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Govt inks setup deal with IR enterprises for 20 billion pataca guidance fund

6 operators to pay total of 9 billion patacas

Staff Reporter

A signing ceremony for the documents establishing the local Government Guidance Fund was held on Friday at Government Headquarters, marking the official launch of the fund's operations.

According to a statement by the Government Information Bureau (GCS), the ceremony was witnessed by Chief Executive Sam Hou Fai, Liaison Office Director Zheng Xincong and Secretary for Economy and Finance Dora Ng Wai Han. The documents were signed by Macao Investment Development Limited (MID) Chairman Alex Che Weng Keong alongside representatives from Macau's six integrated resort (IR) enterprises.

The Government Guidance Fund's initial phase totals 20 billion patacas. This comprises 11 billion patacas invested by the Macao Special Administrative Region (MSAR) Government from accumulated returns on fiscal reserves, and a combined 9.0 billion patacas to be gradually contributed by the six integrated resort enterprises as the initial tranche of social capital, or 45 percent of the total amount.

Chief Executive Sam Hou Fai (centre), Liaison Office Director Zheng Xincong (fifth from left), Secretary for Economy and Finance Dora Ng Wai Han (fifth from right), Macao Investment Development Limited (MID) Chairman Alex Che Weng Keong (fourth from left) and integrated resort operators pose on the sidelines of Friday's signing ceremony at Government Headquarters. – Photo: GCS

The fund is established and operated in accordance with Law No. 11/2025 (Investment Funds Law) and Administrative Regulation No. 26/2026 (Management System for the Government Guidance Fund), and is managed by Macao Investment Development Limited. Upholding the philosophy of long-termism and "patient capital", the fund adopts a three-tier structure consisting of a Guidance Fund, a Master Fund, and Sub-funds Both the master fund and sub-funds will be managed on a market-orientated basis by professional fund managers selected through open public tender, according to the statement.

The fund focuses its investments on emerging industries, industrial upgrading and transformation, commercialisation of scientific and technological achievements, and tech start-ups. It aims to support the integrated development of Macau, the Guangdong-Macao In-Depth Cooperation Zone in Hengqin, and the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area, the statement underlined.

Addressing the ceremony, Ng pointed out that this year marks the start of both the nation's 15th Five-Year Plan and the MSAR's 3rd Five-Year Plan. The MSAR Government is proactively aligning with national development strategies and fully implementing its "1+4"* strategy for appropriate economic diversification to continually enhance the resilience of Macau's economy. She noted that promoting appropriate economic diversification is a "must-answer question" for Macau, requiring joint efforts from both the government and all sectors of civil society.

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Chinese motorcycle entrepreneur sets world record

Zhang Xue, the founder of Chinese motorcycle manufacturer ZXMOTO, waves after setting a new Guinness World Record yesterday by riding a modified motorcycle 40.74 kilometers across open water in his hometown of Mayang Miao Autonomous County in Hunan Province. – Xinhua

CHANGSHA – Zhang Xue, founder of Chinese motorcycle manufacturer ZXMOTO, set a Guinness World Record yesterday by riding a modified motorcycle 40.74 kilometers across open water in his hometown of Mayang Miao Autonomous County in sHunan Province.

Riding a specially modified ZXMOTO MX450, Zhang made several back-and-forth runs across a river to set the record for the longest distance traveled on open water by a modified motorcycle.

"I have strong faith that I can make it happen. Even if I fail, I will pursue it without hesitation. I really enjoy the process," Zhang said.

The achievement marked the culmination of a pursuit stretching back to 2009, when Zhang first attempted to ride a motorcycle across water using rudimentary modifications. On that occasion, he fell into the water four times and managed a maximum distance of just 20 meters.

For yesterday's attempt, the MX450 was fitted with amphibious skis, an enlarged fuel tank and additional waterproofing.

The motorcycle builds up speed on land before skimming across the water, with a front ski providing steering and the rear tire pushing water backward to generate propulsion.

Zhang said staging the record attempt in his hometown gave the achievement added significance. *– Xinhua*

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China marks anniversary of Taiwan's recovery with events across Taiwan Strait

China yesterday marked the 81st anniversary of its recovery of Taiwan and observed Taiwan Recovery Day, with commemorative events held across the Taiwan Strait.

– Story on p. 7

British 'heirs of slavery' back reparations

Caribbean nations campaigning for slavery reparations have won support from an unexpected source – the descendants of some of Britain's most prominent families to have benefitted from the slave trade. *– Story on p. 10*

Demonstrators wounded as police clear housing protest camps in Lisbon, Porto

Portuguese police again cleared tents set up by protesters against skyrocketing housing prices overnight yesterday, with organisers criticising the brutality of the officers involved.

– Story on p. 12

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29 pct of kindergarten, primary school kids are nearsighted

Armindo Neves

Health Bureau (SSM) officials announced during a routine meeting on Thursday that the myopia rate among local school children has reached 29 percent.

According to an SSM statement on Friday, the bureau held the third meeting of its 7th Term of the Medical Affairs Council on Thursday, chaired by Health Bureau Director Alvis Lo Iek Long.

The meeting, the statement said, shared President Xi Jinping's speech at the National Meeting on Health and exchanged views on how to implement its guidelines in light of Macau's actual situation and medical work.

This unlocated photo provided by the Health Bureau (SSM) on Friday shows its director-cum-Medical Affairs Council Chairman Alvis Lo Iek Long (centre) chairing the council's third meeting on Thursday.

In the statement, Dr Lo emphasised that the council serves as an important platform for exchange within Macau's medical sector. He expressed hope that council members, through shared learning and in-depth discussions on President Xi's speech, would consider how to put these principles into practice in their daily medical services and professional work. In this way, they can pool the strength of the medical sector to jointly promote the development of Macau's healthcare services and contribute to the building of a "Healthy China", according to Dr Lo.

The council's Vice-Chairman Lai Kai Seng recommended that the bureau continue to push the "gateway" of health further into the community and into families. He urged the government to optimise public-private collaboration, tiered diagnosis and treatment, and referral and triage arrangements. Furthermore, he highlighted the importance of deepening medical exchanges within the Greater Bay Area (GBA), promoting innovation in traditional Chinese medicine, and improving the mechanism for the mutual recognition of laboratory and examination results – integrating these concepts into daily medical services and professional practice.

Additionally, SSM officials reported on the achievements of the Student Health Care Programme. The participating council members also discussed and offered suggestions on revising the regulations concerning advertising for professional activities under the "Code of Ethics for Health Professionals".

In the 2025–2026 academic year, the statement said, the Student Health Care Programme covered 97 school sections, with over 49,000 students taking part – a participation rate of 94 percent. The data showed that the myopia rate among students stood at 29 percent (only 1.8 percent in Kindergarten Grade 1, but rising to over 60 percent by Primary Grade 6); the rate of overweight and obesity was 13.5 percent; and more than 40 percent of Primary Grade 3 and Primary Grade 5 students were suspected of having dental caries.

To further enhance the service experience, the 2026–2027 academic year will see the rollout of electronic health summaries, allowing parents to view and download relevant information via the "Macao One Account", the statement noted.

Council members attending the meeting affirmed the programme's achievements and put forward suggestions regarding student health tracking records, precise data integration, mental health, and health education and publicity, jointly exploring ways to further safeguard students' health, the statement said. ■

Govt inks setup deal with IR enterprises for 20 billion pataca guidance fund

Continued from p.1

Ng emphasised that industrial upgrading, technological innovation, and the commercialisation of research results require substantial, long-term capital investment. Drawing on experience from mature neighbouring markets, the MSAR Government's establishment of the guidance fund serves as an innovative fiscal policy initiative. By pooling social capital through fund investment mechanisms and market-driven management, the policy and market forces can synergise to jointly cultivate Macau's emerging and future industries, reflecting an organic combination of a "promising government" and an "efficient market".

'Deeply rooted in Macau, playing key role'

Ng stressed that the six integrated resort enterprises are deeply rooted in Macau and play a key role in supporting its growth as a World Centre of Tourism and Leisure. They also continue to fulfil non-gaming investment commitments under their concession contracts, contributing to Macau's economic diversification. The establishment of this fund stems from friendly consultations between the government and the six enterprises, demonstrating a spirit of unity and solidifying the business sector's strong confidence in Macau's future. She expressed gratitude for the six enterprises' support and commended the hard work of the joint task teams.

Breakdown of the 6 operators' contributions

Based on stock exchange data provided by the six integrated resort (IR) operators, according to a news report by public broadcaster TDM on Saturday, their contributions to the MSAR Government Guidance Fund, in line with the agreements signed on Friday, are as follows: Sands China, 2.3 billion patacas (25.5 percent of 9.0 billion patacas); Galaxy Entertainment Group (GEG), 2.27 billion patacas (25.2 percent); Wynn Macau, 1.37 billion patacas (15.2 percent); MGM China Holdings, 1.24 billion patacas (13.8 percent); SJM Holdings, 992.7 million patacas (11.0 percent); and Melco Resorts & Entertainment, 828 million patacas (9.2 percent).

The six concessions are slated to expire at the end of 2032, with a potential exceptional extension of up to three years under specific extraordinary circumstances.

According to data from the Gaming Inspection and Coordination Bureau (DICJ), the six operators own a total of 20 casinos - SJM and Sands own five each, Galaxy and Melco three each, and Wynn and MGM two each. In the first nine months of the year, the integrated resort operators' gross revenue from games of chance stood at 187.1 billion patacas, a year-on-year growth of 3.2 percent. The government's tax revenue from concessions reached 3.29 billion patacas in the first eight months of the year, up by 2.4 percent year-on-year, according to the Financial Services Bureau (DSF). ■

** Macau's "1+4" development strategy is the MSAR Government's official roadmap for appropriate economic diversification, aimed at reducing the city's reliance on gaming revenues by fostering sustainable growth across new sectors. The framework breaks down into:*

"1": Integrated Tourism & Leisure – Upgrading and consolidating Macau's core identity as a World Centre of Tourism and Leisure by expanding non-gaming attractions, cultural offerings, and sports/entertainment events.

+"4": a) Big Health / Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM): Developing TCM R&D, manufacturing, healthcare services, and medical tourism; b) Modern Finance: Promoting wealth management, bond issuance, cross-border financial services, and fintech; c) High Tech: Supporting microelectronics, AI, scientific research, and tech transfer in connection with Hengqin; d) MICE, Culture & Sports: Expanding major conventions/exhibitions, cultural events, and sports commerce to draw international visitors. – Gemini, MPD

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MacauPOST

Macau Weather

FINE APART FROM CLOUDY PERIODS.
LIGHT RAIN AT FIRST.
FORCE 2 TO 4 EAST TO NORTHEASTERLY WINDS.
RELATIVE HUMIDITY WILL RANGE BETWEEN 50% AND 90%.

24ºC~30ºC

Source: SMG

APM conference discusses workplace mental health in AI era

Macau Psychology Association (APM) President Chiang Kin Teng (left) and Chinese Psychological Society (CPS) President Luo Yuejia looks on before talking to the media on the sidelines of Saturday's academic conference held at Rio Hotel Macau in Zape. – Photos: Armindo Neves

Armindo Neves

The Macau Psychology Association (APM) held its annual academic conference to discuss workplace mental health in the AI era at Rio Hotel Macau in Zape on Saturday.

The event, themed "RE:WIRE – A Solution for Workplace Mental Health in the AI Era", also featured the swearing-in ceremony of the group's 14th Board of Directors and Supervisory Board, according to an APM statement.

The statement noted that the conference focused on the psychological challenges brought about by the widespread adoption of AI and changes in working patterns. The discussions explored how individuals and organisations can adapt to technological transformation from the perspectives of psychological science, organisational management, and workplace practice.

APM President Chiang Kin Teng said during the opening ceremony that while AI enhances work efficiency, it also brings anxiety over job displacement and the pressure to learn new skills.

Drawing on the metaphor of "neuroplasticity", Chiang pointed out that people can relearn and adapt amid change, echoing the idea of "rewiring" implied by "RE:WIRE".

Chiang emphasised that when introducing new technologies, enterprises should pay attention to employees' psychological adjustment and sense of well-being, as well as build an organisational culture that promotes physical and mental health – in line with Macau's goal of promoting "healthy enterprises".

Speaking to reporters on the sidelines of the event, Chiang said that AI has rapidly entered the working environment in recent years, causing anxiety among workers, and that the association advocates for enterprises to proactively bring a culture of physical and mental well-being into the workplace. He added that his group will promote the professionalisation and standardisation of psychology, and encouraged members of the public experiencing emotional distress to make good use of hotlines and community resources provided by both the government and non-governmental organisations.

The conference also invited Chinese Psychological Society (CPS) President Luo Yuejia to conduct a sharing session.

Luo told reporters that the purpose of his visit was to strengthen cooperation between the two organisations, talk about experiences regarding industry standards, and jointly promote the development of psychology and mental health services for the public. ■

GEG, MSO mark 6 years of 'Partner Training Programme'

Macau Special Olympics (MSO) National Director Hetzer Siu Yu Hong gives insights on local athletes' performances and training facility needs during a press interview yesterday.

