBS deputy head Mao Shengyong told a media conference that the economy added 5.7 trillion yuan in output during the period, the largest increase for the same period in the past five years.

In the third quarter, GDP growth picked up 0.2 percentage points from the second quarter, while some international institutions expected major economies to grow more slowly in July-September compared to the April-June period, Mao said.

There was also a notable rise in momentum on a monthly basis. In September, value-added industrial output rose 5.5 percent year on year, 0.3 percentage points faster than in August, while the services production index gained 4.8 percent, up 0.7 percentage points from the previous month.

Retail sales of consumer goods grew 1.1 percent in September, 0.7 percentage points



Robots operate at a welding workshop of FAW-Volkswagen's east China base in Jimo District of Qingdao, Shandong Province, yesterday. – Xinhua

faster than in August, and the surveyed urban unemployment rate edged down 0.1 percentage points from August to 5.2 percent.

"Growth momentum showed signs of marginal improvement in September," said Wen Bin, chief economist with China Minsheng Bank, citing faster industrial and services output, a rebound in consumption and an initial stabilization of investment.

China will step up efforts to expand domestic demand, improve supply, and make macro policies more effective to sustain the positive momentum of innovation-led and high-quality development, Mao said.

To this end, China has recently rolled out a batch of new policies, including financial and fiscal support. "With existing policies being implemented faster and incremental policies gradually taking effect, the economy is expected to continue improving in the fourth quarter," Wen said.

NEW DRIVERS AT WORK

New growth drivers continued to expand, contributing more than 40 percent to China's economic growth in the first three quarters. Value-added industrial output rose 5.3 percent year on year, with equipment manufacturing up 10.2 percent and high-tech manufacturing up 14.3 percent. Output of industrial robots,

lithium-ion batteries and 3D printing equipment jumped 29.1 percent, 39.5 percent and 62.5 percent, respectively.

Yesterday's data also showed that the services sector expanded 5.2 percent year on year in the first three quarters, with information transmission, software and IT services up 10.4 percent, and leasing and business services up 12.3 percent.

The shift is visible in the economic structure. Manufacturing accounted for 25.7 percent of GDP in the first three quarters, up 0.6 percentage points from a year earlier, while the share of high-tech manufacturing in the value-added output of major industrial enterprises rose 1.6 percentage points. Investment in intellectual property products climbed 9.3 percent.

Traditional industries are also moving up the value chain. In Jingdezhen, a ceramics hub in east China's Jiangxi Province, local producers have embraced 3D printing in pottery making, propelling the sector's output to over 100 billion yuan. Meanwhile, some coal mining companies have implemented smart monitoring systems for underground operations, increasing efficiency by 30 percent.

Green development is creating openings as well. The penetration rate of new energy vehicles in China has stayed above 60 percent for six consecutive months, while

the country's energy consumption per unit of GDP fell 3.1 percent in the first three quarters.

"The foundations of the economy remain solid, while new quality productive forces, modern services and high-tech foreign trade are steadily taking root," said Zhu Qigui, associate director of the China Academy of Financial Research.

"As long as China continues to rely on innovation, reform and its vast market, the trend of moving toward new and better development will not change," the scholar said.

SHARED OPPORTUNITIES

A major trading partner of as many as 169 countries and regions, China saw its goods trade rise 18.8 percent year on year to 39.94 trillion yuan in the first three quarters. In September alone, trade grew 27.5 percent.

In the first nine months, exports of mechanical and electrical products climbed 23.7 percent and accounted for 64.3 percent of total exports, while intermediate goods made up more than half of all exports, reinforcing China's role as a stabilizing anchor for global industrial and supply chains.

In Anhui Province, robotics manufacturer EFORT Intelligent Robot Co., Ltd. has continued to see growth in overseas orders this year, with a batch of its spraying robots set to be exported to Italy. The company's overseas revenue increased by more than 50 percent year on year in the first half of 2026.

Meanwhile, the company's client, German automobile giant Volkswagen (VW), is shifting its strategy from "in China, for China" to "in China, beyond China," with cars produced in China already exported to the Middle East and Central Asia.

Foreign-invested enterprises in China remained active players in the January-September period, with their imports and exports rising 19 percent to 11.69 trillion yuan, a record high for the same period. Their trade in intermediate goods grew 27.4 percent to 7.9 trillion yuan, and their high-tech product exports jumped 42.1 percent.

More foreign firms are embracing "China Opportunity 2.0," deepening their integration into China's industrial and innovation chains, Mao said.

– Xinhua

Resilient Chinese economy brings much-needed certainty to the world

Commentary

BEIJING – Viewed as an ocean rather than a pond, China's economy may not be immune to headwinds, but it stands firm enough to absorb powerful waves and weather turbulent times. In a world starved of certainty, it remains a stabilizing force in the global economy.

Facts on the ground speak for themselves. China's economy expanded by 4.6 percent in the first three quarters of 2026, landing squarely within the full-year target range and remaining among the fastest of major economies.

Yet to read the economy solely through the lens of headline speed is to miss the more important story. China is in a critical period of accelerating the transition from old growth drivers to new ones. The quality of growth and the direction of structural change matter more.

New quality productive forces are gathering momentum, with new growth drivers including high-end manufacturing, the digital and intelligent economy and modern services contributing more than 40 percent of expansion. In particular, industrial robots, 3D-printing equipment and lithium-ion batteries all registered strong double-digit growth, helping

steer the economy toward more innovation-led, quality-driven development.

The foundation of China's economic resilience also lies in consumption, which accounted for nearly half of the GDP growth in the first three quarters. Services retail sales, upgraded goods consumption, new formats, as well as lower-tier markets and inbound tourism, are all picking up steam. With policymakers leaning harder into consumption support, household spending appetite is showing steady signs of recovery, setting the stage to unlock the vast potential of the country's super-large market.

Foreign trade remains one of the brightest spots, with growth reaching its highest level for the same period in five years. From new energy vehicles to photovoltaic products, robotics and innovative pharmaceuticals, Chinese exports are increasingly defined by frontier technology, original innovation capability and complete industrial and supply chains.

Furthermore, China has ample and effective policy tools to shape its economic growth trajectory. Five-year plans, deepened reforms and wider opening up, along with targeted fiscal and monetary measures and

considerable room for counter-cyclical adjustment, all provide predictability and stability for the market.

A clear-eyed understanding of the Chinese economy also requires acknowledging the real headwinds: a complex and volatile external environment, insufficient domestic demand, and a structural transition that isn't finished.

As the latest figures have demonstrated, the Chinese economy is resilient. This is contrary to the narratives hyped up by certain pessimists and doomsters in the West. Backed by a domestic market of 1.4 billion people, a solid manufacturing base, well-developed infrastructure, a strong talent pool, and complete industrial and supply chains, the underlying fundamentals and long-term positive trend remain unchanged.

Amid the sluggish global recovery and rising geopolitical risks, China's development continues to offer the world growth momentum and market opportunities. It is both a sustained driver of inclusive and shared growth and a reliable buffer against global economic volatility stemming from factors such as regional conflicts and the rise of unilateralism and protectionism. For

many years, China has contributed around 30 percent of global economic growth, remaining a major engine of the world economy.

As the world's largest manufacturer, China continues to provide high-quality, affordable, and reliable product supply globally. No longer just the world's factory, China is becoming a market and a mega-buyer for the world as imports have surged over 20 percent, reflecting a more balanced and open trade structure.

China's commitment to opening up remains unwavering despite rising protectionism globally. This is evidenced by the establishment of more new foreign-invested enterprises, and also highlighted by Apple's executive chairman Tim Cook, who recently noted that the company remains optimistic about China's development prospects and will further expand its business in the country.

China's edge may lie less in its speed, but more in the quality and sustainability of its advance, and in its capacity to hit its full-year targets. "China Opportunity 2.0," boosted by the dividends of innovation and high-standard opening up, will surely create more win-win cooperation outcomes for the world. – Xinhua

Japan to launch world-first mission to moon of Mars

TOKYO – Japanese scientists will launch a spacecraft today that aims to be the first to retrieve samples from one of Mars's moons, potentially helping unlock the origins of the Solar System and life on Earth.

The flagship H3 rocket carrying the unmanned Martian Moons eXploration (MMX) probe was set to blast off from the Tanegashima Space Center at 4:41 a.m. (3:41 a.m. Macau time), according to the Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency (JAXA).

If successful, the spacecraft will arrive near Mars around August next year, where it will orbit one of its moons, Phobos.

It will later land on Phobos and collect at least 10 grams of material from the surface during its planned three years in the Red Planet's vicinity.

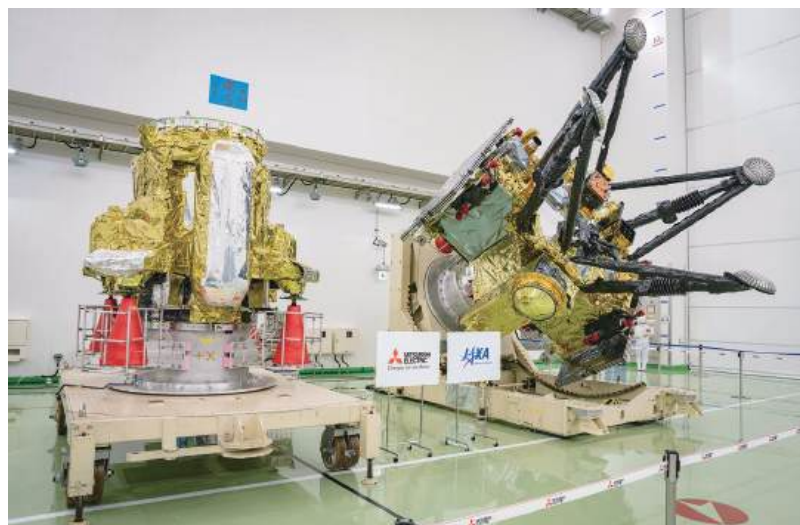
The mission – which aims to be the first round trip to the Martian region – is a collaboration with US and European space agencies, as well as numerous universities and tech companies.

