THE Macau POST DAILY 澳門郵報

DIRECTOR: Harald Brüning | YEAR 22 | NO.5427 | WEDNESDAY November 11, 2026 | https://www.macaupostdaily.com | MOP 6.00

Sam vows closer legal cooperation with PSCs to boost legal modernisation

Tony Wong

The opening ceremony of the two-day 23rd Conference of Prosecutors-General of the Community of Portuguese Language Countries (CPLP) and the Prosecutor-General of the Macao Special Administrative Region (MSAR) was held in Macau yesterday, where Chief Executive Sam Hou Fai said in a speech that Macau is committed to strengthening prosecutorial, judicial, and other kinds of legal cooperation with Portuguese-speaking countries (PSCs) in various aspects, in the course of modernising its legal system.

Macau became a full member of the conference late last year. Previously, the conference consisted of the nine members of the CPLP – the nine Portuguese-speaking countries: Angola, Brazil, Cabo Verde (Cape Verde), Guinea-Bissau, Equatorial Guinea, Mozambique, Portugal, São Tomé and Príncipe, and Timor-Leste (East Timor).

The two-day conference, organised by Macau's Public Prosecutions Office (MP), is being held at the Service Platform Complex for Commercial and Trade Cooperation between China and Portuguese-speaking Countries (aka Forum Macao Complex) in Sai Van.





Chief Executive Sam Hou Fai (left) and Supreme People's Procuratorate Prosecutor-General Ying Yong address yesterday's opening ceremony of the 23rd Conference of Prosecutors-General of the CPLP and the Prosecutor-General of the MSAR, at the Forum Macao Complex. – Photos: GCS

In his speech, Sam underlined that promoting the rule of law is a priority governance objective of the MSAR Government. Since Macau's return to the motherland in December 1999, the development of the rule of law in the MSAR has achieved significant results; the constitutional order established by the nation's Constitution and the MSAR Basic Law has been steadily consolidated; Macau's legal system, based on the continental European tradition with historical roots deeply connected to Portuguese law, has evolved towards modernisation; and judicial authority and justice have been effectively safeguarded, Sam said.

Sam noted that in recent years, thanks to its exceptionally low crime rate, a highly efficient police force, and a fair and rigorous legal environment, Macau has been recognised by the international community as one of the safest cities in the world.

Sam said that prosecutorial work is an integral and essential part of implementing "One Country, Two Systems" and building the rule of law in the MSAR. The MSAR's Public Prosecutions Office strictly fulfils the duties conferred upon it by the MSAR Basic Law, independently exercising its powers in accordance with the law, initiating and preserving a new era of professionalism and efficiency in prosecutorial work in Macau within the "One Country, Two Systems" framework.

Sam noted that the Conference of Prosecutors-General of the Community of Portuguese Language Countries had served as a vital platform for cooperation and exchange among the prosecutorial institutions of member states within the CPLP framework. The MSAR became an observer of this conference mechanism in 2013 and a permanent observer in 2016, Sam noted, adding that the MSAR became a full member of the conference late last year, which was therefore renamed the Conference of Prosecutors-General of the Community of Portuguese Language Countries and the Prosecutor-General of the Macao Special Administrative Region.

Continued on p.5

Embattled Pentagon chief slams impeachment 'farce'

WASHINGTON, DC – US Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth yesterday denounced a push to impeach him as a "farce" and defended his record leading the Iran war and other military operations under President Donald Trump.

"It's a farce, and it's a stunt, and everybody knows it," he said at a Pentagon press conference, branding the impeachment push "slander" and "sabotage."

Hegseth's combative performance came as Congress inched toward a rare vote on impeachment over alleged misconduct related to wars against Iran and Yemen's Houthis, and the controversial killing of alleged drug smugglers in the Caribbean and eastern Pacific.

Trump has acknowledged that the war – which Hegseth has championed – contributed to his party losing control of both the House and Senate.

But moments after Hegseth's televised press conference, the 80-year-old president signalled his support.

"Pete Hegseth gets an 'A' PLUS, PLUS, PLUS," Trump wrote on his Truth Social platform.

The expected impeachment vote in the House comes in the lame duck period when Republicans still retain their narrow majority, ahead of next January when the huge new Democratic majority takes over.

If a majority in the House voted in favour, the Senate would still need a two thirds majority to convict and remove Hegseth – a tall order even after Democrats take up power there too in January. *– AFP*



CIIE volunteers take selfies at the National Exhibition and Convention Center (Shanghai) yesterday. The six-day 9th China International Import Expo (CIIE) concluded yesterday. – (More on p.7) – AFP

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

'Go forth and be saints!' Pope Leo tells Argentines

Pope Leo XIV urged Argentines to "go forth and be saints" yesterday as he rallied hundreds of thousands of faithful in the northern city of Córdoba. *– Story on p. 10*

Nations urged to exit fossil fuels as Turkey touts oil find

UN chief António Guterres yesterday urged nations at COP31 to plan for a future without fossil fuels, even as summit hosts Turkey celebrated the discovery of new oil reserves. *– Story on p. 11*