Guests, athletes and event mascots pose for a group photo before the launch of the sixth "GEG Run with a Partner Training Programme" yesterday at the Macau Workers' Stadium. – Photos: Sherwin Hng

Sherwin Hng

Galaxy Entertainment Group (GEG) and Macau Special Olympics (MSO) launched the sixth edition of the "GEG Run with a Partner Training Programme" yesterday, with more than 150 participants joining the inclusive "fun run" at the Campo dos Operários da Associação Geral dos Operários de Macau (澳門工會聯合總會工人體育場).

The programme, sponsored by GEG and co-organised with MSO, brings together MSO athletes, GEG staff, students, and community representatives to promote inclusion through sport.

Former Hong Kong Olympic swimmer Alex Fong Lik-sun (方力申) was appointed MSO's "Ambassador of Health, Inclusion and Care for the Macau Special Olympics" at the opening ceremony. Fong, an actor and singer, interacted with athletes and participants during the event, which featured team challenges and interactive activities designed to encourage cooperation between people with and without special educational needs. An information booth also encouraged residents to volunteer as guide runners.

MSO Executive Director Hetzer Siu Yu Hong said the six-year programme had helped build connections between runners and athletes, with participants increasingly becoming teammates. He thanked GEG for its continued support in promoting inclusion through community sports activities.

Speaking about Macau's delegation at the Asian Para Games, which concluded on Saturday, Siu said the team's results had broadly met expectations, with athletes doing their best in their respective events.

The delegation included experienced competitors and younger athletes, some as young as 14. While some veteran athletes maintained their standards, injuries affected the performances of some of the local athletes, Siu said, adding that the younger athletes had performed reasonably well but needed more opportunities to compete in major events to gain experience and improve their results.

The delegation, which failed to win any medals, was slated to return to Macau last night, Siu said.

Siu also said additional resources could help Macau's athletes progress further, noting that limited training facilities remained a challenge. Hengqin and other areas in the Greater Bay Area (GBA) could provide venues for longer training camps, although arranging staff to accompany athletes remained difficult, he said.

Siu added that more parents were enquiring about sports opportunities for children with disabilities, reflecting growing recognition of sport as a potential long-term development path. He also said increasing female participation in disability sports warranted further study.

In November, Fong is scheduled to take part in two charity events supported by Galaxy resorts: a 35-kilometre Hong Kong-Macau charity swim and the "Waves Upon Waves" Hong Kong and Macau All-Star Charity Concert at Broadway Theatre in Broadway Macau. All concert ticket proceeds will go to charitable organisations.

Participants in the running programme will continue training with MSO athletes ahead of the Galaxy Entertainment Macau International Marathon on December 6. ■

The Young Post

MONDAY October 26, 2026

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.

Pooi To Students Shine in Maths Comic Contest:

Unlocking the Beauty of Maths Through Visual Storytelling

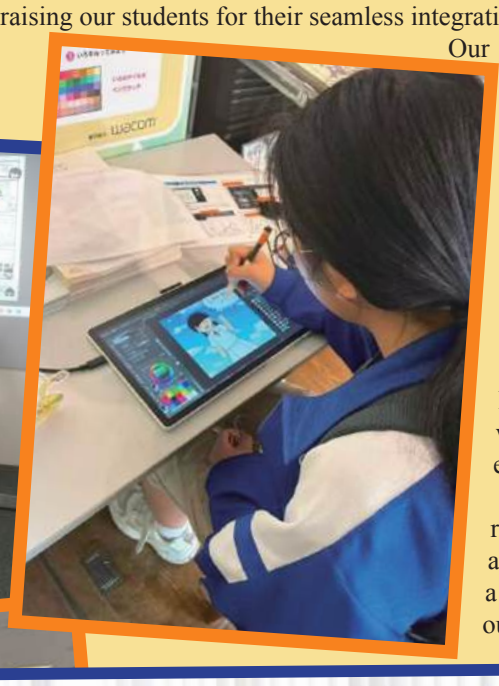
Commentary by Pooi To Middle School Grade 9 students Konstanz Choi Chi Iao, Wong Wai Cheng, and Long Hio Kei

The Maths Comic Contest hosted by Kyoto Computer Gakuin recently concluded with great success! A group of creative students from Macau Pooi To Middle School stood out from the crowd with their highly imaginative maths comics, bringing home an impressive total of 3 First Prizes, 4 Second Prizes, and 5 Third Prizes. This outstanding achievement reflects the dedicated efforts of both teachers and students in exploring the "visual storytelling of maths" in our science education.

Breaking the "Boring Maths" Stereotype with Adventurous Plots

During the preparation phase, our teachers give a core direction with the participants: "A maths comic isn't just about directly copying theorems into panels. It requires breaking down the mathematical thinking process step-by-step through the characters' adventures. Only then can we shatter the stereotype that maths is boring."

Teachers emphasised the importance of building a captivating story to engage readers while accurately handling mathematical logic. The plot progression and mathematical reasoning had to go hand in hand, ensuring that maths concepts were never twisted just for the sake of visual effects. This golden rule became the guiding principle for our students and earned high praise from the competition's judges.



When Maths Meets Comic Storytelling

For this contest, Pooi To students closely followed the theme of "Maths in Daily Life", cleverly weaving geometric shapes, sequence patterns, and maths theorems they had learnt in class into original storylines. From a protagonist breaking into a Geometry Kingdom to solve puzzles to time-travelling to uncover hidden sequence codes, students transformed abstract mathematical rules into thrilling, continuous adventures.

Using detailed storyboards and rich visual compositions, their works maintained the engaging nature of comics while making maths concepts crystal clear. This allowed readers to solve maths puzzles alongside the main characters. Ultimately, several students claimed top honours thanks to their accurate mathematical expressions and unique art styles.

Expert Feedback and Student Voices

At the event, a professor introduced the history of Japanese manga, highlighting its unique value as a medium for popular science. He then took the time to review every single comic submitted by our students, providing detailed feedback on their story concepts, visual expressions, and the way they interpreted mathematical knowledge. During the award ceremony, the professor personally presented the prizes, highly praising our students for their seamless integration of maths and comics.

Our award-winning schoolmates were eager to give their thoughts. Choi Chi Iao, who won a Third Prize, said, "I'm so happy to win this time! I will keep exploring how to combine maths and comics to create even more interesting works."

Wong Wai Cheng, a Second Prize winner, expressed her gratitude: "I really appreciate the professor's detailed comments. This experience has truly inspired my creativity, and I will definitely continue to dig into the endless fun of maths in the future."

This success is not only a recognition of our students' artistic and mathematical talents but also a testament to the effectiveness of our school's "Subject Knowledge + Artistic Storytelling" teaching approach. Moving forward, the school will continue to promote creative maths and science activities, encouraging everyone to discover more innovative ways to make learning maths both imaginative and logical!

Photos taken during the Maths Comic Contest hosted by Kyoto Computer Gakuin ("College" in Japanese) recently. – Photos courtesy of Pooi To Middle School

Macau issues Level 1 travel alert for France

Staff Reporter

The Macao Government Tourism Office (MGTO) issued on Saturday its Level 1 travel alert for France:

In view of the current security situation in France, the Macao Special Administrative Region (MSAR) Government has issued its Level 1 travel alert to France.

"Macao residents who plan to visit France or are currently there are advised to step up vigilance for safety and stay tuned for the latest announcements by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China (PRC) and the Chinese Embassy in France. In case of emergencies, they should contact the Chinese Embassy in France, the Hotline of the Global Emergency Call Center for Consular Protection and Services, or the Tourism Hotline".

MGTO "is paying close attention to the situation in France. So far, no related enquiry or assistance request from Macau residents has been received through the Tourism Hotline".

For the list of 110 countries and travel destinations currently covered by the Macao SAR Travel Alert System, and more information about the classification of travel alerts, as well as special reminders regarding the countries affected by current situations, please visit the webpage for travel alert: https://www.dst.gov.mo/en/tourism-crisis-management/tourism-crisis-management-travel-alert.html.

Level 1 is the lowest of Macau's three-tier travel alert system.

In case of need, MSAR residents may contact the following:

24-hour tourism hotline (853) 2833 3000;

Chinese Embassy in France for consular protection and assistance on Tel: +33-153758840 or +33-640953607, and its website: https://fr.china-embassy.gov.cn;

Global Emergency Call Center for Consular Protection and Services of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on its hotline (24 hours): +86-10-12308 or +86-10-65612308, and Chinese Consular Service Website: https://cs.mfa.gov.cn/zggmzhw/lsbh/aqtx. ■

Myanmar friendship group marks 'Tazaungdaing Festival'

Guests and representatives including Macau Myanmar Friendship Association Director General Tim Wong (second from right) and Consul General of Myanmar in Hong Kong and Macau Phoo Pwint Ko Ko (fifth from right) posing for a group photo before officiating the event celebrating the Tazaungdaing Festival at the "Three Lamps" roundabout. – Photo: Rui Pastorin

Rui Pastorin

The Macau Myanmar Friendship Association yesterday organised an event celebrating the Tazaungdaing Festival, aka "Festival of Lights", at Rotunda de Carlos da Maia (colloquially known as "Three Lamps" roundabout – 三盞燈) yesterday, drawing a large crowd of participants.

The festival is a major traditional Burmese holiday held on the full moon day of Tazaungmon ("the month of bright illumination", typically falling in November) to celebrate the end of the rainy season and mark the Kathina ("firmness" – a symbol of enduring spiritual merit season), as noted by AI chatbot Gemini.

The Macau iteration yesterday marked the first time that the event was held in the city, Macau Myanmar Friendship Association Director General Tim Wong (黃德來), told the *Post* at the venue yesterday afternoon, estimating that the event expected around 5,000 visits throughout the day from morning through evening. He added that other than the Thingyan Festival, aka Myanmar New Year, this event is among Myanmar's largest celebrations.

The event attracted guests and representatives including Consul General of Myanmar in Hong Kong and Macau Phoo Pwint Ko Pho, while it also invited monks from Myanmar to chant prayers and impart blessings. Several performances were also part of the programme, while the distribution of free packs of rice proved particularly popular among attendees as well as curious passers-by, drawing long queues and crowds of people.

Wong said that through the event, the organisers hoped to give blessings to all attendees for the present and the future. "We hope for them [attendees] to have good health and good futures", Wong said. ■

Maritime Festival attracts over 4,500 visitors

Khalel Vallo

The 2026 Maritime Festival opened at the Government Shipyard (筷子基政府船坞) in Fai Chi Kei yesterday, attracting more than 4,500 participants to its Maritime Fun Day, which featured vessel displays, rescue boat tours and activities promoting maritime safety, according to a Marine and Water Bureau (DSAMA) statement yesterday.

Organised by the bureau, the festival aims to introduce residents to maritime professions, raise awareness of maritime safety and promote Macau's nautical culture through a range of activities.

DSAMA Director Susana Wong Soi Man said at the opening ceremony that the festival offered residents diverse maritime experiences, allowing them to learn about maritime operations from different perspectives, acquire safety knowledge and appreciate Macau's distinctive nautical heritage.

The Maritime Fun Day, the festival's main event, was held yesterday. Visitors could view various vessels and maritime equipment and board rescue boats. Activities also included simulated water cannon demonstrations, workshops and game booths themed around maritime safety.

Further activities will take place this coming weekend at Guia Lighthouse, the Maritime Museum and the Maritime Training School, according to the statement. Visitors can take part in remote-controlled model boat activities, interactive games, workshops and guided tours without prior registration.

Meanwhile, speaking to the media yesterday, Wong Soi Man said that passenger traffic at Taipa Ferry Terminal accounted for about 60 percent of Macau's ferry passengers, while the Outer Harbour Ferry Terminal handled around 40 percent.

Marine and Water Bureau (DSAMA) Director Susana Wong Soi Man speaks to the media during yesterday's 2026 Maritime Festival opening ceremony at the Government Shipyard (筷子基政府船坞) in Fai Chi Kei yesterday. – Photo: Khalel Vallo

Wong said that the city's two terminals currently handled about seven to eight million passenger trips annually, below the more than 10 million recorded before the COVID-19 pandemic.

Regarding the future of the Outer Harbour Ferry Terminal, Wong said the bureau would discuss possible uses with the government's planning department, adding that there were no current plans to cancel the terminal. She said both terminals had their own customer bases, although passenger movements had shifted following the development of the Taipa terminal.

Additionally, addressing the upcoming implementation of Law No. 14/2026 (Maritime Area Use Law) on December 1, Wong noted that six existing maritime occupation projects – including leisure yacht clubs and utility intake facilities – will automatically transition into temporary use licences valid until late November 2027. ■

MIF, MFE & PLPEX conclude, draw over 90,000 visits

Rui Pastorin

Over 90,000 visits, including more than 17,000 trade visitors, were drawn to the four-day concurrent 31st Macao International Trade & Investment Fair (31st MIF), and the 2026 Portuguese Speaking Countries Products and Services Exhibition (Macao) (2026PLPEX), and the Macao Franchise Expo 2026 (2026MFE).