Those involved hope that it will help lay the groundwork for eventual human exploration.

JAXA hopes the mission will reveal how Mars and its two moons formed, a key piece of knowledge in working out how the Solar System was born.

One theory for the origin of the moons – the “giant impact” hypothesis – is that they formed after a celestial body collided with Mars.

The “capture” hypothesis, mean-



A Propulsion Module (left) and Exploration and Return Modules, making up the Martian Moons eXploration (MMX) spacecraft, are seen at the Tanegashima Space Center in Minamitan, Kagoshima, Japan prefecture on August 13. – AFP

while, postulates that the moons are asteroids pulled in by Mars's gravity.

Determining which theory is correct will help reveal “how a habitable environment for life might have arisen on the terrestrial planets”, JAXA said, referring to the four rocky worlds closest to the Sun – Mercury, Venus, Earth and Mars.

‘Natural space station’

JAXA said the mission will also explore the possibility of using Phobos as a “natural space station” by establishing the requirements for a round trip – something “essential for crewed Mars exploration”.

It will also observe the planet's other moon, Deimos, although it

will not land on it.

US and Chinese space agencies have also been vying to be the first to bring rock samples from Mars's surface back to Earth.

NASA's Perseverance rover, which has been roaming across Mars since 2021, has already collected samples.

The return mission, however, was effectively cancelled by the administration of President Donald Trump following a vote by Congress in January.

China's Tianwen-3 spacecraft is scheduled for launch around 2028 and hopes to bring Mars samples to Earth as early as 2031 – potentially before the Japanese mission's return. – AFP

India extends detention of top Indian ‘cockroach’ movement leaders

NEW DELHI – A New Delhi magistrate extended the detention of two leaders of India's youth-led Cockroach Janta Party (CJP) movement by two days yesterday, after they were remanded in custody five days ago.

CJP activists and opposition parties have defied a security crackdown to demand the resignation of India's chief election commissioner, accusing the poll body of manipulating voter rolls to benefit Prime Minister Narendra Modi's ruling party.

The commission, which oversees voting in the world's most populous nation, has denied any wrongdoing.

Television footage showed CJP leaders Ashutosh Ranka, 30, and Saurav Das, 27, being taken away in a blue police van from a police station where the hearing took place.

“This is an absolute mockery of the justice system,” the movement's legal affairs head Ratna Singh told reporters.

Das and Ranka were taken into custody on October 14 for their “alleged repeated attempts to disturb public peace and violate the law”, the police said in a statement at the time.

The pair had jumped security barricades to wave the national

flag at Jantar Mantar, a decades-old protest site that police have barred people from using.

“Their alleged attempts to instigate others through social media to engage in similar unlawful activities were also taken into consideration,” the statement said.

Jantar Mantar, in the heart of the capital, has been sealed off with yellow metal barricades for more than a week and guarded by security personnel.

Delhi Police said last week they had removed the site from the list of designated protest venues. – AFP

Nepal floods ‘defining moment’ for climate action: UN

Paavan Mathema

KATHMANDU – Nepal's devastating floods should be a turning point for global climate action, with the international community helping the Himalayan nation recover, a top UN official told AFP on Saturday.

The country suffered one of the worst disasters in its history on August 26, when a mountain collapse near the China border triggered catastrophic floods that killed more than 1,400 people and left over 5,000 missing.

Scientists said climate change played a significant role in that disaster.

Jorge Moreira da Silva, executive director of the UN Office for Project Services (UNOPS), which implements humanitarian and development projects, said he had witnessed “massive devastation” during a visit to affected communities.

Nepal, a largely rural country of 30 million people that contributes little to global greenhouse gas emissions, estimates reconstruction will cost US\$4.78 billion.

“This is a defining moment not only for Nepal, this is a defining moment for the international community,” Moreira da Silva told AFP in Kathmandu.

“It's not fair to ask a country that emits almost nothing of CO2 to suddenly pay alone the consequence of something that was not generated by the country,” he added.

“That's why it's fundamental that global solidarity is brought to this equation.”

‘Climate justice’

Moreira da Silva said reconstruction and resettlement must account for future climate risks, while the international community must “renew its commitment to climate”.

“It's also about climate justice and climate responsibility,” he said, warning that low-emitting countries would continue to bear the brunt of climate change.

“This is going to happen unless those countries that emit the most... change their pathway,” he said.

Moreira da Silva said Nepal was rebuilding as global disruptions threatened food security. He also leads the UN task force for the Strait of Hormuz.

“The simultaneous disruption of the three maritime shock points... the Strait of Hormuz, in the Black Sea and in the Red Sea, poses a significant challenge, particularly on food security,” he said.

The UN and its humanitarian partners launched a US\$49.6 million appeal last month to provide emergency assistance to flood victims.

Nepal's Prime Minister Balendra Shah told the United Nations last month that the flooding “was a warning to the world” about the growing dangers of climate change. – AFP



A worker prepares firecrackers ahead of Diwali, the Hindu festival of lights, at a workshop in Vaanch village on the outskirts of Ahmedabad, India yesterday. – AFP

N Korea warns ‘grave situation’ prevailing along border

SEOUL – The powerful sister of North Korea's leader said yesterday that “a grave situation is prevailing” along the Southern border, according to state media, and Pyongyang was considering deploying “more tactical strike means” to the area.

The announcement comes amid heightened tensions between the two Koreas, with the nuclear-armed North stepping up weapons tests in recent days, including of a “new-type” precision-guided torpedo system that uses artificial intelligence to detect and track targets.

“Now the situation of the southern border is very unstable,” Kim Yo Jong, sister of North Korean leader

Kim Jong Un, said in a statement.

“A grave situation is prevailing along the southern border due to the reckless behaviour of the ROK military gangsters,” she said in the English-language statement carried by the official Korean Central News Agency.

ROK is an acronym for Republic of Korea, more commonly known as South Korea.

Citing South Korea's firing of warning shots, broadcasts from propaganda loudspeakers and what she called a “mine explosion farce”, Kim said the incidents had “gone beyond the red line”.

North Korea has rejected claims

it was behind an explosion that injured three soldiers last month inside the Demilitarised Zone (DMZ), the heavily mined buffer area that has divided the two Koreas since their 1953 armistice.

A joint Seoul-United Nations Command investigation concluded the blast was caused by North Korean mines laid on the South Korean side of the border.

“Our military leadership is examining the issues of deploying more tactical strike means along the southern border as a pre-emptive and suppressive measure to deal with contingency,” said Kim, but did not specify the details of the tactical strike.

Kim also added that the North is reviewing “resuming the loudspeaker broadcasting against the ROK and considering other necessary and appropriate measures”.

She warned that if the actions were to continue, “Seoul will surely regret and face uncontrollably terrible danger”.

In 2024, North Korea sent thousands of trash-carrying balloons southwards, saying they were retaliation for anti-North propaganda balloons floated by South Korean activists.

Later, the South turned on border loudspeaker broadcasts for the first time in six years – including K-pop tunes and international news

– and the North started transmitting strange sounds along the frontier, unsettling South Korean residents.

Loudspeaker broadcasts, a tactic that dates back to the Korean War, have previously prompted Pyongyang to threaten artillery strikes on Seoul's speaker units.

South Korea's President Lee Jae Myung has vowed to reach out to the nuclear-armed North and pursue dialogue without preconditions – a reversal from his hawkish predecessor.

Last year the South's defence ministry removed loudspeakers from its side of the border as “a practical measure aimed at helping ease tensions with the North”. – AFP/MPD

Dozens of orangutans saved from Indonesian blazes

JAKARTA – Dozens of critically endangered orangutans have been rescued in recent weeks from rampant wildfires burning across Indonesia, conservation groups said.

The fires have triggered a months-long pollution spell that has closed schools, fuelled a surge in respiratory conditions both among humans and animals, and restricted outdoor activities in Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore and East Timor.

Pollution levels again ranged from unhealthy to very unhealthy across the region on Sunday, cloaking many areas across southern Southeast Asia in toxic haze.

Swiss-based air quality monitor IQAir again ranked Singapore and Kuala Lumpur among the world's top five most polluted major cities as fires on Borneo and Sumatra islands, intensified by a turbo-charged El Niño weather phenomenon, keep emitting smoke.

In Indonesia, groups are working to save wildlife from the fires, including orangutans.

On Saturday, the West Kalimantan conservation agency and Indonesian non-profit YIARI said a team evacuated 51 orangutans from locations in the province from August 6 to yesterday.

And figures from Indonesia's forestry ministry suggested this week that the number rescued over recent months in Kalimantan could be as high as 96.



Protesters from the Central Kalimantan People Fighting Alliance hold posters and printouts of social media posts demanding government action on forest and land fires outside the Central Kalimantan Governor's office in Palangkaraya, Indonesia yesterday. – AFP

Officials could not be immediately reached to clarify the number.

The latest rescue came on Saturday, when three conservation agencies rescued a 20-year-old male orangutan in Hampangen village in Central Kalimantan, on Borneo island.