Having concluded on Saturday and featuring over 1,000 exhibitors showcasing everything from technology to IP brands, the three fairs, which last year saw more than 85,000 visits, were held at The Venetian Macao's Cotai Expo. The period also saw the generate over 2,000 jobs during the period, the Commerce and Investment Promotion Institute (IPIM) said in a statement on Saturday.

From the over 1,100 business matching sessions held across the event's run this year, the statement noted that around 140 agreements were signed, among which 80 percent were related to the "1+4" industries, while 12 percent involved Portuguese- and Spanish-speaking countries.

The local government's "1+4" economic modernisation strategy aims to consolidate and diversify the development of the city's tourism and leisure industry, i.e., the "1" element, while putting special emphasis on promoting the development of four new key industries, i.e., the additional "4" elements, namely (+1) big health mainly driven by traditional Chinese medicine (TCM), (+2) modern finance, (+3) high-tech, and (+4) MICE and commerce as well as culture and sport.

This undated handout photo provided by the Commerce and Investment Promotion Institute on Saturday shows business matching sessions taking place during the concurrent, four-day 31st Macao International Trade & Investment Fair (31st MIF), the 2026 Portuguese Speaking Countries Products and Services Exhibition (Macao) (2026PLPEX) that took place from Wednesday through Saturday.

The statement added that IPIM also showcased Macau's investment environment and business advantages to over 360 enterprises, noting that, to date, 78 enterprises from Brazil, Portugal, Singapore, Switzerland and elsewhere have submitted project proposals for investment in Macau, representing a year-on-year increase of 14 percent.

The statement added that among them, 20 have "commenced or completed company registration procedures, covering sectors including high technology, Big Health, specialised financial services, cultural tourism and MICE".

The statement said that 60 PSC enterprises and eight companies from the Chinese mainland have submitted project proposals for expanding into markets in China and Portuguese-speaking countries (PSCs). ■

Macau launches cultural festival celebrating China, PSCs

Khalel Vallo

The 8th Encounter in Macao – Arts and Cultural Festival between China and the Portuguese-speaking Countries (PSCs) and the 29th Lusofonia Festival opened on Friday, bringing together nearly 690 artists and performers for almost 50 programmes celebrating cultural exchanges between China and Portuguese-speaking communities.

The opening ceremony was held at the Amphitheatre of the Taipa Houses, with the Lusofonia Festival running from Friday through yesterday at the same venue. Organised by the Cultural Affairs Bureau (IC), the arts and cultural festival features performances, exhibitions, concerts, a film festival and a Chinese and Portuguese picture book fair at venues across Macau, according to a statement by the bureau on Friday.

The 29th Lusofonia Festival, organised by IC and co-organised by the Macao Government Tourism Office (MGTO) and the Municipal Affairs Bureau (IAM), placed a special focus on Brazilian culture in recognition of the China-Brazil Cultural Year. It also showcased the traditions of Portuguese-speaking communities from Angola, Brazil, Cape Verde, Guinea-Bissau, Mozambique, Portugal, São Tomé and Príncipe, Timor-Leste, Goa, Daman and Diu, as well as the Macanese community.

Visitors could enjoy music, handicrafts, traditional costumes, food and tourism information, alongside performances by artistic groups from Brazil, Equatorial Guinea and Timor-Leste and more than 40 local Portuguese-speaking artists. Activities also included traditional Portuguese games, table football tournaments and games for children, while food stalls in Taipa Municipal Garden and Largo do Carmo offered specialities from Portuguese-speaking countries.

Community performances under the programme "Where Culture Flourishes, Happiness Happens – Traditional Music and Dance Performances in the Community" took place on Saturday and Sunday at Lok Kuan Building in Seac Pai Van, Lok Yeung Fa Yuen and Anim'Arte NAM VAN, the statement said, adding that the programme featured the Fumei Yingge Dance Troupe from Puning, Guangdong, the EPO Dance Troupe from Equatorial Guinea and the Timor Furak dance troupe from Timor-Leste.

The wider arts and cultural festival will continue with several programmes through early 2027. The Chinese and Portuguese Picture Book Fair, themed "Books Nourish the Soul", runs through November 1 at Carmo Hall and Carmo Fair, displaying more than 1,000 picture books and children's books, mainly in Chinese and Portuguese, alongside book promotion sessions and workshops, the statement said.

The 8th China and the Portuguese-speaking Countries Film Festival, themed "Resonance of Light and Shadow", will present its opening film at Anim'Arte NAM VAN on November 13, followed by nearly 30 works at Cinematheque•Passion from November 16 to December 7.

Mozambican singer Stewart Sukuma will perform with the Macao Chinese Orchestra (OM), under Music Director and Principal Conductor Zhang Lie, on November 14. Meanwhile, the 2026 Annual Arts Exhibition between China and the Portuguese-speaking Countries will run from November 2026 to January 2027 at the Taipa Houses' Exhibitions Gallery, featuring contemporary visual art from the Chinese mainland, Macau and Portuguese-speaking countries. ■

Festivalgoers stroll around the 29th Lusofonia at the Taipa Houses Museum yesterday.
– Photo: Khalel Vallo

SSM sets up 13 e-cigarette disposal boxes

Rui Pastorin

The Health Bureau (SSM) announced in a statement yesterday that e-cigarette disposal boxes will be available at 13 locations throughout Macau from today until June 30 next year, aiming to "facilitate the proper disposal of e-cigarettes".

The bureau reminded members of the public that starting on July 1, 2027, anyone (including residents and tourists) using or possessing e-cigarettes outside their residence may be subject to a fine of 1,500 patacas. Moreover, from January 1, the fine for carrying e-cigarettes into or out of the city will increase from the 4,000 patacas to 10,000 patacas.

The statement noted that the 13 locations include the Health Centres in Tap Siac, Fai Chi Kei, Areia Preta, Ilha Verde, Praia do Manduco, R. de Constantino Brito, Ocean Gardens, Nossa Senhora do Carmo – Lago, and Seac Pai Van. Other than the centres, the remaining locations comprise the health stations in Zone A (新城A區) and Coloane, as well as the public Conde de São Januário Hospital Centre, and the Tobacco and Alcohol Prevention and Control Office (GPCTA). ■

This undated handout photo provided by the Health Bureau (SSM) shows an e-cigarette disposal bin set up at one of the 13 locations.

Gongbei Customs seizes 91 kg of silver hidden in Macau vehicle

Sherwin Hng

Zhuhai's Gongbei Customs seized 91 kg of silver granules concealed in a Macau-registered vehicle at the Hengqin Port (customs and immigration checkpoint) recently, the customs authority said in a statement on Saturday.

According to the statement, customs officers at Hengqin Port noticed an anomaly in the X-ray images of a single-plate vehicle from Macau while conducting on-site inspections of cross-border passenger vehicles.

Upon further inspection, officers discovered silver granules hidden in a concealed metal compartment welded beneath the vehicle's rear-seat power battery, the statement said.

An appraisal confirmed that the seized silver granules were of fine silver purity, with a net weight of 91 kg.*

The customs anti-smuggling department formally opened a criminal case last Tuesday, according to the statement. ■

**Based on current raw silver spot prices (US$1,730 to US$1,755 per kg), 91 kg of pure silver (.999 fine) is worth up to 1.25 million patacas. – Gemini*

This undated handout provided by Zhuhai's Gongbei Customs on Friday shows 91 kg of silver granules seized by its officers at the Hengqin Port border checkpoint.

Local student steals 55,000-patacas from dorm: police

Sherwin Hng

The Judiciary Police (PJ) arrested a 21-year-old local university student for stealing a Chinese mainland student's laptop and other belongings worth about 55,000 patacas from a university dormitory in Cotai, a PJ spokesperson said during a regular press conference on Friday.

The suspect, surnamed Loi, is a local resident. The victim is a Chinese mainland male university student who did not know the suspect and is neither in the same faculty nor class as him.

According to the spokesperson, officers received a report on the evening of October 4 that a laptop and other belongings had been stolen from a student's dormitory room at a university in Cotai.

The investigation found that the suspect lived in a different room in the same dormitory building. On the day of the theft, he passed the victim's room and noticed that the door had been left ajar, with nobody inside. He then entered the room and stole the belongings before leaving the dormitory.

The spokesperson said Judiciary Police officers identified the suspect during their investigation and arrested him at his dormitory at noon on Thursday.

The police recovered most of the stolen electronic devices and are continuing to investigate the whereabouts of the remaining items.

The Judiciary Police said there was strong evidence that the suspect committed aggravated theft. The case has been transferred to the Public Prosecutions Office (MP) for follow-up investigation. ■

This undated handout photo provided by the Judiciary Police (PJ) on Friday shows stolen electronic devices and other items recovered during the investigation of a Cotai dormitory theft.

CDSJ5 conference explores inclusive education development

Armindo Neves

Colégio Diocesano de São José 5 (CDSJ5) Principal Wong Kin Man announced during Saturday's "Greater Bay Area Sign Bilingualism and Co-enrolment Education Conference" that the event aimed to explore inclusive education.

The conference was held at the Macau General Union of Neighbourhood Associations' (UGAMM – widely known as Kai Fong, its short name in Cantonese) headquarters in Toi San district.

According to Wong, CDSJ5 is the only school in Macau to implement sign bilingual inclusive education, covering kindergarten through to Primary Grade 6, and currently has 36 hearing-impaired students.

Wong emphasised that the essence of education is to recognise the unique value of every child, and expressed the hope that the forum would bring together the expertise of specialists from the three regions to open up new ideas for inclusive education in the Greater Bay Area (GBA).

According to the conference's booklet, it featured two panel discussions, respectively examining the historical evolution of deaf education and academic support across Guangdong, Hong Kong, and Macau, as well as counselling support for the inclusive education of deaf students.

Colégio Diocesano de São José 5 (CDSJ5) Principal Wong Kin Man addresses Saturday's conference held at the Macau General Union of Neighbourhood Associations' (UGAMM) headquarters in Toi San district. – Photos: Armindo Neves

Dr Stephen Chan Teng Fong from the Diocesan Catholic Education Commission (C.D.E.C.), delivers a keynote speech during Saturday's conference.

The speakers included Guangzhou Qicong School Vice Principal Long Weidong; Chinese University of Hong Kong (CUHK) Centre for Sign Linguistics and Deaf Studies Head Dr Chris Yiu (姚勤敏); Lau Tsz Lui, Hong Kong's first counselling psychologist fluent in sign language; and Lei Wan, head of the Student Support Team at CDSJ5, alongside Deputy Head Cheng Zhi Xiong, among others, who shared practical experience in inclusive education from their respective regions.

For the keynote speech, the conference invited Dr Stephen Chan Teng Fong from the Diocesan Catholic Education Commission (C.D.E.C.) to give an overview of the development of special education in Macau.

Dr Chan pointed out that there are approximately 3,086 integrated students (students with special educational needs) in Macau, and that 70 percent of schools have implemented inclusive education. However, the localisation of special education teachers and therapists still needs to be strengthened. He recommended that schools set up dedicated special education teams, build an inclusive campus culture with whole-school participation, and plan career pathways for special education students at an early stage. ■

China marks anniversary of Taiwan's recovery with events across Taiwan Strait

BEIJING/TAIPEI – China yesterday marked the 81st anniversary of its recovery of Taiwan and observed Taiwan Recovery Day, with commemorative events held across the Taiwan Strait to honor the shared history of resistance against Japanese aggression and reaffirm calls for national reunification.

A symposium in Fuzhou, capital of Fujian Province, brought together about 200 participants, including descendants of Taiwan's anti-Japanese resistance fighters and revolutionary martyrs, young people from both sides of the Strait, representatives from Hong Kong, Macao and overseas communities, and experts and scholars.

Song Tao, head of both the Taiwan Work Office of the Communist Party of China (CPC) Central Committee and the Taiwan Affairs Office of the State Council, said at the symposium that the establishment of Taiwan Recovery Day underscored China's firm resolve to safeguard its sovereignty and territorial integrity and helped consolidate the international consensus on upholding the one-China principle.

Song urged people on both sides of the Strait to carry forward the spirit of the Chinese people's resistance against Japanese aggression and resolutely oppose "Taiwan independence" secessionism and foreign interference. He pledged firm support for patriots in Taiwan who support reunification and reaffirmed the mainland's commitment to advancing national reunification.

Hung Hsiu-chu, former chairwoman of the Chinese Kuomintang party and chairwoman of the Taiwan-based Chinese Cyan Geese Peace Education Foundation, said people on both sides of the Strait should carry forward the spirit of those who defended the country's territory and work toward peaceful reunification.

Following its war against China in 1894, Japan seized Taiwan and the Penghu Islands in 1895, subjecting Taiwan to five decades of colonial rule. Taiwan's recovery in 1945 marked a hard-won victory in the Chinese people's resistance against Japanese aggression during World War II and a defining moment in the nation's efforts to safeguard its sovereignty and territorial integrity.