"The evacuation process was carried out with great caution," the agencies said.

"After the orangutan was sedated, the medical team immediately conducted a health examination before taking the animal to the... rehabilitation centre," it said.

Indonesia's transport ministry also said around 2,400 flights across the country have been affected by the haze since mid-August.

"Haze reduces visibility around airports,

which can lead to delays, disruptions, and even flight cancellations. Every operational decision is made with safety as the top priority," the ministry said.

Fires burned 1.9 million hectares

The wildfires burned more than 1.9 million hectares in the first nine months of 2026, a monitor analysing satellite data said yesterday.

The report came as Indonesian officials said they had accepted help from neighbours Malaysia and Singapore to combat the blazes.

"We've already responded to the aid proposal... they (Malaysia) will be assisting with three aircraft and 52 personnel," Coordinating Minister for Political and Security Affairs Dudung Abdurachman told reporters in Jakarta.

Malaysia had made repeated offers of help to combat the fires that have sent air pollution levels soaring in its own capital and others in the region.

Dudung said Singapore will also provide assistance, without giving any details.

New figures from deforestation monitoring site Nusantara Atlas showed an area nearly 12 times larger than London has burned from January to the end of September, most of it as drought took hold from June, exacerbated by a strong El Niño cycle. – AFP

Indonesia identifies 97 firms for involvement in forest, land fires

JAKARTA – Indonesian authorities have identified 97 companies suspected of involvement in forest and land fires across Sumatra and Kalimantan islands, Coordinating Minister for Political and Security Affairs Dudung Abdurachman said yesterday.

Dudung said the companies were identified based on reports received by regional and national police units, urging investigators to thoroughly investigate those responsible for the fires.

As of October 13, police had named nine companies and 223 individuals as suspects in separate forest and land fire cases, said Pipit Subiyanto, a senior official with the

National Police's special crimes unit.

The corporate cases were linked to 98 police reports, while the individual cases involved 273 reports, Pipit said.

He warned that offenders could face prison sentences of 10 to 12 years, stressing that burning land should not be used as a cheap and easy method of land clearing.

The investigations follow President Prabowo Subianto's order last month for police to intensify their crackdown on companies suspected of causing forest and land fires, which have spread haze across parts of Indonesia and neighboring countries. – Xinhua

Thailand eyes forced sales in foreign property crackdown

BANGKOK – Thailand's government said yesterday it could force the sale of up to 2,300 plots of land worth more than US\$400 million as part of a crackdown on property held unlawfully by foreigners.

Prime Minister Anutin Charnvirakul called in a speech for tougher action against the use of Thai proxies to circumvent a ban on non-Thais owning land.

The government has identified 2,360 plots worth 14.01 billion baht (US\$417 million) owned through 1,397 proxies, Department of Lands Director Somchai Leelanoi said.

They cover an area totalling 5,467 rai - around 875 hectares - across the country.

"The department will expedite the forced sale of land in cases deemed illegal and will proceed with both civil and criminal legal action," the government said in a statement.

Tourism accounted for 12.6 percent of Thailand's gross domestic product last year, and is forecast to hit almost 20 percent by 2036, according to the World Travel and Tourism Council.

However, the industry has come under growing public scrutiny. There have been protests in recent months about bad behaviour by visitors, as well as concerns that foreigners are buying up property in certain hotspots, including Phuket.

Thai law bars foreign nationals or companies from owning land within the kingdom, except those with prior approval from the country's Board of Investment.

However, a limited company can purchase land as long as the majority of shares are held by a Thai national.

"This investigation must not stop at merely the names of title deed holders or company shareholders; it must dig deeper to identify the true controlling figures, behind-the-scenes decision-makers, and ultimate beneficial owners," Anutin said.

"Thailand remains open and welcoming to honest, transparent foreign investments that respect Thai law and abide by the rights granted under investment promotion regulations," he said. – AFP

Suu Kyi receives UK royal package: Myanmar govt

YANGON – Myanmar's Aung San Suu Kyi received a package from Britain's King Charles III yesterday, authorities said, releasing the first pictures of the detained Nobel laureate in two months and describing her as a "special female prisoner".

It is the first time Myanmar authorities have used the term to describe Suu Kyi, who was deposed in a military coup in 2021, triggering an ongoing civil war that has killed more than 100,000 people, according to monitor ACLED.

The coup leader and former junta chief Min Aung Hlaing was installed as civilian president in April following elections that did not include Suu Kyi's party, and she was moved to house arrest soon afterwards.

Home ministry officials met her yesterday to deliver a package of two books about soil, "one sealed envelope, and a sealed diplomatic communication sent by King Charles III of the United Kingdom to the special female detainee", Myanmar's presidential spokeswoman said on her Facebook page.

Britain is Myanmar's former colonial power and the monarch is known to

have a keen interest in gardening and the environment.

Accompanying the statement were two images of Suu Kyi meeting two men with their backs to the camera.

The pictures appeared to be in a similar room to the last released images of her, when she met a Red Cross representative in August, her first publicised meeting with a foreign official since her ouster.

Fact-checkers from AFP examined the latest photos and found no evidence of manipulation using Meta Generative AI or OpenAI tools.

Suu Kyi remains detained on charges rights groups say were concocted to return power to the military, which has historically ruled Myanmar since independence.

"I have been extremely lenient toward her," Min Aung Hlaing said in an interview with *Time* magazine published last month.

The Foreign Office in London did not immediately respond to questions from AFP asking whether British diplomats had sought to deliver the package in person, or been refused permission to do so. – AFP

Japanese vice mayor crushed to death during festival

TOKYO – A deputy mayor in western Japan died after being crushed under a giant float during a local parade, officials said yesterday, a week after two others were reportedly killed at separate traditional festivals.

Akihiro Nabae, deputy mayor of the city of Saijo in the Ehime region, was carrying a giant float with other participants on Saturday before becoming trapped beneath it, city and police officials told AFP.

He was taken to hospital and later pronounced dead, local media said.

The exact circumstances that led to his death – including "whether the float fell down or he somehow lost his balance" – remain under investigation, Makoto Hagiwara, deputy director of a local police station, told AFP.

Local media said 11 floats were lined up, side by side, and as much as three tonnes may have come crushing down on Nabae.

Organised by local shrines, the annual Saijo festival is a "gorgeous and flashy" affair, punctuated with a procession of floats sculpted to symbolise flowers, birds and warriors, the city explains on its website.

The tradition dates back to Japan's Edo period (1603 to 1868) and is meant to thank deities for an abundant harvest of grains.

Two people reportedly died the previous Saturday during two separate festivals in western Osaka that saw floats topple over while participants attempted high-speed turns.

Two people also reportedly died in February following a crush at Japan's 'Naked Man Festival'. – AFP

PM calls for curfews in France as govt grapples with unrest

Jeremy Tordjman, Lea Dauple and Nicholas Roll

PARIS – France’s prime minister called for partial curfews yesterday as protesters blocked the entrance to the Louvre in Paris and authorities scrambled to stem public discontent fuelling cost-of-living demonstrations that over the weekend spilled over into some of the worst street violence in recent years.

Prime Minister Sebastien Lécornu did not rule out imposing a state of emergency after the interior minister said the police “had lost control” during the weekend’s unrest, which has flared six months before France elects a successor to President Emmanuel Macron.

With organisers calling for a new round of protests next Saturday, Lécornu called for regional authorities to impose “partial” curfews to protect businesses and people after hundreds of shops were damaged and looted.

“I’m absolutely determined to restore public order”, he said, adding that the government was ready to impose a state of emergency “if needed”.

Other European countries, where anger over rising prices has also led to protests, were keeping a nervous eye on the developments, with smaller clashes breaking out in Milan, Italy’s financial capital, and Belgium over the weekend and protests simmering in Spain and Portugal.

Some half a million people turned out across France on Saturday to denounce the surging cost of living, a culmination of four weeks of protests that began with high school students demanding better conditions at their schools.

What started as peaceful demonstrations morphed into violence in some places, as masked groups on the sidelines of the protests attacked law enforcement, broke into town halls and other public buildings, setting many of them ablaze, looted shops, and set fire to cars, bicycles and scooters on the streets.

Failures in govt response

More than 2,500 people were arrested and nearly 1,000 members of the security forces injured. Protesters were also hurt, with one



A pedestrian walks past a row of burnt-out vehicles on Rue Yves-Toudic, destroyed after a nationwide protest over the weekend against the “high cost of living” in France, in central Paris yesterday. – AFP

demonstrator’s hand blown off by a police crowd-control grenade.

“On Saturday, in some major cities, you couldn’t look shopkeepers in the eye after hundreds of shops had been looted and tell them we hadn’t lost control,” Minister of the Interior Laurent Nuñez said.

He said “a number of measures” aimed at containing and preventing looters and vandals would be implemented “starting this [yesterday] evening”, including boosting police on the streets.

Macron acknowledged failures in the government response, despite the deployment of some 60,000 law enforcement personnel across the country on Saturday.

Nationwide, more than 2,330 people were taken into police custody over the weekend, 70 percent of whom were adults – and many of whom were already known to authorities, said Justice Minister Gérald Darmanin said.

At least 3,000 businesses were affected by the unrest, according to Trade and Small Businesses Minister Serge Papin, with damage running into hundreds of millions of euros.

In an address to the nation on Sunday, Macron slammed the “unbridled” violence

and said local authorities would be able to ban some rallies, but stopped short of imposing more drastic measures.