This photo shows a commemorative stamp issued by China Post to mark Taiwan Recovery Day. China Post issued a commemorative stamp marking Taiwan Recovery Day yesterday. Featuring the Great Wall, Alishan Range and Sun Moon Lake, the stamp has attracted strong interest from collectors at postal outlets and online platforms across the Chinese mainland. – Xinhua

In October 2025, China's national legislature designated October 25 as Taiwan Recovery Day.

In Beijing, the Central Committee of the Taiwan Democratic Self-Government League held a commemorative event on Saturday at a memorial square in the city's western suburbs. Participants observed a moment of silence, sang songs and laid flowers before a monument measuring 14 meters long and 4 meters high, paying tribute to those who sacrificed their lives for national reunification.

Xu Yunchu, granddaughter of revolutionary martyr Zhu Feng, said the history of Taiwan's recovery demonstrated that Taiwan is an inalienable part of China.

"Our territory must remain undivided, and our nation must remain united. Chinese on both sides of the Strait should work together to safeguard the common homeland of the Chinese nation," she said.

Chen Wen-cheng, a young participant from Taiwan, said establishing Taiwan Recovery Day was significant in strengthening historical awareness among people in Taiwan and deepening emotional ties across the Strait. He called on younger generations to preserve their shared historical memory and carry forward the aspirations of their predecessors.

Other commemorative activities included the release in Beijing of a music video about Taiwan's recovery, an exhibition in Shanghai featuring historical materials on Taiwan people's resistance against Japanese aggression, and a seminar in Jinhua, Zhejiang Province, on the history and legacy of the Taiwan volunteer corps, a force formed by patriotic Taiwan residents to resist Japanese aggression during WWII.

China Post also issued a commemorative stamp marking Taiwan Recovery Day on Sunday. Featuring the Great Wall, Alishan and Sun Moon Lake, the stamp attracted strong interest from collectors at postal outlets and online platforms across the mainland.

In Taiwan, representatives from more than 20 groups gathered yesterday at the Taipei Zhongshan Hall, where a ceremony to accept Japan's surrender in Taiwan Province of the China war theater of the Allied powers was held in 1945, marking the end of five decades of Japanese colonial rule.

Participants sang a song commemorating Taiwan's recovery and paid tribute to those who fought against Japanese aggression before a stone monument in the square outside the hall.

The commemorative event took place as the secessionist-minded Democratic Progressive Party authorities in Taiwan have conspicuously avoided mentioning China's victory in the War of Resistance Against Japanese Aggression and China's recovery of Taiwan, and repeatedly downplayed or whitewashed Japan's colonial rule over the island.

Hsiung Yi, deputy secretary-general of the Reunification Alliance Party in Taiwan, said Taiwan's recovery is a shared historical memory of all Chinese people.

"History must not be forgotten. We must never erase the crimes committed by the aggressors. I hope more people in Taiwan will remember this day and the profound significance it carries," Hsiung said.

A Taipei resident surnamed Yu, whose family originated in Shandong Province, said her father had often reminded the family that "we are Chinese." She attended the ceremony because she was concerned about insufficient media coverage of the anniversary and wanted to support efforts to preserve historical truth.

Chi Hsing, who works with Taiwan-based magazine *The Observer*, said the joint commemorations on both sides of the Strait underscored that both sides of the Strait belong to an inseparable community with a shared future.

The ceremony concluded with representatives reading a joint statement calling for remembrance of history, opposition to Japanese militarism, the preservation of peace and the rejuvenation of the Chinese nation. *– Xinhua*

‘How is it possible?’: Students protest Indonesian haze

A woman wearing a facemask pushes a cart filled with used plastic bottles along a road amid thick haze from forest and land fires in the region in Palangkaraya, Central Kalimantan, Indonesia yesterday. – AFP

PALANGKARAYA, Indonesia – Hundreds of students protested late Friday in Indonesia’s Palangkaraya, demanding the government do more to tackle a wildfire crisis that has shrouded their city and the wider region in toxic haze for months.

The students, many wearing surgical masks, gathered under an eerily orange sky with severely reduced visibility and waved banners urging authorities to declare a national emergency to free up more aid.

“The officials are morons, yet they get fantastic perks while the lives of the common people are tragic,” read one protest placard nailed to a wall outside the office of the governor of Central Kalimantan – an Indonesian province on the island of Borneo where the fires are burning.

The demonstrators sang the Indonesia Pusaka patriotic song and engaged in light skirmishes with police.

No injuries or arrests were reported and as night fell, the protesters cleared up their rubbish before dispersing peacefully.

“We call upon the Central Kalimantan provincial government to state clearly that it is unable to mitigate this disaster, so that the situation may be officially designated a national disaster,” protest leader Yuyun Sanjaya told the crowd.

“How is it possible that such thick, dense smoke is being inhaled by helpless elderly people and newborn infants, and the government simply lets it happen?”

Wildfires have burned more than 1.9 million hectares in the nine months to September, according to deforestation monitor Nusantara Atlas – a figure the government has not confirmed or denied.

The resulting haze has sickened hundreds of thousands in Indonesia and reached as far as Malaysia, Singapore and East Timor.

Amid diplomatic objections from neighbouring countries, patience has also been running thin at home, with sporadic anti-government protests.

On Thursday, Indonesian school children prayed for rain on Java island, where fires have also ravaged several regencies and conservation areas. *– AFP*

Philippines investigates laptop found at Thomas Markle’s former home

MANILA – Philippine police are investigating a laptop found alongside images of child abuse at the former home of Meghan Markle’s estranged father, with “full results” expected in a week, the country’s interior minister told AFP.

Thomas Markle, whose daughter is married to Britain’s Prince Harry, had been living in Cebu in the Philippines until reportedly returning to the United States earlier this year.

Philippine interior minister Jonvic Remulla told AFP the country planned to take “appropriate legal actions” against Markle – who has denied all claims of alleged offending – if sufficient evidence was found.

“The Philippine National Police (PNP), upon the reports of the son, inspected the former home of a certain Mr Thomas Markle,” Remulla said in a text message sent late Saturday. “Found were a trove of child pornography materials as well as a laptop.”

“The laptop is currently going under forensic investigation and we will have the full results in one week,” Remulla said.

“The PNP will coordinate with their counterparts to locate and take appropriate legal actions against Mr Markle if found that there is sufficient evidence to charge him.”

British tabloid *The Sun* first reported last week that Markle’s son, Thomas Markle Jr., had discovered the child abuse images while going through boxes found in his father’s former home.

On Friday, Meghan Markle said she was “deeply distressed” by accusations her father had possessed images of child abuse, adding she had blocked contact between him and her children over previous “troubling and disturbing” allegations.

After the reports, Meghan said that in 2018 she had seen a letter sent to London’s Metropolitan Police and Royalty and Specialist Protection making similar accusations.

“It made troubling and disturbing allegations against my father, and I was given assurances that these were being investigated,” she said in a statement.

London’s Metropolitan police said it had passed on the information to the royal couple but did not share it with other law enforcement agencies.

The Sun reported yesterday that Meghan had written a final letter to her father last year, telling him she knows he is an abuser and that he will never meet his grandchildren.

Meghan and Prince Harry left Britain and quit royal duties in 2020 amid a bitter royal family feud.

They made an unexpected return with their children to live in the United Kingdom in August. *– AFP*

Philippines puts bounty on Duterte’s fugitive drug-war enforcer

MANILA – The Philippine government put a bounty on Friday on the head of the top enforcer of ex-president Rodrigo Duterte’s bloody anti-drug crackdown, nearly a year after the International Criminal Court (ICC) ordered his arrest.

Former Philippine police chief and sitting Senator Ronald “Bato” Dela Rosa had mostly been in hiding for months before The Hague-based tribunal unsealed the November 2025 arrest warrant against him in May and put him into flight.

The bounty comes just over a month before Duterte is to stand trial on November 30 for the crimes against humanity of murder and attempted murder.

“As of today, Senator Bato will be considered armed and dangerous. We are placing a bounty of 50 million pesos (about US$786,000) for his capture,” Interior Secretary Juanito Victor Remulla told a Friday news conference.

Remulla said Dela Rosa “has shown nothing but cowardice by going into and remaining in hiding”, adding: “It’s time for the gloves to come off. It’s time to bring justice to his victims.”

Dela Rosa emerged from months of hiding on May 11 to take refuge inside the Senate building, but slipped out days later following a standoff between security guards and investigators attempting to arrest him, in which shots were fired.

Former president Duterte was arrested in Manila on March 11 last year and handed over the following day to the ICC. He has been in detention in The Hague ever since.

Dela Rosa was named as among eight “co-perpetrators” in the drug crackdown that took place during the Duterte presidency from 2016 as well as during his earlier stint as mayor of a southern city.

Philippine police have said they killed more than 6,000 drug suspects in self-defence during his presidency, which ended in 2022.

Among the other co-perpetrators named by the ICC is sitting Senator Christopher Lawrence Go, though there is no known ICC arrest warrant against him.

Philippine police chief Jose Melencio Nartatez said Friday that Dela Rosa was possibly being protected “by an armed group or group of supporters”, warning that those shielding him would “face the consequences”.

He said a dedicated task force had been formed to track him down and hand him over to the ICC.

Duterte faces three counts of crimes against humanity, with prosecutors alleging his involvement in at least 76 murders between 2013 and 2018.

The true number of killings during his campaign in the Philippines is thought to be in the thousands, and lawyers for the victims have argued that a full trial could encourage more families to come forward. *– AFP*

Ensnared female orangutan and her baby rescued in Indonesia

PALANGKARAYA, Indonesia – Indonesian conservation workers rescued an orangutan ensnared in rope and her baby on the island of Borneo where the critically endangered animals are at risk from boar traps and wildfires, an official said yesterday.

The female orangutan named Gadis, about 25 years old, and her son Garis, 10 months, were found snared in a suspected trap early Friday near a village in Central Kalimantan province on the Indonesian part of Borneo.

“Gadis was found with the ropes tied to her upper right arm and lower left arms, and the wounds were bad because the ropes had torn deep into her flesh,” local conservation official Muriansyah told AFP by telephone yesterday.

“It looked like the ropes were set up as a wild boar snare trap,” added Muriansyah, who like many Indonesians has one name.

Both were receiving treatment at the Orangutan Foundation International clinic near the village of Pangkalan Bun.

Wild boar hunting using rope snares is legal and common in parts of Indonesia as a pest control measure to protect crops, but illegal inside protected forests or national parks.

Officials have repeatedly cautioned that careless placement of snares near wildlife areas could instead trap endangered sun bears or orangutans.

Dozens of orangutans have also been rescued in recent weeks from rampant wildfires burning across Indonesia that have cloaked the Southeast Asian region in a toxic haze.

Two more were released in Ketapang, West Kalimantan on Saturday after being rescued from an oil palm plantation.

Orangutans are critically endangered and only about 120,000 remain in the wild in Borneo and Sumatra – about half the number from a century ago, according to conservation group WWF.

Last month, the International Union for Conservation of Nature said fires were burning in habitats containing 52 percent of Borneo’s orangutan population. *– AFP*

This handout image taken on Friday and released yesterday shows joint team members from the Central Kalimantan Natural Resources Conservation Agency (BKSDA) and Orangutan Foundation International (OFI) evacuating a mother orangutan and her baby (not framed), after being found snared in a suspected trap in Kandan Village, Kota Besi Sub-district, East Kotawaringin. – AFP

Kim returns home after visit to Chinese border city

Isabel Kua with Claire Lee and Kang Jin-kyu in Seoul

DANDONG, China – North Korean leader Kim Jong Un returned home Saturday after a day-long trip to the Chinese border city of Dandong, vowing to "firmly carry forward" the two nations' friendship, Pyongyang's state media reported.

Kim's visit follows the official opening of a major cross-border bridge last week – 12 years after its completion – deepening economic ties between China and diplomatically isolated North Korea.

Neither North Korea nor China disclosed Kim's visit in advance.

In Dandong Kim visited a memorial hall dedicated to honouring Chinese soldiers who died fighting alongside the North in the 1950-53 Korean War, the official Korean Central News Agency said.

Kim then spoke with Wang Huning, Beijing's top political advisor, who accompanied the leader during his visit, the agency said.

"We will always remember the history when the excellent sons and daughters of the Chinese people helped our revolution... and steadily and firmly carry forward the history of the DPRK-China friendship," Kim told Wang, using the initials of the North's official name.

The aims and outcomes of Kim's visit were murky, but China is North Korea's largest trading partner and a vital source of diplomatic, economic and political support for Pyongyang.

China's official news agency Xinhua quoted Wang as saying the visit was significant for "consolidating public goodwill towards the friendship (and) deepening political mutual trust and jointly pursuing cooperation and development".

Wang conveyed Xi's "cordial greetings and best wishes" to the North Korean leader.

The trip fell near the date both countries use to mark the entry of Chinese troops into the Korean War in 1950.

Beijing sent hundreds of thousands of troops to fight alongside North Korea against US-led United Nations forces, helping prevent Pyongyang's defeat and cementing an alliance.