City authorities in the southern port city of Marseille said they had banned public gatherings from noon to 8:00 p.m.

The European Union slammed the weekend violence as “unacceptable” but warned that the right to peaceful protest “must be protected” in France.

Germany condemned the violence and updated its travel advice for France, saying “further demonstrations and, in some cases, further outbreaks of violence in the coming days cannot be ruled out”.

The United Kingdom said the right to protest “can never excuse violence”.

Louvre blocked

In Paris yesterday, about a dozen demonstrators blocked the entrance to the iconic Louvre Museum, the most visited in the world, while puzzled tourists looked on.

“We don’t want to get involved. We want to stand back and get away from them,” Pat Boland, a tourist from Australia, said of the protests.

“But we don’t want to go against them

either,” his wife Anne added.

The two pensioners, both 73, spoke to AFP outside barricades that had been erected at the Louvre, which had closed as a small group of protesters occupied an area outside its famed glass pyramid entrance.

Rising prices have fuelled anger in France, where diesel prices have jumped nearly 40 percent and petrol by 25 percent since March, and where food prices have risen by 25 percent over the past five years.

The unrest has flared just months before presidential elections that will see a new French president elected after a decade of centrist Macron and with Marine Le Pen, the far-right presidential candidate for the National Rally party, riding high in the polls.

Ministers and Le Pen have accused ultra-left groups of stoking the violence to boost the chances of the far-left firebrand Jean-Luc Mélenchon in the presidential polls.

On Monday, Lécornu blamed the “ultra-left movement” for seeking to “orchestrate deep unrest across the country.”

“There is a whole network that could be mobilised to even call into question the timetable for the presidential election and the holding of the presidential election itself,” Lécornu told reporters.

Mélenchon said he was “astonished” at the remarks and said he had “not heard anyone talk about that”.

Elsewhere in Europe

During the weekend, clashes broke out on the sidelines of a cost-of-living demonstration in Milan.

“I’m very worried because it’s a new phenomenon, which also originates from an international scenario and therefore feeds itself,” Mayor Giuseppe Sala said.

In Belgium, police fired tear gas and water cannon to disperse protesters in Brussels and Liege.

In Spain protesters have set up tents in the heart of Madrid to denounce soaring housing costs, with similar encampments going up in neighbouring Portugal’s main cities of Lisbon and Porto. (More on p.12) – AFP

Trump tells Netanyahu he’ll have ‘tremendous’ election win

JERUSALEM – US President Donald Trump told Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu yesterday he expected him to win a “tremendous” election victory next week, with the Israeli leader suggesting they may again attack Iran together.

A day after Trump publicly endorsed Netanyahu in the close-fought October 27 election, the Israeli premier put out a video of the two right-wing leaders lavishing

praise on each other by telephone.

“I think you’re going to have a tremendous victory, actually,” Trump can be heard saying, with Netanyahu putting his mobile on speakerphone.

“You’re the man I want by my side, Bibi,” Trump said, referring to Netanyahu by his nickname.

Netanyahu – while reminding the famously loose-lipped president that they were on an open line – hailed

Trump for joining Israel in attacking Iran, a decades-long goal of Israel’s longest-serving prime minister.

“Donald, we have a job to finish,” Netanyahu said. “We’ll finish it together. We’ll finish it, and no one else will do it.”

Netanyahu did not elaborate but again described Iran’s clerical state, which remains in power nearly eight months after the joint massive attack, as “the greatest danger”. – Xinhua

US Supreme Court to hear challenge of 1800s home distilling ban

WASHINGTON, DC – The US Supreme Court agreed yesterday to hear a case challenging a nearly 160-year-old ban on distilling liquor at home, a dispute implicating Congress’s taxation powers.

A law banning at-home distillation of alcohol was enacted in 1868 in a bid to tackle widespread tax evasion. Violators face fines, prison sentences and even the possibility of their homes being confiscated.

Lower courts have issued conflicting rulings on the law’s constitutionality, prompting an appeal to the conservative-dominated Supreme Court.

US President Donald Trump’s administration has argued for the law to be upheld.

“Congress restricted home distilling because a distiller can more easily conceal a distilling operation or thwart necessary inspections – thereby evading the requisite tax – if the still is located in a dwelling-house or connected structure,” Solicitor General John Sauer has argued in court filings.

The opposing party, an association of artisanal distillers in Texas, is instead hoping the Supreme Court will declare the law unconstitutional, arguing that the ban exceeds Congress’s authority.

Under the legal theory behind the law, “there is no limit” to what potentially taxable private activities Congress could ban, the group has argued. – AFP

Dutch PM, partner expecting baby via surrogate mother

THE HAGUE – Dutch Prime Minister Rob Jetten and his Argentine partner Nicolas Keenan announced yesterday that they were expecting a baby with the help of an egg donor and a surrogate mother.

“A very special person is on the way. See you in 2027, little one,” the couple posted on Instagram, next to a photo of them holding a pregnancy scan image.

Jetten’s political party, D66, issued a statement saying the pregnancy was

made possible by a couple of Dutch friends who already had children.

“There is no commercial surrogacy involved. The surrogate mother and the egg donor are known to Jetten and Keenan,” it said.

“They are pleased to be able to help fulfil the wish of the two fathers-to-be to have a child in this way.”

“We are incredibly grateful that, thanks to two wonderful women, we now have the opportunity to make our dream

come true,” Jetten said in the statement.

The prime minister and his partner, a professional field hockey player, have been engaged since 2024.

“Surrogacy feels like a very special way to help make the dream of our dear friends come true,” Lisa, the surrogate mother, was quoted as saying.

Dutch law only allows non-commercial surrogate pregnancies, where the woman carrying the child is not paid for doing so. – AFP

UN agency slashes Gaza food 'lifeline' over funding shortfall

Beit Hanina, Palestinian Territories
Anouk RIONDET

BEIT HANINA, Palestinian Territories – The World Food Programme (WFP) said yesterday it would end monthly assistance to 500,000 people in Gaza due to a funding shortfall, despite acute needs in the war-battered Palestinian territory.

With the cutbacks, 1.1 million Palestinians in Gaza – still about half the population -- will be receiving either food or cash assistance each month from the UN agency, in reduced amounts.

The World Food Programme said its efforts had mitigated the effects during a famine last year in Gaza – an evaluation of the situation disputed by Israel – and warned that conditions had not improved to the point that it can take away aid.

“This has been a lifeline. But now, rather than being able to sustain and scale up that assistance, we’re actually having to reduce it,” Shaun Hughes, the WFP country director, told AFP at the agency’s office in east Jerusalem.

“And that’s not because we don’t have humanitarian access to deliver food; that’s because we don’t have funding.”

According to the latest assessments, 1.4 million people – or two-thirds of Gaza’s population – are still “acutely food insecure” and need humanitarian assistance to survive, he said.

‘Extremely difficult’

Palestinians living in Gaza, where nearly the entire population has been displaced at least once, voiced alarm at the cuts in assistance.



A boy sells fish at a market in the Jabalia camp for Palestinian refugees in the northern Gaza Strip yesterday.

– AFP

“The hardest thing for a mother is to see her children hungry and be unable to provide food for them,” said Samaher al-Najjar, 45, from the southern city of Khan Yunis.

“We live in a tent and do not have the money to buy everything we need. We rely on aid to provide part of our food,” she said.

“All we want is for our children to have something to eat every day. The consequences of this would be extremely difficult.”

Ayman Daghmash, 40, from Gaza City called news of the cutoffs “frightening”.

“The assistance helped us get by for

several days, but now we do not know how we will meet our family’s needs, especially after community kitchens in Gaza stopped operating some time ago,” he said.

“There is also no work or steady income, and food prices are beyond our means. If assistance stops coming from every direction, how will we feed our children?”

The WFP was able to bring in more assistance after a US-brokered ceasefire took effect a year ago. Israel has kept striking Gaza since then, vowing to kill anyone involved in the October 7 attack.

Between 1.5 million and 1.8 million people have been receiving assistance every month.

In addition to reducing the number of people who receive rations, the WFP will shrink the content.

Families receiving food assistance will now get only one food parcel instead of two and a smaller bag of wheat flour, the WFP said in an operational note.

The 75,000 families who receive assistance in cash will see the amount reduced from 1,250 to 750 shekels (US\$400 to US\$240) per month.

The WFP is funded by governments as well as private donors. It has seen a sharp drop in resources, including after President Donald Trump returned to power in the United States and drastically slashed contributions to UN agencies, as well as bilateral aid.

The agency says it needs about US\$450 million over the next six months for its operations in Gaza and the West Bank, but in 2026 it has only received about half the usual financing for the Palestinian territories.

In September, the agency also reduced by half the number of aid recipients in the West Bank, which Israel has occupied since 1967, from 400,000 to 200,000.

Israel has allowed more goods into Gaza under the terms of the Trump ceasefire, but still turns away shipments of anything that is seen as having potential military use – a policy that has included blocking even prosthetic limbs, according to the United Nations.

Israel has ramped up longstanding criticism of the United Nations since the Gaza war, accusing the world body of bias and perpetuating dependency among Palestinians.

– AFP

Pharma giant Roche puts German investments on hold

FRANKFURT AM MAIN – Swiss pharmaceutical giant Roche said yesterday it would put expansion in Germany on hold, dealing a blow to Berlin as a government-backed investment summit got underway.

“We have put all future investment decisions in Germany on hold for the time being,” Daniel Steiners, head of Roche Germany, told *Die Welt* newspaper.