China's top diplomat, Wang Yi, also participated in the events, it added.

After the memorial hall trip, Kim visited a bus factory before returning to North Korea, KCNA reported.

In Dandong late Saturday, the bridge stood empty and the surrounding neighbourhood was quiet.

Resident Zhao told AFP it was "quite good" that Kim visited, saying he feels that a closer relationship between the two countries could ultimately benefit his city.

"When the two countries engage with each other, it will naturally benefit border cities in China economically," the 50-year-old driver said.

"May our friendship last forever."

Bridging a divide

The New Yalu River Bridge was completed in 2014, but its opening was delayed due to a lack of connecting roads and customs facilities on the North Korean side, according to South Korean news reports.

Its opening came just over a month after North Korea and Russia opened their first road bridge.

Kim may have sought to "press China to move more quickly" on commitments agreed during Xi's visit to North Korea this year, Yang Moo-jin, former president of the South's University of North Korean Studies, told AFP.

"He may also have sought Beijing's active support and cooperation ahead of a possible summit with (US President Donald) Trump in Shenzhen."

Hours before South Korea's Yonhap news agency first reported Saturday's visit, North Korean state media said Kim had urged his military at a major meeting in Pyongyang to train to become the strongest in the world.

Kim's call for what he dubbed a "Korean-style military revolution" came soon after Seoul's military proposed talks to clarify the shared border with the North, following an explosion inside the heavily fortified Demilitarised Zone.

Seoul's military proposed the talks Friday after it blamed the blast, which injured South Korean soldiers and severely strained bilateral relations, on North Korean landmines. Pyongyang strongly rejects the claim.

North Korea has not responded to the proposal and previously rejected the South's demand for an apology over the explosion.

The countries remain technically at war as their 1950-53 conflict ended in an armistice, not a peace treaty.

Implicit acceptance

Despite long-running UN sanctions, North Korea has enshrined its status as a nuclear-armed state in law and routinely declares its atomic arsenal permanent and irreversible.

South Korea's dovish President Lee Jae Myung – who has repeatedly offered Pyongyang talks without preconditions – suggested in September that Washington seek a freeze, rather than the immediate elimination, of North Korea's nuclear programme in return for sanctions relief.

Critics say such an approach risks tacitly accepting North Korea as a nuclear-armed state while allowing Pyongyang to win sanctions relief without giving up its arsenal.

Analysts say China has also appeared to move towards implicit acceptance.

Kim hosted Xi in Pyongyang in June, soon after Xi held back-to-back summits in Beijing with Trump and Russia's Vladimir Putin.

Neither Pyongyang nor Beijing mentioned North Korean denuclearisation in their official statements after the June meeting – an omission experts saw as a sign of China's tacit consent. *– AFP*

Sri Lankan turbine project fuels anger as fish hauls plunge

This photograph taken on October 2 shows egrets resting on a beach near a wind power plant in Sri Lanka's Mannar Peninsula. – AFP

Philippe Alfroy

SRI LANKA – Beneath rotating wind turbines on Sri Lanka's Mannar peninsula, a fishing net is hauled up the beach by tractor winches and 20 men, but once again the catch is meagre.

"I've been fishing here since I was a boy," said Venkatasamy Kalimuththu, 65, looking disappointedly at the catch – a few good fish, some small fry, and several clumps of seaweed.

"Before the wind turbines were installed, we caught a lot of fish," he added. "Now, much less."

Since they appeared six years ago, the Mannar wind turbines have been blamed for a host of problems – from dwindling catches to floods, fuelling opposition to green energy projects as fuel costs soar.

Local residents are determined to see them dismantled or, at the very least, prevent more from being built.

The opposition comes as war in the Middle East sends fuel and electricity costs soaring, making the shift to renewable energy an economic imperative.

Although he admits he has no proof, Kalimuththu is convinced the spinning blades are driving fish away.

"When the fans rotate, the shadow falls on the water," he said. "So the fish don't swim up to the shallows."

His colleagues agree, also blaming the turbines – as well as competition from Indian trawlers.

'Toilets overflow'

"We are not opposed to renewable energy in principle," said Lesley Jesurajan, a leading figure in the local civil society group OPEnE. "But not here. There are plenty of other places to install wind turbines."

Owned by state utility Ceylon Electricity Board (CEB), the turbines line a narrow strip of sand exposed to winds sweeping across the gulf between Sri Lanka and India.

The first phase – 30 turbines with a combined capacity of 104 megawatts – joined the grid in 2020, and construction on another 14 has begun.

A third phase of 52 turbines had been awarded to Indian conglomerate Adani, but the government cancelled the contract in 2025 after a dispute over the price per kilowatt-hour.

Even the first phase has fuelled anger.

Benedict Mary Vijiliya's village, around 100 metres from the coast, is surrounded by wind turbines.

She claims concrete foundations and trenches for access roads have prevented rainwater from draining towards the sea.

"During the monsoon rains, the water comes up to our waists and the toilets overflow," complains Vijiliya, president of the Women's Rural Development Society (WRDS), showing photographs on her phone of her home submerged under about a metre of water.

"We never had experienced that before 2020. Our homes are damaged, our cattle and our crops are affected, our livelihood is impacted and we can't even drink the water of our well anymore".

'Cheating people'

In neighbouring Pesalai, fishing incomes have plummeted, said A. Stanislas Peries, head of the local fishermen's cooperative.

"Before, people could earn up to 5,000 rupees (US$15) a day from fishing. Now they barely make more than 1,000. Things have become very difficult."

Energy Minister Anura Karunathilaka said he had heard the complaints.

"We are carrying out feasibility studies," he said. "Once we implement this...the flood situation they are currently facing can be reduced."

The government aims to generate 70 percent of the country's electricity from renewable sources by 2030, including wind power. But it has frozen new projects in Mannar to ease local opposition.

"We have already pledged... that only those projects already approved will be carried out."

Father S. Marcus, a Catholic priest and head of the Mannar Citizens' Committee, remains unconvinced.

"They had several times promised mitigation measures but nothing happened ... they are cheating our people," he added.

At his initiative, residents have filed two complaints in Sri Lankan courts. But a separate one has been filed against him.

"Apparently, we are disrupting the government," he said. "But we will not back down – we will put an end to all this." *– AFP*

5 dead in Indian firework workshop blasts

PATNA, India – At least five people including three children were killed in eastern India on Friday when a series of powerful explosions tore through a firecracker workshop, police and witnesses said.

The explosion in Siwan district of Bihar state set off multiple blasts at the private house, where the manufacturing was taking place, local media reports said.

Police officer Bharat Soni confirmed the five deaths to AFP, adding that residents feared one or two more people may be buried under the rubble.

The factory owner was killed, along with four other relatives.

Industrial accidents are common in India, where safety standards are often overlooked or poorly enforced.

In August, 11 people, including eight children, were killed by an explosion in a firecracker workshop operating from a residential area in northern Uttar Pradesh state.

In March, a blaze at a fireworks factory in western India killed 17 people.

The following month, eight people were killed when a firecracker warehouse in southern India caught fire. *– AFP*

British 'heirs of slavery' back reparations

Helen Rowe

LONDON – Caribbean nations campaigning for slavery reparations have won support from an unexpected source – the descendants of some of Britain's most prominent families to have benefitted from the slave trade.

As prime ministers, courtiers and aristocrats, the Gladstone, Lascelles and Trevelyan families were at the heart of the governing elite down the decades.

They accumulated significant wealth from slavery through the ownership of plantations in the West Indies and South America.

Laura Trevelyan, a former BBC journalist, told AFP she had been unaware of her family's involvement until hearing about an archive listing compensation payments to plantation owners triggered by the British parliament's abolition of slavery in 1833.

"I was clueless," she told AFP.

"I looked at the database and saw this small island in the eastern Caribbean called Grenada that various members of the Trevelyan family had claimed compensation for the loss of what was termed their property."

The revelation spurred Trevelyan, who made a public apology in Grenada in 2023, to co-found the Heirs of Slavery group which supports "reparative justice".

Personal reparations

With other members of her family she has paid voluntary personal reparations of around £100,000 (US$133,000) earmarked for educational projects.

"Everybody I met, I asked them 'should I apologise for what my ancestors did and do you think that I personally should pay reparations?' and the answer came back a resounding 'yes'," she said.

Co-founder Charlie Gladstone, a direct descendant of reforming 19th century prime minister William Gladstone whose father John was one of the largest slave owners in the British West Indies, followed suit by making a public apology in Guyana in 2023.

Demonstrators calling for slavery reparations, protest outside the entrance of the British High Commission in Kingston, Jamaica, on March 22, 2022, during the visit of the Britain's Duke and Duchess of Cambridge. – AFP

Another group member is aristocrat David Lascelles, the Earl of Harewood, whose family has close links to the royal family.

A portrait of the actor David Harewood hangs at the family's stately home, Harewood House in northern England, after it was discovered that his ancestors had worked on Lascelles family sugar plantations in Barbados.

The UK government in September reiterated its rejection of calls for slavery reparations.

Modern British royals have expressed remorse, but like the government have not issued an official apology.

'Worst indignity'

The issue is likely to be raised during a Caribbean tour by King Charles III which begins tomorrow when he travels to the Bahamas, then Guyana and Antigua and Barbuda where he will address the Commonwealth Heads of Government meeting.

A Buckingham Palace spokesman said the king would acknowledge the "darkest days" of colonial rule and slavery during the trip.

Ahead of the visit, Guyana's President Irfaan Ali said his country would continue to champion the reparation issue "because slavery was the worst indignity to humankind".

He called for a "mature" discussion on an apology and reparations, pointing to differing measures from debt relief, to finance for education and healthcare, and even climate adaptation.

The Reparations Commission of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) has called for "monetary compensation" alongside debt cancellation and a full apology as part of its "Ten-Point plan".

Meanwhile, Britain's Privy Council – the final court of appeal for UK overseas territories – will next year hear a petition for slavery reparations filed by Jamaica.

The petition asks the court to rule on whether the capture, transport and enslavement of Africans in Jamaica was ever legal under English law, and whether the UK owes the people of Jamaica a "reparatory remedy".

'Deeply regrettable'

Not all families who benefitted from slavery, however, have agreed with the Heirs group approach.

CARICOM Reparations Commission chair Hilary Beckles has repeatedly spoken out about ex-Conservative Party lawmaker and UK landowner Richard Drax, 68, whose ancestors established Drax Hall Estate in Barbados in the mid-17th century.

Beckles has estimated up to 30,000 slaves died at Drax plantations in Barbados and Jamaica over 200 years.

Drax has remained staunchly opposed to reparations. He has said that while the role his ancestors played in the slave trade was "deeply, deeply regrettable ... no-one can be held responsible today for what happened many hundreds of years ago".

The Draxes are unique in that "they're the only family that still owns a plantation that was set up in the beginning", said Paul Lashmar, author of "Drax of Drax Hall: How One British Family Got Rich (and Stayed Rich) from Sugar and Slavery".

But he said it was increasingly difficult to see how Drax's position could prevail.

"If you are very wealthy and a lot of your wealth comes from those years then it's not something you can wash your hands of," he said. *– AFP*

'Tech debt coming due': AI-found flaw signals chaos ahead

Analysis by Alex Pigman

WASHINGTON, DC – Companies and government agencies rushed last week to patch two critical flaws in PHP, the programming language that runs a large share of the world's websites.

The vulnerability to potential hackers was found by using a powerful model from OpenAI in one of the most high-profile demonstration of AI's cyber capabilities.

AFP spoke with Michael Daniel, president of the Cyber Threat Alliance and a former White House cybersecurity coordinator under former US president Barack Obama, about what the episode means as AI tools find software flaws faster than ever.

The interview has been edited for length and clarity.

Q: What does the PHP episode tell us?

A: This is the beginning of a pretty chaotic period, given the abilities of the advanced models. I've been saying for years that the logical conclusion of these AI models being able to find vulnerabilities at speed and at scale is that there's going to be a flood of these vulnerabilities.

Rob Joyce [former cybersecurity director at the US National Security Agency] has referred to it as the great cleansing forest fire of old software. I've talked about our tech debt coming due.

The incentives have been for people to keep software as long as possible, and we don't really factor these risks into the cost of having the software. You're not incurring a direct cost on your books for this old software, but in reality you are, only it's an implicit cost until something like this happens.

Q: What should organisations be doing?

A: Preparing to get your software updated, be prepared to keep it updated, and be prepared to implement patches when they come out.

There's going to be a flood of vulnerabilities, a flood of patches and a flood of mitigations, and not all of them will be created equal.

For a lot of smaller organisations that don't have a lot of internal capacity, what you've got to do is shift your organization to be able to accept the vendor updates as fast as you can.

Q: Is every flaw dangerous?

A: Historically, the exploitation rate for vulnerabilities has been five or six percent, and there's no indication that number is going up. But now when bad guys exploit a vulnerability, they're able to do so much more quickly.