“As far as the pharmaceutical sector is concerned, I can say that political decisions have recently destroyed a great deal of trust.”

German lawmakers in July passed a bill forcing pharmaceutical companies to cut prices as part of a bid to control costs in the country’s statutory health insurance system.

Drugmakers have to grant a 15.5 percent rebate on most branded medicines from next year, up from a current rate of seven percent.

The United States in June cited the reforms when it launched a tariff probe into Germany over what it said was Berlin’s “persistent underpayment for innovative pharmaceutical products”.

Asked about Steiners’ comments, Economy Minister Katherina Reiche said the measures were necessary to keep a lid on social security contributions.

Nevertheless, she also praised “the enormous contributions of the pharmaceutical industry”.

But Roche’s criticism comes at an awkward time for the government, which is hosting a two-day summit in Berlin until today aimed at drumming up business interest in Europe’s top economy.

Suffering from subdued demand at home as well as US tariffs and competition abroad, Germany’s economy has posted little growth since a burst of pent-up COVID-19 pandemic demand at the end of 2022.

Speaking alongside Reiche at a press conference, Roland Busch, head of industrial giant Siemens, said Roche’s announcement was a signal.

“Companies are saying: if the investment conditions in Germany aren’t right, then they’ll simply invest elsewhere,” he said. “That’s understandable.”

– AFP

At least 2 dead as floods hit eastern Spain

MADRID – At least two people have died after heavy rain triggered flooding in eastern Spain, authorities said yesterday, as rescuers worked to evacuate stranded residents and officials urged residents in the Valencia region to stay indoors.

Videos released by Valencia’s regional meteorological agency showed streets turned into torrents, sweeping away vehicles in several towns in the provinces of Valencia and Alicante.

“Road travel is impossible, you must stay at home,” Juan Carlos Valderrama, the Valencia region’s emergency chief, said yesterday morning,

warning that intense and persistent rainfall was causing severe flooding.

One person died in Sagunto, local authorities said overnight from Sunday to yesterday, while firefighters in neighbouring Catalonia reported the death of a woman who fell into a stream.

Emergency services and soldiers from Spain’s military emergency response unit were working early yesterday to evacuate people whose homes had flooded, including residents who had taken refuge on rooftops.

“Rescue operations are continuing in areas that are difficult to access. People are urged to avoid all travel,”

Prime Minister Pedro Sánchez said on X, describing the situation in the Valencia region as “very difficult”.

Scientists believe that human-driven climate change is intensifying the Mediterranean storms that typically hit eastern Spain in autumn as the sea absorbs heat during the summer, leading to increased evaporation and heavier rainfall.

Spain’s national weather agency AEMET announced on Friday that last month was mainland Spain’s hottest September on record, after the country registered its warmest summer between June and August.

– AFP, MPD

Danish police probe claims of violence towards journalists

COPENHAGEN – The Copenhagen police are investigating claims by two press photographers who say they were assaulted by officers while following anti-immigration protests at the weekend, the force said yesterday.

A photographer for the *Ekstra Bladet* tabloid alleged the police hit him with a truncheon as he was covering a protest in the Danish capital calling for “remigration”, or the deportation of immigrants to their country of origin, along with a counter-demonstration.

A fellow photojournalist for the *Politiken* newspaper also accused the

police of smacking him with a baton. His camera was destroyed and he had to be taken to the hospital.

“The media have reported on two specific incidents in which members of the press were struck by the police,” the police said in a statement.

“In light of the criticism that was subsequently expressed, we have asked the Independent Police Oversight Authority (DUP) to investigate these cases.”

In a column on Sunday, *Politiken*’s editor-in-chief wrote: “This newspaper understands that the police’s task is often difficult when

demonstrations spiral into violence and street clashes.

“But it is all the more incomprehensible that the police should make the press their adversary by preventing us from doing our job, which also consists in bearing witness to the police’s use of force.”

The Copenhagen police promised it “will always work to ensure the best possible conditions for the functioning of democracy”.

“This applies to freedom of assembly and freedom of expression and... to the conditions under which the press carries out its work,” it said.

– AFP

‘Liar,’ ‘clown’: Lula and Bolsonaro spar in election debate

SÃO PAULO – Firing off personal attacks, Brazil’s leftwing President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva and rightwing senator Flávio Bolsonaro held an acrimonious first debate on Sunday, a week before a tight presidential election runoff.

A chaotic exchange between the two men, who called each other liars on multiple occasions, accusing each other of corruption and dragging up various scandals, encapsulated the tone of a bitter election campaign in the deeply polarised nation.

Bolsonaro, 45, son of the rightwing former president Jair Bolsonaro, secured a shock first-round lead over Lula earlier this month and polls predict a close battle for the runoff this coming Sunday.

The two men sparred over the economy, public security, healthcare, corruption, and Brazil’s ties to the United States.

“Brazil is going to retire you,” fired off Bolsonaro, seeking to unnerve his adversary by pacing up and down behind him throughout the debate in view of the camera, shaking his head, smirking and scoffing while his adversary spoke.

Lula called Bolsonaro “a habitual liar, a thug,” and said he did not want to stand close to a “militiaman,” alluding to his alleged ties to Rio de Janeiro’s paramilitary groups.

Bolsonaro, who made several jabs about Lula’s time jailed for corruption on charges that were later annulled, retorted that it was better he stay at a distance “because my wallet could be stolen.”

Lula, who at almost 81 is seeking a fourth term in power, battled to control his irritation at times and repeatedly asked viewers to “look it up on Google” to prove his adversary was lying.

While Bolsonaro has led in polls since the first round, his edge slightly narrowed in two polls last week which showed him with 51 percent of voting intentions compared to 49 percent for Lula.

‘Subservient’ to US interests

Bolsonaro hammered away at the primary concerns of Brazilians – such as the cost of living and



Brazil’s leftwing President and presidential re-election candidate Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva (right) and Brazil’s rightwing presidential candidate Flávio Bolsonaro gesture during a debate ahead of the presidential election runoff in São Paulo on Sunday. – AFP

insecurity – and accused Lula of “reckless spending to get re-elected” due to various social measures he has announced while campaigning.

Lula countered by asking Bolsonaro about his plans to emulate the drastic “chainsaw” cuts to public spending implemented by Argentina’s libertarian President Javier Milei, which led to higher unemployment and cuts to benefits. Throughout the debate, Bolsonaro dodged the question and pivoted to different topics.

Lula questioned Bolsonaro’s ties to US President Donald Trump – an ally of the Bolsonaro family – and plans to “hand over” Brazil’s rare earth minerals.

“It is striking how the Bolsonaro family is subservient to American interests,” said Lula.

Former president Jair Bolsonaro came up several times, including when his son asked Lula why so many prisoners had supported him in the election.

Lula said he wanted all of their votes, including that of Jair Bolsonaro – who is currently serving a 27-year sentence under house arrest for a botched coup bid after his failed 2022 re-election bid.

“Vote for me, Bolsonaro, you know your son, you know I’m better than him.”

‘A state of calamity’

Ahead of the showdown, tens of thousands of supporters of Lula and Bolsonaro gathered in cities around the country.

In São Paulo, a sea of people dressed in the yellow and green of the Brazilian flag rallied for Flávio Bolsonaro, who made his way down Avenida Paulista on the back of a truck.

“The country is in a state of calamity. To make ends meet or buy anything, you have to work two or three jobs just to pay the bills,” said Sara Machado, 36, wearing a T-shirt with the slogan: “Right-wing. With pride.”

The rally drew about 71,000 people, according to monitors at the University of São Paulo (USP).

Swimmers and singers for Lula

In Rio de Janeiro, swimmers at Praia Vermelha (“Red Beach”) synchronised in the water to spell out Lula’s name with their bodies.

Later, on Copacabana Beach, iconic octogenarian singer Caetano Veloso led a “rally for democracy” in favour of the president, which USP monitors said drew some 56,000 people.

Fabiana Leite, a 51-year-old nurse and social worker, said Lula’s social welfare programmes saved her after she was wrongly incarcerated, lost custody of her daughters, and had to rebuild her life after being freed.

“You might have the desire to fight and to grow, but without the means, without social programmes, it’s just not possible. That is why I am here, continuing the fight,” she told AFP. – AFP, MPD

Tents spring up in Lisbon as Portugal housing protests spread

LISBON – Protesters pitched dozens of tents in Lisbon on Saturday demanding action to stem housing and living costs in Portugal, mirroring demonstrations that have gripped neighbouring Spain for weeks.

Hundreds of protesters rallied at night in Rossio square – located at the bustling, touristic heart of the Portuguese capital – following a march that had rallied thousands of people nationwide.

The mostly young attendees vowed to stay put, with hundreds singing songs as they sat around the statue of King Pedro IV that dominates the square.

“The Portuguese social class that pays taxes, that which keeps this country going, is under attack and is losing its rights, notably its right to housing,” said Elena Costa, a 46-year-old social assistant.

“So we are all here together to try to explain that we are suffocating,” she said.

Engineer António Margado, 52, criticised the centre-right government for “a total liberalisation of rents; owners are protected more and more, while tenants who need a house are those who are protected less and less”.

Portuguese housing prices rose by 124 percent between 2015 and 2024, roughly twice as fast as the EU average, according to official data.

The impact is especially harsh on the young and in Lisbon, which concentrates around one-quarter of Portugal’s 11 million inhabitants including the capital’s greater metropolitan area.

Another of the protesters, Isabel Guerreiro, told public broadcaster RTP: “As a self-employed professional, I obviously don’t have the means to pay Lisbon’s exorbitant rents – and I’m a daughter of Lisbon.”