It used to take a month or two for a proof of concept to come out, and then another month or two for it to show up in exploit kits (used by bad actors). That's now measured in hours or days.

Q: What does that mean for large companies?

A: Most businesses essentially ran a zero-risk tolerance for breaking things, so they would test the hell out of a patch before they put it into production. Now they don't have that time.

If the risk of breaking something by putting this patch into place is one percent, but the risk of being attacked could cost me US$50 million ...now I've got an interesting trade-off.

Q: Are advanced AI tools reliable at finding real flaws?

A: There's a lot of noise. The PHP one is a prime example of a real one, but there's an awful lot out there that are either not real or are on software that's never exposed to the internet. We've got to improve our triage system.

Q: Where does this lead us in two or three years?

A: We're going to turn these AI tools on software that hasn't been deployed yet, so one would hope we start to deploy software that has fewer vulnerabilities to begin with. You burn out all the old stuff, and it makes way for new growth that's more secure from the beginning.

It's not like this solves our cybersecurity problem, but it does change the nature of it going forward. *– AFP*

Israel central bank issues rare rebuke of Netanyahu's sanctions comments

JERUSALEM – Israel's central bank has issued a rare rebuke of recent remarks from Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu suggesting that the country use cryptocurrency to help establish an "alternative economy" to withstand possible sanctions.

The remarks had already drawn criticism from Netanyahu's rivals in this week's national elections, who said they amounted to a tacit admission that the premier's leadership was generating harmful consequences for Israel.

"Cryptocurrencies cannot be used as a way to bypass sanctions on Israel. What is right for Israel's economy is to preserve our economic relations with our main trading partners and focus on preventing sanctions and their negative impact on the economy," the Bank of Israel said in a statement on Saturday night.

"This matter falls within the responsibility of the political leadership, and it is appropriate to act to advance it."

In a recent interview with Israel's Channel 10, Netanyahu had acknowledged rising pressure from key ally the United States and said "there could be sanctions, including banking sanctions".

"You need to prepare an alternative economy that can operate around them," he added, saying he had ordered plans to be drawn up using blockchain technology to that end. *– AFP*

French police make 1,314 arrests in weekend protests

PARIS – Police arrested 1,314 people in weekend protests across France, the interior ministry said yesterday, adding that 53 officers were hurt in clashes.

The arrests occurred as violence broke out on the margins of mass demonstrations in major cities on Saturday over the high cost of living.

It was the second consecutive weekend of unrest in France, which is heading to presidential elections in April and May to choose a successor to Emmanuel Macron, who is reaching his two-term limit.

The interior ministry said police responded to 75 fires during Saturday's protests, adding that 24 shops were looted.

"Several investigations have been opened," it said in a statement, without giving details. It said that the rest of Saturday night, after the clashes had died down, was "calm".

The ministry statement yesterday did not say how many protesters were hurt.

Late Saturday, Interior Minister Laurent Nuñez spoke of two serious injuries among protesters: one in Toulouse and one in Clermont-Ferrand.

Protesters hurt

The Toulouse prefecture, which reports to the interior ministry, told AFP that a 20-year-old man was seriously hurt with a wound to his hand.

A street medic who tended demonstrators told AFP, on condition of anonymity, that the man had "several fingers" blown off his right hand.

The prefecture covering Clermont-Ferrand said a man there also had a hand hurt, but did not suffer the loss of any fingers.

A French regional daily, *La Nouvelle République*, reported that a man in Poitiers was hurt in his left eye, showing a photo of a man holding his face.

The newspaper's photographer told AFP he was a 19-year-old who was wounded during a charge by riot police firing stun grenades and tear gas.

There have been several instances in recent weeks, during student protests in France, of people being maimed by police stun grenades or tear gas grenades.

It was not known if the injuries reported from Saturday were from those police weapons. Officials said investigations had been opened in at least some of the cases. *– AFP*

Protesters hold French national flags as they confront French Republican Security Corps (CRS) officers during a demonstration against the rising cost of living and for the protection of public services and fiscal and social justice, in Marseille, southeastern France, on Saturday, as part of a nationwide call for mobilisation bringing together members of the Yellow Vest movement and labour unions, as well as high school and university students. – AFP

Embattled Albanian PM vows fines for violent protesters

Protesters burn chairs offered by Albanian Prime Minister Edi Rama as a symbolic gesture for dialogue during an anti-government demonstration – called by the student-led protest movement to denounce poor study conditions and corruption, and also to demand Rama's resignation, outside his office in central Tirana yesterday. – AFP

TIRANA – Albania's Prime Minister Edi Rama yesterday vowed a tougher line against anti-government protesters calling for his resignation, saying that new fines would be introduced for violent demonstrations.

The Socialist party leader said a new law would be released this week allowing for fines of more than UJS$550 for "anyone who chooses to remain in a crowd" that is carrying out acts of violence or looting in a public space, or "concealing their identity".

He said in a speech broadcast on social media that the clampdown would apply to any type of gathering "when it results in property damage".

Months of anti-government demonstrations have deteriorated in recent days into pitched battles between the security forces and protesters.

The new law would also give police the powers to restrict "gatherings" in certain cases if there was a risk of violence, Rama said.

"Anyone demanding my resignation is mistaken if they think it can be forced or imposed in any way, but I do not believe that everything they are saying and demanding is wrong," he stated.

The law also allows for compensation for small companies affected by protests and action against those who "encourage, organise or coordinate the participation of minor school children in rallies".

Teachers have backed high school students who have taken part in the protests this year.

In recent protests, demonstrators have attacked the education ministry and other official buildings, complaining about corruption and demanding better conditions for students and Rana's resignation.

Police said after Saturday's protests that 23 people had been formally arrested, 13 others face legal proceedings and 30 people were "wanted". *– AFP*

Trump votes early in Florida for US midterm elections

West Palm Beach, United States

WEST PALM BEACH – US President Donald Trump on Saturday voted early in his home state of Florida for the November 3 midterm elections, in which his Republican Party is battling to maintain control of Congress.

Trump and his wife, Melania, cast their ballots ahead of an appearance by the president at a campaign rally in the southern US state of Georgia.

Trump said he voted party line, or exclusively for members of his Republican Party.

Asked by reporters after voting about corruption as a major issue for voters, Trump insisted that it was happening in districts and cities controlled by Democrats.

"You ought to look at the real corruption – it's Democrat corruption," he said.

The Republican billionaire, who has consistently refused to accept his defeat in the 2020 presidential election, alleging widespread voter fraud, reiterated allegations along those lines on Saturday.

"I ran and I won in 2016, and I won in 2020, too, but it didn't work out that way," he said at the Palm Beach County Supervisor of Elections office in West Palm Beach. "It was a rigged election, but I won by millions of votes."

With 10 days to go until the midterms, which traditionally favour the party outside the White House, Trump faces dismal polls suggesting the Republicans will lose control of the House of Representatives and possibly the Senate.

Without a Republican majority in Congress, the 80-year-old president would have little room to push through his legislative agenda during his final two years in office.

He or his staff could also face numerous congressional investigations by Democrats, who have said they want to examine business dealings conducted by the president and those close to him through the family's holding company since his return to the White House. *– AFP*

US President Donald Trump speaks to the press at the Palm Beach County Supervisor of Elections Office, with his wife Melania looking on, after voting in the midterm elections in West Palm Beach, Florida, on Saturday. – AFP

Demonstrators wounded as police clear housing protest camps in Lisbon, Porto

Riot police officers and protesters clash as they take part in a protest against housing shortage, soaring rents and low wages in Rossio square in Lisbon yesterday. *– AFP*

LISBON – Portuguese police again cleared tents set up by protesters against skyrocketing housing prices overnight yesterday, with organisers criticising the brutality of the officers involved.

Officers have frequently moved in to dismantle the camps that have sprung up in Lisbon and Porto in recent weeks, at a time when countries across Europe are grappling with a wave of rising discontent over the cost of living.

In a message on X, the police said yesterday that officers had "intervened early this morning [in Lisbon and Porto]... to put an end to these illegal encampments".

"Once dialogue ended, the operation led to 31 arrests for disobedience," the police added.

According to the force, 11 people were injured, of whom eight were civilians with the remaining three police officers, while 171 structures were taken down.

Cited in the Portuguese press, organisers of the movement put the toll at 37 protesters injured as a result of the police raids, most of them in Lisbon.

The protesters have accused the government of failing to act to tackle Portugal's housing crisis and trying to push through rent reforms to make eviction easier.

The Portuguese demonstrators have followed the lead of protesters in neighbouring Spain, where tents have been set up in central Madrid for weeks. *– AFP*

Dozens freed from human trafficking scam in Guinea-Bissau

Allen Yero Embaló and Abdourahmane Diallo

BISSAU – Sitting on the steps outside Judiciary Police (PJ) headquarters, Jane from Sierra Leone recounts how she suffered attempted rape and other abuses at the hands of a criminal network dismantled in Guinea-Bissau.

Like her, some 70 other individuals from various west African nations were rescued on Wednesday during a police operation that led to the arrest of four suspects, although the alleged ringleader remains at large.

The network lured victims by promising to facilitate their immigration and secure them employment abroad, specifically in Canada, Europe and the United States.

According to accounts, the network engaged in human trafficking and fraud, drawing victims in with false promises before compelling them to participate in illicit, fraudulent activities.

The nightmare for Fanta Makalou, a 32-year-old mother of three from Mali, began with the promise of a job in France.

To arrange the journey, the network allegedly demanded 1.5 million CFA francs (US$2,570), with 500,000 CFA francs to be paid before she even left Mali.

"I've been here for three months now", she said, describing her time held against her will in Bissau.

Issa, a 23-year-old from the Guinean capital of Conakry, described how the trap closed in on him. He says he paid 10 million Guinean francs (US$1,130) to a smuggler, who subsequently demanded that he recruit another person.

"When I realised it was a scam, I refused. The smuggler threatened to kill me if I told anyone else", said Issa, who declined to provide his last name for security reasons.

The Guinea-Bissau Judiciary Police (criminal investigation department) carried out their operation codenamed "ASTRA" following weeks of investigation.

Their surprise raids on two houses in the capital's north led to the arrest of four suspects and the liberation of 71 people.

Among those just rescued were individuals from Mali, Guinea and Sierra Leone, according to information provided by the police, while the overall trafficking operation has also included those from Burkina Faso, Togo and Senegal.

Held against will

The investigation's preliminary findings indicate that the victims were brought to Bissau then held against their will.

They were subjected to physical and psychological pressure, including threats and abuse, and were allegedly made to participate in pyramid schemes by recruiting new people via social media, António Gomes, a PJ officer, told AFP.

To lend their activities an air of legitimacy, the organisers reportedly provided fake contact details for offices supposedly in Canada, the United States, and Portugal.

Interpol intelligence reportedly contributed to the dismantling of the network, which investigators describe as having a presence in several countries in the region.

Braima Cisse, PJ communications officer, said the victims would be handed over to their respective embassies and that those whose countries have no diplomatic mission in Bissau would have to manage for themselves.

For years thousands of young west Africans have attempted to migrate in order to escape conflicts, misrule, or poverty and the lack of opportunity.

Unable to obtain legal paperwork, the migrants often turn to clandestine migration, relying on dangerous networks of human traffickers. *– AFP*

New centre puts focus on Portugal's Salazar legacy

LONDON – A centre devoted to the study of Portugal's 20th-century strongman António Salazar opened in his home village on Friday after two decades of disputes.

Salazar used a feared secret police and brutal repression of opponents to maintain his "New State" rule from when he seized power in 1932 to 1968, when he became ill and fell into a coma. His legacy is fiercely debated.

The "Interpretive Centre for the New State -- Regime and Resistance" opened in Vimieiro, where Salazar was born in 1889.

Its development has been disputed for two decades. Some historians and rights groups expressed fears that it would help efforts to rehabilitate Salazar's name and that it would become a pilgrimage point for supporters of the New State dictatorship.

The centre is in a school dating from the 1940s near the house where Salazar was born and the cemetery where he is now buried.

It has a library, a permanent exhibition and a copy of a classroom from the Salazar years. Temporary exhibitions, lectures and conferences are to be held there.

"We do not want a museum that glorifies Salazar, nor a place where people bad-mouth this principal figure," said Inês Matos, mayor of Santa Comba Dão, which includes Vimieiro.

"We want a space that is open to everyone" to discuss Salazar, she told Portugal's Lusa newswire.

Salazar came to power in a coup and ruled with an iron fist for more than three decades, until sinking into a coma in September 1968. He died 23 months later at the age of 81.

His New State government was finally overthrown in a military uprising in April 1974 following mounting opposition to the country's wars in its African colonies.

There are already several museums and institutions devoted to the dictatorship years.

One museum on the struggle against Salazar was opened in a former secret police prison in Lisbon in 2015.