Saturday’s camp in Lisbon amplified a housing protest that started in the northern city of Porto, where dozens of tents are set up.

‘Matter of survival’

At the earlier protest in Lisbon called by the General Confederation of the Portuguese Workers (CGTP), demonstrators called for better public services, pensions and wages as well as measures against soaring

housing costs.

Marching to the roar of drums, they held placards with slogans including “Their greed, our misery” and “the cost of living increases, the people can’t take it anymore.”

“There are many problems. Wages, housing, the cost of living: it’s a matter of survival,” Yolanda Silva, a 43-year-old civil servant, told AFP.

Earlier last week, Prime Minister Luis Montenegro said “we fully understand that people want answers” and to “express their outrage at what, in their view, may be omissions in public policies”.

But he warned political rivals against “importing into Portugal climates of instability and protest that, in fact, have no support in Portuguese society”, in a likely reference to violent protests that have rocked France.

The expanding Portuguese movement comes as Spain is gripped by housing protest camps and demonstrations that are entering their fourth week and have culminated in the calling of an early general election for November 29.

Lisbon, Porto housing protesters dig in

Meanwhile, hundreds of Portuguese activists on yesterday shrugged off government warnings to dismantle tents pitched in the heart of the capital Lisbon and second-largest city of Porto, part of ongoing demonstrations at soaring housing costs.

Authorities have told the demonstrators that they face prosecution if they continue to occupy public spaces.

In Porto, where the movement began earlier this month, protest spokeswoman Maria João Calisto told *Público* daily they had sought permission to continue their demonstration through to December 31.

Demonstrators have also sought to align themselves with similar protests against housing costs in Spain, and have urged labour unions to call for a general strike on November 11.

The protesters accuse the government of failing to act to tackle the housing crisis and trying to push through rental market reforms making tenant eviction easier. – AFP

Italy, Spain agree to remove border checks

BRUSSELS – Italy and Spain have agreed to remove tit-for-tat border checks introduced following a spat over migration after talks between the two countries’ leaders, diplomatic and government sources said on Friday.

The détente ends a showdown that began in summer, when Italy’s interior ministry introduced controls on travellers from Spain after tens of thousands of migrants

rushed from Morocco into the Spanish exclave of Ceuta in North Africa.

As part of an agreement reached at an EU summit in Brussels, Rome’s measures will continue for a week more so they lapse at the same time as Madrid’s, according to Italian government sources.

The deal was struck after Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni and her Spanish counterpart Pedro

Sánchez held talks on the sidelines of the leaders’ two-day meeting, where migration was on the agenda, a Spanish diplomat said.

The summit ended on Friday. Italy and Spain do not share a land border, but passengers arriving on flights had been required to go through passport checks, which is normally not the case because both countries are members of the Schengen free-travel zone. – AFP



Demonstrators set up tents to protest against a housing shortage, soaring rents and low wages on Rossio square in central Lisbon on Sunday. – AFP

Guehi insists players have 'trust and belief' in Man City after charges



LONDON – Manchester City defender Marc Guehi said yesterday a “pretty calm” squad have “a lot of trust and belief in the football club” despite the English giants being found guilty of more than 100 breaches of Premier League financial rules.

City have made an impressive start to the season under new manager Enzo Maresca, winning all of their seven opening league games to lead the Premier League table by three points from champions Arsenal.

But those results have been achieved against the backdrop of a mass of guilty verdicts, which have led to calls for City to be hit with huge points deductions, colossal fines and even the stripping of some of their Premier League titles.

Significantly, however, no punishments have yet been announced and City, who have repeatedly denied wrongdoing, are appealing against the verdicts.

The only blemish to City’s on field form so far in the current campaign has been a 4-2 defeat in the Champions League by title-holders Paris Saint-Germain, with City eager to returning to winning ways in Europe at home to AEK Athens today.

England defender Guehi, speaking at a pre-match press conference, said: “The team spirit has been really good, every single person, player, staff and fans are backing us and it has been great to see.

“We’re pretty calm. There’s a lot of relaxed faces because we have a lot of trust and belief in the football club and what’s been going on here.”

“It can be very easy to be affected by the noise that’s going on. But I’m so happy to see the team spirit, the team bonding and everyone taking to what’s happening and just focusing on the football,” he added.

Guehi, who joined City from Premier League rivals Crystal Palace in a £20 million (US\$26.6 million) move in January last year, was asked how he had come to trust the club.

“Ever since I’ve got to the club, the club have been fantastic with me,” the 26-year-old replied. “The support that I’ve had, tough times on the pitch and off the pitch.

“I’m aware already of the success the club has already had in the past and I want to be someone who’s part of the future success.”

Questioned on whether Enzo Maresca’s players had been given any details about why the City hierarchy were so confident of mounting a successful appeal against the decision of an independent commission, Guehi answered: “No, nothing’s been said. The only thing that’s been said is to focus on the football, which is all we can do.”

The game will be played at 3:00 a.m. tomorrow morning Macau time.

– AFP/MPD

Football shorts

England women’s coach Wiegman signs two-year contract extension

LONDON – England women’s head coach Sarina Wiegman has signed a two-year contract extension taking her through until the end of the 2029 women’s European Championship, the Football Association announced yesterday.

Wiegman has led England to tournament triumphs at both the 2022 and 2025 Euros, as well as a first World Cup final in 2023, since taking charge in September 2021.

The 56-year-old Dutchwoman has reached five successive major tournament finals, also winning Euro 2017 with her native Netherlands.

“I am so happy to be able to carry on with this squad and cannot think of a better job in football,” Wiegman said yesterday.

England, beaten by Spain in the 2023 World Cup final in Australia, will face Ukraine over a two-legged play-off in November and December for a place in next year’s tournament in Brazil.

“Of course, anyone who knows me will understand that my main concern right now is absolutely the World Cup, and helping this squad realise their potential in the years to come,” Wiegman added.

“We have an important job to do to

confirm our place in Brazil, and hopefully we can do that and give the country another special summer to remember next year.”

Wiegman’s new deal will also encompass the 2027 Nations League, which serves as a qualifying tournament for the 2028 Los Angeles Olympics.

She first agreed a contract extension in January 2024.

– AFP

CAS verdict on Senegal AFCON title appeal ‘expected end Nov’



LAUSANNE – The Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS) announced yesterday that a verdict on Senegal’s appeal of the decision to strip them of the Africa Cup of Nations title in favour of Morocco is expected at the end of November.

CAS said in a statement that a hearing of the case took place behind closed doors at its headquarters in Lausanne on October 8.

“The panel have begun and continue their deliberations,” the organisation which resolves international sports disputes explained.

“The CAS arbitrators have decided to issue a complete ruling which includes legal grounds, known as a CAS Award. This process will require several weeks, with the CAS Award

‘Special’ to face friend Perez in Champions League, says Liverpool’s Iraola



LONDON – Liverpool boss Andoni Iraola says it will be a “special” experience to go up against a Villarreal side managed by longtime friend Inigo Perez when the teams meet in the Champions League at Anfield today.

The two Spaniards first knew each other as young players making their way at Athletic Bilbao before Iraola recruited Perez as his assistant coach when in charge of Madrid club Rayo Vallecano.

“For me it is a special game because Inigo is my friend,” Iraola told a pre-match press conference at Anfield yesterday.

“We know each other since the academy years in Athletic Club, we played with each other in the first team. As soon as he retired, I was quick enough to grab him to help as an

assistant. We’ve been through a lot of things together.

“It is a privilege for me to face him in a Champions League game. He knows me very well, he knows everything. It is a team that I follow, I know the players and it is going to be a little bit strange but in a good way.”

Iraola, asked if he had spoken to Perez lately, said today’s game had put a temporary restriction on their friendship.

“When these things happen (facing each other in a match), it is not good for relationships,” the 44-year-old Iraola explained.

“I talk to him a lot, but when you know you are going to face each other, you stop talking because you leave the distance, you don’t want to... Lately, it is probably the moment we have talked less.

“We normally call time to talk

about La Liga, the Premier League, about football, other stuff, about our families. But now when the game gets closer, we haven’t been in touch.”

Iraola is in his first season in charge of Liverpool, having arrived at Anfield from Premier League rivals Bournemouth - where he tried to bring Perez only for his friend to be denied a work permit by British authorities.

“We tried to take him to England, he was here but he couldn’t work,” said Iraola. “He didn’t receive the work permit. We tried to do everything to convince the panel. I complained in the moment because I came with just two guys, but it has worked well for him also.

“Now he is coaching in the Champions League with Villarreal and I am so, so happy for him.”

The gam will be played at 3:00 a.m. tomorrow morning Macau time.

– AFP/MPD



Liverpool’s Dutch defender Virgil van Dijk (centre) and teammates attend a training session at their training ground in Kirkby, Liverpool, north-west England yesterday, the eve of their UEFA Champions League, league phase football match against Villarreal.

– AFP

expected at the end of November 2026.”

At the January 18 final in Rabat, Senegal won 1-0 thanks to Pape Gueye’s extra-time goal, but the occasion was marred by chaotic scenes near the end of normal time when many Senegal players walked off the pitch in protest at the decision to award Morocco a penalty with the match still goalless.

Some Senegalese supporters also attempted a pitch invasion, and the game was held up for almost 20 minutes before the Senegal players returned.

In March, the Confederation of African Football (CAF) overturned that result, awarding Morocco a 3-0 victory, and the title.