Another dedicated to Aristides de Sousa Mendes, a diplomat who helped thousands of Jewish refugees to escape persecution during World War II, opened in 2024 in his home village of Cabanas de Viriato. *– AFP, MPD*

Spanish police make 128 overnight arrests in Barcelona for 'looting'

Pedestrians look at a jeweller's shop looted the previous night during riots, in Barcelona, Catalonia, northern Spain, yesterday. *– AFP*

MADRID – Police made 128 arrests overnight in Barcelona for acts of "vandalism", damage to public property" and "looting", the regional Catalan police said yesterday.

Seventy-three of those arrested were minors, with the reports due to be sent "to the juvenile prosecutor's office", Catalan police chief Silvia Cata told Spain's 3CatInfo media outlet.

Footage on social media showed groups of young people, many clad in all-black, attacking businesses in Barcelona after gathering in the city centre for a rally that had not been declared to the authorities.

The scenes come at a time when countries across Europe have been grappling with unrest, with France, Italy and Albania all seeing protests give way to incidents of looting and violence.

Cata said that only two of the 128 people detained in Barcelona had prior criminal records, and said that a total of 15 officers had been injured during the night.

"This is gratuitous violence," the police chief said, noting 23 premises were vandalised.

While the movement was "completely disorganised", the call to rally had spread "on social media", Cata added.

The police were attempting to "study the profile" of those in custody, she said.

"Violence has no place in Catalonia. Ever," Catalonia's regional president, Salvador Illa, posted to X, demanding that the rioters "pay" for their actions.

With Spain now into a campaign for a November 29 general election, the leader of the right-wing opposition, Alberto Núñez Feijóo, called for "a change" for Spain "that emerges from the ballot box, with freedom and respect.

"Coexistence requires responsibility, not enabling those who endanger it," he added. *– AFP*

Football shorts

Lyon lose Czech star Sulc to long-term knee injury

LYON – Lyon's Czech international Pavel Sulc is set to miss around four months after damaging the meniscus in his right knee, the Ligue 1 club said yesterday.

The 25-year-old attacking midfielder sustained the injury in training ahead of Thursday's Europa League defeat by Hoffenheim and will require surgery.

Sulc was the team's second leading scorer last term with 14 goals, 11 of those in Ligue 1. He has scored twice in 10 games in all competitions this season.

"We lost Lois (Openda) for a few weeks and now we lose Pavel," said Lyon captain Corentin Tolisso.

"We knew how important he was, just like Lois, and of the impact he brought to our game as soon as he arrived. They're players we're really going to miss."

Lyon began the weekend as one of five teams level on points at the top of the table. Paulo Fonseca's side are in first place on goal difference ahead of today's trip to Paris Saint-Germain.

The match was pushed back from yesterday following a request by police amid a wave of violent protests in the French capital. – *AFP*

High-flying Betis held at Celta Vigo

VIGO, Spain – Real Betis failed to put pressure on La Liga's top three with a 0-0 draw at Celta Vigo yesterday.

Manuel Pellegrini's side, fourth, are a point behind third-place Real Madrid before they visited Barcelona in the Clasico later yesterday.

Betis had chances to win the game, with Nelson Deossa hitting the crossbar early in the second half and striker Troy Parrott dragging wide in stoppage time.

"The ball didn't want to go in," Betis goalkeeper Alvaro Valles told DAZN, while admitting "the draw was fair". The point leaves Celta provisionally ninth.

Madrid trail leaders Barcelona by six points before the Clasico, with Atletico Madrid second, two points behind the leaders, after a 1-0 win over Deportivo La Coruna on Saturday. – *AFP*

Monaco hold Lille as both move to top of Ligue 1

MONACO – Lille were made to pay for Tanguy Nianzou's red card as Monaco fought back to hold them to a 1-1 draw in Ligue 1 yesterday.

With Paris Saint-Germain and Lyon's match pushed back to today due to protests taking place across France this weekend, a winner in the principality would have gone three points clear at the top of the table.

But Lille have to content themselves with a lead on goal difference in the standings ahead of Monaco as both sides moved to 15 points - one ahead of Lyon, reigning champions PSG and Paris FC.

Ethan Mbappe's goal midway through the first period put the visitors in the driving seat but a straight red for Nianzou just after the hour was swiftly punished by Edan Diop as Monaco forced a draw.

The younger brother of France and Real Madrid star Kylian showed the crisp finishing instincts associated with the Mbappe name as he darted into the box and whipped a first-time shot with his left foot past Lukas Hradecky on 24 minutes.

Monaco rarely threatened through the rest of the opening period but the match burst into life in the second half as Monaco's Paris Brunner passed up a golden opportunity in the 65th minute, before Lille defender Nianzou was given his marching orders for a reckless challenge.

The hosts then levelled in the 74th minute as Diop's cross toward Brunner evaded everyone and nestled in the far corner. – *AFP*

Carrick on the brink as Man Utd misery mounts, Isak stars for Liverpool

Steven Griffiths

LONDON – Michael Carrick was pushed to the brink of being sacked after Manchester United slumped to a miserable 3-0 home defeat against Bournemouth, while Alexander Isak extended his hot streak in Liverpool's 2-0 win against Brighton yesterday.

Carrick's bold decision to drop captain Bruno Fernandes backfired as defeat stretched United's winless run to eight games and left them 16th in the Premier League, just one point above the relegation zone.

For the third time in four seasons, the Cherries won by a three-goal margin at Old Trafford as strikes from Rayan, Marcus Tavernier and Evanilson secured a fully deserved victory for Marco Rose's side.

Fernandes was critical of Carrick's tactics in a 4-1 Champions League thrashing at Como on Wednesday.

The United boss said the decision to leave out last season's Premier League Player of the Year was a "purely football" driven, but it was hard to believe Fernandes was not being punished as he was left on the bench for the entire match.

Carrick was taunted with chants of "you're getting sacked in the morning" from the Bournemouth fans.

But on this evidence, dismissing another manager is far from a quick fix for a club that has fallen dramatically from grace since Alex Ferguson's retirement after winning their most recent English title 13 years ago.

"It's a tough situation. What is next? I don't know," Carrick said after United's winless run reached eight games in all competitions.

"I'll always do what's best for this football club. I've said it all along, I don't change that now.

"I love what I do. I love the responsibility, but we'll have to wait and see."

A strong finish to last season during Carrick's interim spell in charge secured third place in the Premier League.

Yet with just one win against promoted Ipswich, United have taken just seven points from eight league games so far this season - their lowest tally at this stage of a season since 1986-87.

United's players were booed off by the few frustrated fans that remained inside Old Trafford at the end of their heaviest home defeat since 2024.

United's co-owners the Glazer family and Jim Ratcliffe were also targeted for angry chants, although Carrick largely avoided the fans' ire.

It is unlikely that sympathy vote will spare the former United midfielder from the axe.

Liverpool's Swedish striker Alexander Isak (left) celebrates with teammates after scoring their second goal during the English Premier League match against Brighton and Hove Albion at Anfield in Liverpool, north west England yesterday. – *AFP*

A United fan looks on during the English Premier League match against Bournemouth at Old Trafford in Manchester, north west England, yesterday. – *AFP*

Liverpool on the rise

At Anfield, Liverpool struck twice in quick succession in the first half, with Pascal Gross's own goal followed by Isak's latest strike.

Isak has netted six times in seven league games this season and has three goals in his last four matches.

After a turbulent debut season following his acrimonious move from Newcastle, the Sweden striker is finally beginning to repay his £125 million (US$167 million) fee.

It was a welcome first taste of top-flight success at Anfield for Reds boss Andoni Iraola, who had failed to win his first three league games on Merseyside since arriving from Bournemouth in the close season.

The Spaniard, who had won Champions League and League Cup games at Anfield, has led Liverpool to four successive victories in all competitions since the chastening 3-0 home defeat against Manchester City.

Liverpool have climbed to fourth place, just one point behind third-placed Brighton after inflicting the high-flying Seagulls' second league loss this term.

The rampant Reds are six points behind leaders City as they eye a potential title challenge.

William Osula and Harvey Barnes scored in the second half as Newcastle piled pressure on Crystal Palace manager Pierre Sage with a 2-0 win at Selhurst Park.

Thrashed 5-0 at rivals Brighton last weekend, 17th-placed Palace have won just twice in eight league games under Sage, who arrived from Lens in the close season to replace Oliver Glasner.

Hull's unbeaten home record remains intact but the Tigers have not tasted victory for seven games after a 1-1 draw with Brentford at the MKM Stadium.

Oli McBurnie's 24th-minute penalty, awarded when Aaron Hickey fouled Tim Iroegbunam, put Hull ahead, but Dango Ouattara equalised in the 63rd minute. – *AFP*

Inter rally late to down Fiorentina and regain Serie A lead

Alasdair Mackenzie

ROME – Inter Milan struck twice in stoppage time to complete a remarkable 2-1 comeback win over Fiorentina at San Siro yesterday and return to the summit of Serie A.

Alex Jimenez's rocket strike had the struggling visitors heading for a shock win, but Marcus Thuram levelled in the 91st minute before winning a penalty that Piotr Zielinski converted in the 98th minute.

The result meant the Nerazzurri returned to first place, level with surprise fellow pace-setters Lazio on 22 points, while the Florence club's winless run stretched to four games to keep them in 18th spot.

It was Inter's fifth comeback win of the season, while they conceded for the 10th time, but head coach Cristian Chivu was unconcerned by his side's defensive issues.

"That's football: sometimes you concede," Chivu told DAZN. "The important thing is not to let your heads drop and to maintain the same mentality. Ever since I arrived here, I've always said that games last 90 minutes."

"I don't want to see people feel sorry for themselves," Chivu added. "I want to see players respond to setbacks."

Chivu's side had the better of the first half but could not find a way past David de Gea, who made a fingertip stop on a Pio Esposito header before showing quick reactions to parry Thuram's angled drive.

De Gea was alert again to parry a fierce Thuram strike over the bar early in the second half, but it was the visitors who struck first against the run of play after 65 minutes.

Former AC Milan player Jimenez took debutant Inter goalkeeper Ivan Provedel by surprise with an audacious angled strike from distance that flew into the top corner.

Inter piled forward in search of an equaliser, with Carlos Augusto's glancing header coming off the top of the bar and De Gea denying substitute Petar Sucic, but they could not find a way through until the game was into added time.

Thuram guided a shot into the bottom corner to level the scores before winning a penalty when he was dragged down by Victor Valdepenas in the box, which Zielinski converted to complete a pulsating victory.

There was an eight-goal thriller in Bergamo as Atalanta and Frosinone played out a 4-4 draw in which both sides came from behind twice, extending La Dea's winless run to three games in all competitions and keeping the visitors in sixth place.

Genoa claimed a 1-0 win at home to Venezia thanks to a goal from Mikael Ellertsson to climb up to 16th place as Davide Nicola's side stayed bottom. – *AFP*

Last MotoGP race at Phillip Island cancelled due to weather in Marquez setback

MotoGP

PHILLIP ISLAND, Australia – Marc Marquez was denied the chance yesterday to stretch his world championship lead over injured Jorge Martin with the last Australian MotoGP at Phillip Island cancelled due to treacherous conditions.

Organisers pulled the plug despite a sell-out crowd with persistent rain and poor visibility making racing unsafe. The Moto3 and Moto2 races were also called off.

"Limited visibility has resulted in the cancellation of the Australian MotoGP," organisers said.

It was an inglorious end to nearly three decades of the sport at the waterfront circuit two hours from Melbourne, with the Australian race moving to a city-centre street circuit at Adelaide next year.

While a blow for Ducati's Marquez, it was an escape for Aprilia's Martin, who had been ruled out of the race with a fractured forearm sustained when he crashed during the sprint on Saturday, won by his fellow Spaniard.

He risked sliding further behind seven-time world champion Marquez with only four legs of the season to go, starting next week in Malaysia.

Instead he will leave Australia just 10 points adrift.

Aprilia's Marco Bezzecchi is third in the standings, 50 points behind Marquez.

Whether Martin can ride at Sepang remains to be seen.

His team said in a statement the break was not as bad as initially thought and he would not need to return home to Spain for surgery.

"The only confirmed injury is a non-displaced fracture of the distal radius," Aprilia said, meaning the bone remains aligned.

"Consequently the rider will not be returning to Spain and will undergo the necessary treatment over the coming days."

The picturesque and often wind-swept Phillip Island track has been a staple on the calendar since 1997.

But its contract expires this year.

Promoter MotoGP Sports Entertainment wanted to broaden its appeal and shift it to Melbourne's Albert Park, which hosts the Australian Formula One.

The Victoria state government was adamant it should remain at Phillip Island.

With negotiations breaking down, South Australia stepped in and secured the race for six years from 2027 in Adelaide - the first MotoGP to be held in a city-centre location. *– AFP*

Feng Yanzhe (first left)/Huang Dongping (second left) of China and Hoo Pang Ron (first right) Lai Pei Jing of Malaysia pose for photos after their mixed doubles final at the French Open badminton tournament in Paris yesterday. Feng and Huang won the match 21- 10, 21 – 13.
– Xinhua

Sport in brief

2027 Dakar Rally to be moved from Saudi Arabia

PARIS – The 2027 Dakar Rally will be moved from Saudi Arabia "following recent developments in the region", organisers said yesterday, after repeated attacks on the kingdom by Yemen's Houthis.

"Dakar 2027 will go ahead. The 2027 edition will take place in a different territory" but still be organised by ASO, which runs the Dakar along with Saudi Motorsport Company (SMC), read a statement from the organisers.

"A new location will be announced in the "coming days", it added.

It is the latest sporting event to be cancelled, postponed or relocated amid the fallout from the war.

Saudi Arabia and the government it backs in Yemen have come under sustained attack in recent weeks from the Houthis as a years-long truce broke down in the summer, shifting the focus of the wider US-Iran war that erupted in February.

Yemen's civil war, pitting the Iran-backed Houthis against the Saudi-supported and internationally recognised government, had been dormant since a ceasefire in 2022, but reignited again in July as the wider Middle East war roiled the region.

According to specialist media, the preferred option for next year's Dakar would be a start in Spain with Morocco as the destination.

It would be the first time since 2007 that the gruelling multi-stage rally, created in 1979, returns to Africa.

The race, formerly called the Paris-Dakar, used to be staged from the French capital following a route to the Senegalese capital Dakar.

But security threats along its route in North Africa meant that from 2009 it was held in South America and from 2020 in Saudi Arabia. *– AFP*

Chen, Harimoto crowned in singles at table tennis Asian C'ships

Table tennis

TASHKENT – China's Chen Yi and Japan's Tomokazu Harimoto respectively claimed the women's and men's singles titles at the 2026 ITTF-ATTU Asian Championships yesterday.

Chen, 22, showed great form on the last competition day to sweep her teammate Wang Yidi in the semifinals before beating Japan's Miwa Harimoto in straight games 11-5, 11-8, 11-6 in the final later in the day.

"This tournament is definitely a valuable experience for me. I lost two matches in the women's team final. Together with Huang Youzheng, we were defeated by Miwa and Sora Matsushima in the mixed doubles final," said Chen. "I am really grateful for my teammates and coaches. They trust me and encourage me a lot."

"I kept a stable mindset and tried my best to challenge her [Miwa] today. I became more decisive in returns and finally took the victory. This is the best reward for my team," Chen noted.

In the men's final, Tomokazu came back from two games down to edge China's 19-year-old Li Tianyang 1-11, 9-11, 11-7, 11-8, 11-7.

Also yesterday, Wang and Kuai Man clinched the women's doubles title after beating Japan's Miwa and Hina Hayata 9-11, 11-8, 11-9, 11-8, while Huang and Lin Shidong won the all-Chinese men's doubles final over compatriots Wen Ruibo and Yuan Licen 8-11, 11-7, 11-5, 11-6.

– Xinhua

Asian Para Games 2026 medal table

#	DELEGATION				TOTAL
1	CHN	205	117	111	433
2	JPN	64	60	62	186
3	UZB	45	49	51	145
4	IND	30	34	49	113
5	KOR	29	38	33	100
6	IRI	26	36	40	102
7	THA	19	39	66	124
8	INA	15	20	36	71
9	KAZ	12	16	22	50
10	KSA	8	8	1	17
11	IRQ	7	8	8	23
12	MAS	5	8	13	26
13	TPE	4	7	8	19
14	MGL	4	4	2	10
15	HKG	3	14	24	41
16	SRI	2	4	3	9
17	UAE	2	2	5	9
18	PHI	2	2	3	7
19	JOR	2	1	2	5
20	VIE	1	2	2	5
21	KUW	1	0	2	3
22	KGZ	1	0	0	1
23	SGP	0	6	5	11
24	QAT	0	2	2	4
25	MYA	0	1	4	5
26	BRN	0	1	2	3
27	PRK	0	1	1	2
28	PAK	0	1	0	1
28	TJK	0	1	0	1
28	TLS	0	1	0	1
31	CAM	0	0	1	1
31	OMA	0	0	1	1
31	SYR	0	0	1	1

Stop-motion 'Wildwood' showcases 'human creativity' in AI age

Paula Ramon

LOS ANGELES – After a murder of crows kidnaps her little brother, a young girl ventures into an enchanted forest filled with talking animals and other magical beings, where a looming war will decide everyone's fate.

This is the fanciful tale told in "Wildwood," from the stop-motion animation studio Laika – an ambitious project that took 16 years to make it to the big screen, and already a frontrunner for next year's Oscars.

"To put that in perspective, 16 years ago, Barack [Obama] was then a fresh-faced president in his very first term. Oh, it was a better time, my friends," director Travis Knight said at the film's premiere in Los Angeles.

"This movie exists because hundreds and hundreds of people poured years of their lives into trying to tell the most beautiful story that they could using their hands, using their imagination," Knight explained in an interview with AFP.

"That is something that computers can't do," added the filmmaker, who is also the CEO of Laika, the US studio behind "Coraline."

In the age of AI, Knight extols the virtues of stop-motion, an animation technique in which the movements of tiny physical objects are captured one frame at a time, to create the effect of fluid motion when played back.

"It is a celebration of humanity because what you're seeing in this film is human creativity, human artistry, human effort on a grand scale," he said.

"Computers can try to emulate things that we've gone through, but a computer has never felt loss. It's never felt joy. It hasn't fallen in love. It hasn't had its heart broken."

'Universal'

"Wildwood" is the story of Prue McKeel (Peyton Elizabeth Lee) and her quest to rescue her brother, who has been taken by the crows into the Impassable Wilderness – or the forests outside Portland, Oregon, which are hidden from mere mortals.

Along with her friend Curtis (Jacob Tremblay), Prue discovers a fantastic world, but one in which ambition and grief are fuelling discord that could erupt in conflict.

"It is a big sweeping fantasy story," Knight said. "But it also is an exploration of mature themes and profound emotional things that everyone goes through at various times in their lives."

Lee told AFP that Prue's journey resonated for her, and recalled some of her own challenges in adolescence.

US actress Peyton Elizabeth Lee and Canadian actor Jacob Tremblay pose on the sidelines of the "Wildwood" Premiere with FIJI Water at AFI FEST 2026 at TCL Chinese Theatre on Wednesday in Hollywood, California. – AFP

"I didn't go into a magical forest," Lee joked, but said she did understand "that idea of being a young person that feels so mature and so grown up, and feels like they have a really firm grasp on the world and reality, and then it's sort of all put into question."

"And all of a sudden, you have to rethink everything," she added.

Tremblay also said he could identify with Curtis, who tries to emulate the courage he sees in his favourite comic book and game characters.

The actors whose voices are featured in the film also helped shape how their characters move. Their gestures were filmed as they recorded their lines, so that animators could incorporate those mannerisms into the movie.

Angela Bassett, Carey Mulligan, Mahershala Ali and Awkwafina are all part of the cast.

For its technical team, "Wildwood" marks a milestone in terms of the expressions created, and the menagerie of animals featured.

"Every film we've done has been R and D [research and development] for the next one," said animation supervisor Brad Schiff, who explained that the subtleties in facial movement achieved were impossible just a few years ago.

The film, inspired by Colin Meloy's book of the same name, is an ode to Portland, where Laika is based.

"It is a very specific place," said Knight, who lives in the Pacific Northwest city.

"The more specific, the more intimate you make something, ultimately the more universal it becomes." *– AFP*

Alexander Skarsgard and his viral 'Wicker' transformation

Interview Paula Ramon

LOS ANGELES – Alexander Skarsgard says he could hardly wait to become the plaited fantasy husband conjured up for a lonely woman in the whimsical romantic drama "Wicker."

But when the time came to don the intricately detailed costume, which sent the internet into a frenzy, the Swedish actor admits his immediate reaction was "panic and claustrophobia."

The suit "was quite heavy and warm and glued to my face a little. I couldn't really take it off at all during the day," Skarsgard told AFP in an interview.

"Wicker," now playing in US cinemas, is based on "The Wicker Husband," a short story by British author Ursula Wills-Jones.

In the movie, Skarsgard stars opposite British actress Olivia Colman, who plays the fisherwoman with the studly new spouse in a medieval, patriarchal village, where residents are known by their professions.

For the fisherwoman, it is a hostile place where she is an outcast for being independent, with no man supporting her – and for smelling like fish.

So she defiantly asks the basket weaver (Peter Dinklage) to create a husband for her. A month later, Skarsgard's character appears – a tall, sexy, carefully woven dream of a spouse.

His housework – and his bedroom skills – are quickly the talk of the town. The men are resentful because they can never match up, and the women are jealous.

"The movie can just be enjoyed at surface level, and it's this fun spectacle," said Eleanor Wilson, who directed the film with her work and life partner, Alex Huston Fischer.

"But underneath that, there's a lot going on that does feel very modern and relatable to us," she said, adding that she thinks it would not work as a fable set in modern times.

Olivia Colman (left) and Alexander Skarsgard pose on the sidelines of the Los Angeles Premiere of Black Bear's "Wicker" at Directors Guild of America on Tuesday in Los Angeles, California. – AFP

With its medieval setting and quirky cast of characters, "you can just see it more clearly," Huston Fischer said.

'Passion'

Wilson said the pair "fell in love" with the story right away.

"It just examined how envy can corrupt love, and how we all sort of look at ourselves in relation to other people," she told AFP.

For Huston Fischer, the challenge was to rise to the challenge of creating a visual feast for filmgoers.

"We wanted to see what the wicker husband could look like," he said.

That task fell to Weta Workshop, a New Zealand special effects studio that worked on the "Lord of the Rings" films and Christopher Nolan's "The Odyssey."

The details in the wicker man's face parallel Skarsgard's own features, but the actor said the prosthetic made it difficult for him to convey emotion.

"I had to exaggerate all my expressions," he said.

With the mask glued to his face, "any subtleties would be lost, so a slight frown would read as nothing. We had to play around," Skarsgard said.

He said he felt like a "clown" in rehearsals, but Colman applauded his efforts.

"He's incredibly humble," said the Oscar winner. "All credit to Alex because to get that – the love and the nuance and the humour and all of that – through basically a basket is incredible, and not many people could."

The pair said that filming began with the sex scenes. Clips quickly went viral, to the point that even Swedish big box furniture retailer IKEA ran cheeky ads promoting some of its rattan products as "made from husband material."

"There is so much, obviously, passion, intensity, but there's also a lot of humour and warmth and funny, awkward moments in those scenes," Skarsgard said, calling it "a good way to start the movie." *– AFP*

US actor Anthony Ippolito poses on the sidelines of the AFI FEST "I Play Rocky" premiere at the TCL Chinese Theatre in Los Angeles on Saturday. AFI FEST, presented by the American Film Institute, runs from October 21 to 25. – AFP

World Weather

CHINA	ASIA-PACIFIC	WORLD	LUSOPHONE
Beijing 6°C~19°C	Manila 23°C~33°C	New York 11°C~23°C	Lisbon 13°C~23°C
Shanghai 14°C~24°C	Bangkok 24°C~34°C	London 15°C~16°C	Rio de Janeiro 19°C~23°C
Hong Kong 22°C~29°C	Tokyo 15°C~20°C	Frankfurt 8°C~14°C	Luanda 24°C~28°C
Taipei 19°C~27°C	Singapore 26°C~31°C	Vancouver 7°C~13°C	Maputo 20°C~34°C
Guangzhou 20°C~31°C	Kuala Lumpur 23°C~31°C	Paris 11°C~14°C	Dili 22°C~32°C
Nanjing 14°C~24°C	Jakarta 25°C~34°C	Moscow 2°C~11°C	São Tomé 25°C~33°C
Guilin 18°C~31°C	Seoul 9°C~20°C	Las Vegas 12°C~25°C	Praia 23°C~31°C
Xi'an 9°C~14°C	Sydney 14°C~21°C	Monte Carlo 14°C~20°C	Bissau 24°C~35°C

Artists perform after the flame was extinguished during the closing ceremony of the Aichi-Nagoya Asian Para Games in Nagoya, Japan, on Saturday. – Xinhua

A Hadi (right) of Indonesia reacts during the mixed team gold medal match of Para Powerlifting between Iraq and Indonesia at the Aichi-Nagoya Asian Para Games in Nagoya, Japan, on Saturday. – Xinhua

Members of Team China pose after the mixed team event of Para Powerlifting at the Aichi-Nagoya Asian Para Games in Nagoya, Japan, on Saturday. – Xinhua

Gold medalist Zahraa Al-Obaidi of Iraq sheds tears during the victory ceremony for the mixed team event of Para Powerlifting at the Aichi-Nagoya Asian Para Games in Nagoya, Japan, on Saturday. – Xinhua

Ahmad Abdulla Al Buenain (right), CEO of the Doha 2030 Asian Games Organizing Committee, holds the flag of Asian Paralympic Committee during the closing ceremony of the Aichi-Nagoya Asian Para Games in Nagoya, Japan, on Saturday. – Xinhua

Asian Para Games 2026 mascot Uzumin high-fives with children before the victory ceremony for the mixed team event of Para Powerlifting at the Aichi-Nagoya Asian Para Games in Nagoya, Japan, on Saturday. – Xinhua