– AFP

London – Araujo says too soon to talk about permanent Liverpool move



Ronald Araujo says it is “very early” to be talking about making his move to Liverpool permanent despite an impressive start to his loan spell at Anfield.

The former Barcelona captain has established himself as first-choice right-back even though he is known to prefer a central defensive role.

Liverpool have a £47 million (US\$63 million) option to secure Araujo’s services on a full-time basis, although whether the six-

time European champions will want to spend that sum on a player who turns 28 in March remains to be seen.

“It’s very early to talk about these things,” the Uruguayan international said ahead of today’s Champions League match at home to Villarreal.

“I’m really happy to be here, my family are also very happy but it’s a bit early to be talking about these things.”

Araujo, who has played 10 times for Liverpool, is already popular with fans and appears to have adjusted quickly to the demands of the Premier League.

“Coming to Liverpool, it’s not easy,” he said. “There are those demands, that responsibility. Personally I’d already experienced that in Barcelona.

“It depends on the personality of each player and how they (face) that challenge. I knew it was a new challenge coming to the Premier League but from the first moment I arrived I had no doubts I had to give everything here. And that’s how I live it.

“It’s not easy to be in big sides, but that’s what we came to do. That’s the work we have to do.”

Andoni Iraola’s Liverpool are fifth in the league phase of the Champions League with two wins in two games, against Atletico Madrid and LASK.

The game will be played at 3:00 a.m. tomorrow morning Macau time.

– AFP/MPD

LeBron joins 76ers to chase one more NBA title at age 41



LeBron James (left) and Joel Embiid of the Philadelphia 76ers talk during the game against the Boston Celtics on Friday at Xfinity Mobile Arena in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. — AFP

PHILADELPHIA — LeBron James, yearning to capture a fifth career NBA title, tips off his record 24th campaign today at age 41 with his new Philadelphia 76ers teammates chasing a long-sought crown.

The league's 81st season launches with the Sixers at New York, watching the Knicks hoist their first championship banner since 1973.

James made it clear in July when he announced he was joining the 76ers that his move was all about making one more title run himself.

"I believe I can help make the Philadelphia 76ers a championship team and I am so excited to energize a new fan base and start this incredible journey one last time," James posted on X on July 24.

"I'm not going for money. I'm not going for family. What am I really playing for at this point? I still want to sacrifice. I still want to work. I still want to grind. I still want to compete, to win and to have a chance at the feeling of winning another championship."

James, the NBA's all-time leading scorer, said in June he was leaving the Los Angeles Lakers. On July 24, James revealed he was going to Philadelphia and two days later, the team revealed James had signed a two-year deal worth US\$8 million.

James, a four-time NBA Most Valuable Player, won two NBA titles with Miami, another with

hometown club Cleveland and a fourth with the Lakers and hopes to bring the 76ers their first NBA title since 1983.

He could become the first player to win NBA titles with four or more clubs.

It's a goal that James, who turns 42 in December, shares with former Boston star Jaylen Brown, Joel Embiid, Tyrese Maxey and V.J. Edgecombe — all seeking a first NBA title.

"Everybody is kind of on the same page," James said. "We want to put the work in. That's most important."

"Everyone is highly motivated to get 1% better every single day... Everyone is excited to be here and that's exciting to be a part of."

"If we're trying to do something special, which I believe we are, it's a positive. If you have this championship approach every day, it'll definitely work in our favor."

James has career averages of 26.8 points, 7.5 rebounds, 7.4 assists and 1.5 steals over 1,622 games.

James said his teammates are willing to make sacrifices to become a contender, not content with big individual statistics and early playoff exits.

"I don't think anybody in the locker room wants their career to be like that or we wouldn't be here," James said.

James hopes to help 2024 US Olympic gold medal teammate

Embiid grab his first NBA crown.

"Hopefully I can give him resources and whatever he needs on a day-to-day basis to make him feel even more comfortable about where he is, about where we are as a team," James said.

James had 10 points, five assists and four rebounds in his pre-season debut for the 76ers in a 114-108 loss at Brooklyn.

"It felt a little different," James said. "Obviously, just wearing a new uniform, but the game is the game."

"We're still trying to put each other in a position to be successful and complement each other the best way we can out on the floor. But it's going to take some time."

No 'instant oatmeal'

James said people who want quick and easy camaraderie will be disappointed.

"They want instant oatmeal," James said. "If you want to do something special, it takes time, every single day doing things you may not want to do, because it's the same thing over and over and over and over."

"For us to be great we have to do things that are just not comfortable. We have to be comfortable being uncomfortable. That's the best way to expedite being great."

"I didn't leave my family to lose in the second round I know that for sure. Work needs to be done and I'm ready to put the work in." — AFP

Powerlifter Cui Zhe sets personal best to win China's 1st gold at Aichi-Nagoya Asian Para Games

NAGOYA - Powerlifter Cui Zhe led from her opening attempt to win the women's 41kg title at the Aichi-Nagoya Asian Para Games yesterday, delivering China's first gold medal of the Games.

"This is my fifth Asian Para Games, and I'm so happy to win the first gold for China today," Cui said. "I want to thank my country, our coaching team and everyone back home who has supported me."

Cui also won China's first gold medal at the 2018 Asian Para Games in Jakarta, where she claimed the women's 41kg title with a decisive final lift. Eight years later and less than two months shy of her 40th birthday, she opened yesterday's

competition with a confident 110kg lift, immediately putting herself 10kg ahead of nearest rival Tursynay Kabyl of Kazakhstan.

Cui extended her lead with a 115kg second lift. When Kabyl, the penultimate lifter, selected 104kg for her third attempt, Cui's gold was secured. The champion was not finished, however. She called for 120kg on her final attempt and completed the lift cleanly, surpassing the personal best of 119kg she set at the Paris 2024 Paralympic Games.

After the lift was declared good, Cui turned to the crowd, waved and smiled broadly.

"I focused on staying calm because I had never lifted that weight in competition. I just wanted

to get every detail right," she said.

Cui's victory extended a remarkable streak, as she has competed at all five editions of the Asian Para Games and won gold at each one. A Paralympic veteran since Beijing 2008, she finally claimed Paralympic gold in Paris in 2024.

Looking ahead, Cui sees Nagoya as part of her build-up to Los Angeles 2028. "I view this as a test on the road to the 2028 Paralympics. I hope I can lift even better there," she said.

Earlier yesterday, China's Chen Liuxun secured the delegation's first medal of the Games, taking bronze in the men's 49kg para powerlifting with a best lift of 161kg. — Xinhua

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Asian Para Games 2026 medal table					
Rank	Country/NPC	Gold	Silver	Bronze	Total
1	People's Republic of China	24	20	16	60
2	Japan	8	6	13	27
3	Uzbekistan	6	10	6	22
4	India	4	5	2	11
5	Kazakhstan	3	4	6	13
6	Republic of Korea	3	3	5	11
7	Islamic Republic of Iran	3	3	2	8
8	Thailand	1	5	2	8
9	Indonesia	1	1	8	10
10	Mongolia	1	1	1	3
11	Malaysia	1	0	1	2
11	Philippines	1	0	1	2
13	Iraq	1	0	0	1
13	Jordan	1	0	0	1
13	Kyrgyzstan	1	0	0	1
13	Chinese Taipei	1	0	0	1
17	Hong Kong, China	0	1	2	3

Tennis bagels

Zheng Qinwen ends 2026 season early to recover, train for 2027

WUHAN — China's tennis ace Zheng Qinwen has withdrawn from the remainder of the 2026 season to recover and begin winter training for 2027, her team said yesterday.

Zheng, the Paris 2024 Olympic gold medalist, underwent surgery on her right elbow after Wimbledon in 2025. She returned this season and gradually rediscovered her form, coming through qualifying at the US Open to reach the quarterfinals.

Playing on a wild card in Beijing in early October, she won seven matches to claim the China Open title, becoming the first home women's singles champion in the tournament's 20-year history.

After the China Open, Zheng withdrew from her hometown tournament in central China's Wuhan due to a right shoulder injury. She then pulled out of the Japan Women's Open in Osaka, the Pan Pacific Open in Tokyo and the Hong Kong Tennis Open.

When she withdrew from Wuhan earlier this month, the WTA published an article in which Zheng said the workload since her return had taken its toll.

"Since returning from injury, I have played a demanding stretch of tennis over the past month and

a half, competing at the US Open, the Billie Jean King Cup and the China Open," Zheng said. "My body is feeling very fatigued after this intense run of matches."

The 24-year-old will spend the coming months recovering and preparing for the 2027 season, according to her team. — Xinhua

Svitolina to split with fellow tennis star Monfils

PARIS — Elina Svitolina announced yesterday she is divorcing fellow tennis star Gael Monfils after five years of marriage.

Ukraine's Svitolina, the world number six, married French player Monfils in July 2021 and they have a four-year-old daughter together.

"I need to find my way back to myself and I cannot do that within our marriage," the 32-year-old Svitolina said in a social media post.

"It is the hardest truth I have ever had to face and the hardest thing I have ever had to tell the person I love."

Monfils, 40, retired from tennis earlier this month, despite having been expected to make farewell appearances in Lyon and at the Paris Masters later this month.

He had been given a wildcard for this week's ATP 250 tournament in Lyon, but organisers said he had withdrawn for personal reasons. — AFP

Hollywood's fresh take on tech titans: from heroes to villains

Paula Ramón

LOS ANGELES – Hollywood has found its new favoUrite villain: the onetime heroes of Silicon Valley.

From convicted biotech fraudster Elizabeth Holmes to tech giants Elon Musk, Mark Zuckerberg and Sam Altman, the marquee names are dominated by the headline makers who have wowed the world – and the markets – with promises of innovation.

“These figures used to be more on the aspirational side,” Monica Castillo, the film critic for the pop culture website The A.V. Club, told AFP.

“They were larger-than-life figures who bootstrapped their way to multibillion [US] dollar companies, and they were kind of seen as heroes who were like changing the world,” Castillo said.

“Then now... there’s sort of a level of disillusionment.”

Castillo said the world is now asking “harder questions” of its tech heroes, adding: “There’s a little bit more reflection because of what’s happened with this generation.”

Silicon Valley was once seen as a breeding ground for progressive-minded entrepreneurs, their politics running in parallel with their innovative solutions.

But lately, many of the industry’s A-listers have switched allegiance to US President Donald Trump and

his “America First” policies.

“Musk,” Alex Gibney’s searing four-hour documentary about the world’s richest man, dissects the career of the South Africa-born head of SpaceX and Tesla, from his beginnings as a tech genius to his alliance with Trump and the Republican Party.

Also in cinemas is “The Social Reckoning,” Aaron Sorkin’s follow-up to his Oscar-winning 2010 film “The Social Network.”

This time around, rather than trace the meteoric rise of the Facebook wunderkind, writer-director Sorkin tells the story of company whistleblower Frances Haugen (Oscar winner Mikey Madison) and how she revealed some of its more nefarious practices.

One of those was how its algorithms amplified hate speech by keeping users on the platform for as long as possible, and the dramatic consequences of that decision.

The films highlight how Musk and Zuckerberg amassed so much power that they were affecting US government policy, and how that reverberated around the world.

‘Terrifying’

No one is seen with a more skeptical and critical eye in Big Tech than Holmes, who once upended the biotechnology sector with Theranos, which pledged that



Theranos Inc’s founder Elizabeth Holmes (left) arrives, escorted by a prison official, at the Federal Prison Camp in Bryan, Texas, on May 30, 2023. – AFP

it could perform a host of medical tests using only a few drops of blood.

But the now-defunct company couldn’t deliver. Holmes was sentenced to more than 11 years in prison for fraud and conspiracy, and her fall from grace is chronicled in the buzzy documentary “You Can See Everything.”

Holmes unexpectedly opened her home to co-directors Nathan Fielder and Lance Oppenheim in the 34 days before heading to a Texas prison in a bid to tell her story in her own words. They eventually moved in.

The result – a strange mix of

documentary and reality television – is earning serious Oscars buzz.

Back on the fiction side, Italian director Luca Guadagnino’s “Artificial” stars Andrew Garfield as OpenAI chief Altman, who changed the world with his generative AI tool ChatGPT.

Matt Neglia, the editor in chief of the weekly audio and video show Next Best Picture, called the film “as entertaining as it is terrifying.”

“It’s a brilliantly written human story about power, control, ambition and greed that might be the most urgently relevant film of our time,” Neglia said.

‘Social anxieties’

For J.M. Tyree, a professor of cinema at Virginia Commonwealth University and the editor in chief of *Film Quarterly*, “popular movies always are reflecting these social anxieties of the day.”

“Right now, people are really worried about power being concentrated into the hands of just a few individuals at the expense of most of the rest of the citizens,” Tyree told AFP.

People have lost faith in “zillionaire tech moguls,” and are starting to see their flaws, he added.

“That’s maybe a common thread of these films, is that they’re not just holding wealth for themselves, but also their products don’t seem to be very good for society,” Tyree said.

This group of films attempts to showcase the tech titan, not their products.

In the process, Tyree notes, the filmmakers reveal that unlike in the past, when captains of industry launched art museums and libraries, this generation isn’t as interested in philanthropy.

Castillo says the directors appear to be seeking “some sort of accountability for all the damage” that these tech titans have wrought on society.

“The only way that they can punch back is through their movies,” she said. – AFP

‘Street Fighter’ wins N American box office

LOS ANGELES – Paramount’s action film “Street Fighter” karate-chopped the competition this past weekend with a US\$31 million debut at the North American box office, industry estimates showed on Sunday.

However, a buzzy three-hour documentary on tech fraudster Elizabeth Holmes was the talk of Tinseltown, after a stunning US\$15 million debut on less than 1,000

screens in the United States and Canada.

“Street Fighter,” based on the beloved Capcom video game, follows super-powered martial artists competing in a global tournament who uncover and battle a sinister conspiracy.

Andrew Koji, Noah Centineo and Callina Liang star in the film – the third feature-length adaptation of the video game and the first since

production company Legendary acquired the movie rights in 2023.

Jason Momoa and Curtis Jackson – better known as rapper “50 Cent” – also make appearances.

Analyst David A. Gross of Franchise Entertainment Research called the US\$31 million debut a “good opening” but noted “critics’ reviews are weak and the audience score is soft.”

“The film should recover its costs after playing in ancillary markets, in addition to adding value back to the franchise in all its forms – in film, TV and games,” he added.

In second place was A24’s hotly anticipated documentary “You Can See Everything,” co-directed by comedian Nathan Fielder and Lance Oppenheim.

The film, which follows Holmes at her home in 2023 during the month before she began an 11-year prison sentence, took in US\$15 million on just 855 screens, according to Exhibitor Relations.

Holmes was convicted of defrauding investors in her medical testing company Theranos after touting lofty promises she couldn’t deliver.

The scandal fuelled a media circus and was chronicled in a book, multiple podcasts, and the biographical mini-series “The Dropout,” starring Amanda Seyfried.

In “You Can See Everything,” comedian Fielder places himself inside the action, like in his previous projects that blur the lines

of documentary, social experiment and prank show.

The film has garnered much interest since its trailer – showing Holmes unblinkingly asking Fielder “Why would I deceive you?” – sparked a deluge of online memes, and a surprise debut at the Telluride Film Festival garnered rave reviews.

Deadline called the US\$15 million debut “easily the second best opening ever for a documentary at the box office after 2004’s ‘Fahrenheit 9/11.’”

Third place went to Universal and Blumhouse’s “Other Mommy,” which gained another US\$8.4 million after topping the box office the previous weekend with a US\$27.8 million debut.

The horror flick stars Oscar-winner Jessica Chastain in a dual role as a sinister entity terrorising a

child – made even worse by the fact that the demon resembles the girl’s mother.

In fourth place was 20th Century’s “Whalefall,” a survival-thriller film that debuted to only US\$8 million.

The movie follows a scuba diver who is swallowed by a whale and has an hour of oxygen to escape.

“At a cost of US\$60 million, the film won’t break even, even with relatively good business overseas,” said Gross.

Fifth place went to Focus Features’ new adaptation of the Jane Austen novel “Sense and Sensibility,” directed by Georgina Oakley.

The film, starring Daisy Edgar-Jones and George MacKay, took in an estimated US\$7.5 million.

– AFP



MMA fighters perform during the “Street Fighter” World Warrior Miami Screening with Noah Centineo at CMX Cinemas Dolphin 19 on October 14, in Miami, Florida. – AFP

World Weather

CHINA	ASIA-PACIFIC	WORLD	LUSOPHONE
Beijing 3°C~14°C	Manila 24°C~33°C	New York 9°C~21°C	Lisbon 13°C~22°C
Shanghai 19°C~29°C	Bangkok 24°C~33°C	London 9°C~13°C	Rio de Janeiro 20°C~23°C
Hong Kong 22°C~30°C	Tokyo 20°C~27°C	Frankfurt 8°C~14°C	Luanda 23°C~27°C
Taipei 22°C~34°C	Singapore 25°C~34°C	Vancouver 7°C~16°C	Maputo 17°C~27°C
Guangzhou 22°C~33°C	Kuala Lumpur 23°C~33°C	Paris 7°C~15°C	Dili 22°C~33°C
Nanjing 15°C~22°C	Jakarta 24°C~36°C	Moscow 0°C~10°C	São Tomé 25°C~30°C
Guilin 18°C~33°C	Seoul 13°C~22°C	Las Vegas 17°C~27°C	Praia 23°C~30°C
Xi'an 6°C~19°C	Sydney 15°C~23°C	Monte Carlo 17°C~21°C	Bissau 23°C~33°C

China's delegation enters the stadium during the opening ceremony of the Aichi-Nagoya Asian Para Games in Nagoya, Japan, on Sunday. – Xinhua



China's Hong Kong delegation enters the stadium during the opening ceremony of the Aichi-Nagoya Asian Para Games in Nagoya, Japan, on Sunday. – Xinhua

China's Macao delegation enters the stadium during the opening ceremony of the Aichi-Nagoya Asian Para Games in Nagoya, Japan, on Sunday. – Xinhua



Mona Agarwal of India celebrates after para shooting R2 Women's 10m air rifle standing SH1 at the Aichi-Nagoya Asian Para Games in Toyota of Aichi Prefecture, Japan, yesterday. – Xinhua

Chinese Taipei's delegation enters the stadium during the opening ceremony of the Aichi-Nagoya Asian Para Games in Nagoya, Japan, on Sunday. – Xinhua



Gold medalist Gabbasov Yerkin (centre) of Kazakhstan, silver medalist Park Jinho (left) of South Korea and bronze medalist Lee Jangho of South Korea pose for photos during the awarding ceremony for para shooting R1 Men's 10m air rifle standing SH1 at the Aichi-Nagoya Asian Para Games in Nagoya, Japan, yesterday. – Xinhua