Cape Verde to pick president, with incumbent battling first woman candidate

Cape Verde holds a presidential election on Sunday with incumbent José Maria Neves favoured to win a second term as head of state of the west African archipelago renowned for its democratic stability. *– Story on p. 12*

Published by Macau Cultural Box Ltd. Printed by Welfare Printing Ltd. Head office: 39 Rua dos Mercadores, Centro Comercial Ou Chong, 5/F, A-B, Macau.
Tel.: 2833 1050 E-mail: macaupost@macau.ctm.net Fax: 2833 1104 GCS Registry Nº. 223 ISSN 1813-2898

Mil-Homens captures Macau Grand Prix speed at FRC gallery exhibition

Interview by Rui Pastorin

As the city gears up for the 73rd edition of the Macau Grand Prix (MGP), a variety of events themed on the international motorsport event are being held. Among them is an exhibition at the Rui Cunha Foundation (FRC) gallery by Lisbon-born photographer António Duarte Mil-Homens, who has been capturing the annual event through his lens since 1999.

Following up on his 2017 showcase at the gallery, this edition launched with an opening ceremony last night that was officiated by guests and representatives including Consul General of Portugal in Macau and Hong Kong Alexandre Leitão.

Photos taken over the past four years line the gallery's walls, showing frames that capture high-speed motorsport action and decisive moments along Macau's Guia Circuit, a challenging 6.2-kilometre street circuit that has garnered both respect and recognition from many racers around the world.

Speed is, of course, a key point that Mil-Homens hopes to convey through his photos, along with the competition found at the start and finish of each race, which goes back to the title of the exhibition: "START & FINISH"

For Mil-Homens, capturing that energy is an ongoing passion. "It's always a pleasure to try and capture the ambience and the action", the lensman said in an interview with the Post after last night's opening ceremony.

While Mil-Homens noted that Macau continues to see "a lot of very good drivers" competing in the city, he also remarked on how much harder it has become to photograph them, pointing out the increasing number of restrictions and fewer designated photo spots year after year.

"It's more and more difficult to get different angles, to get the kind of pictures I could take 10, 15 or 20 years ago. Now it's almost impossible", unless, in some cases, you are an official photographer or reporter.

Moreover, the veteran photographer, whose professional career spans 52 years with an extensive, varied portfolio, also touched on the possibilities brought on by technology and modern cameras ranging from speed to going fully automatic to a more accurate autofocus when photographing the event.

"It's much easier than before", Mil-Homens said, looking back at the times when he was still taking pictures with no autofocus and with film, which might only offer 36 frames compared to the thousands of photos stored in a single, tiny memory card.

"We're seeing, all over the world, good pictures" not only in capturing the Macau Grand Prix and racing, but other genres and subjects. But while Mil-Homens added that making things easier is a good thing, it isn't always the best, especially when building a strong foundation. For this, he said, he was happy to have had the opportunity to learn the craft before cameras evolved into what they are today.

"I'm very happy to have started 52 years ago with film, with no autofocus, auto settings. This gave me a basis for what I can achieve, even today. Of course, I have to keep updating and upgrading, but this is counting on the basis of what I started 52 learning years ago", Mil-Homens said.

With this year's Macau Grand Prix taking place from November 19 through 22, Mil-Homens offered advice for those hoping to capture the action themselves, particularly the importance of taking photos starting from the practice sessions in order to "learn the best angles, the opportunities, the kind of lenses you can use in this or that situation". But most of all? "Keep enjoying and keep taking pictures".

The exhibition is on until November 21. Admission is free. Stay tuned for more photos in an upcoming page 4. ■



Veteran photographer António Duarte Mil-Homens poses in front of some of his photos on display at the Rui Cunha Foundation (FRC) Gallery at 749 Avenida da Praia Grande, Luen Pong Building. – Photo: Rui Pastorin

Published since Aug 2004

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

MacauPOST

Macau Weather

DRY.
FINE APART FROM CLOUDY PERIODS.
FORCE 3 TO 4 NORTH TO NORTHEASTERLY WINDS.
RELATIVE HUMIDITY WILL RANGE BETWEEN 40% AND 75%.

17ºC~25ºC

Source: SMG

Govt to host Dr Sun Yat-sen birth anniversary photo exhibition

Ida Cheong

Tomorrow marks the 160th anniversary of the birth of Dr Sun Yat-sen*. The government will host a series of memorial events and open a photo exhibition tomorrow at the Macao Cultural Centre (MCC) to commemorate the date, according to a statement from the Government Information Bureau (GCS) yesterday.

The photo exhibition will run until November 27, showcasing Dr Sun's life trajectory and revolutionary ideals, as well as the deep-rooted historical ties between Macau and Dr Sun and his family, the statement noted, adding that it features over 100 precious historical documents and photographs, complemented by text archives, videos, audio recordings, and interactive installations.

The exhibition is structured into five main sections. It also includes a special section titled "The Historical Ties Between Macao Kiang Wu Hospital and Dr Sun Yat-sen's Family", detailing the enduring connection spanning decades – from Dr Sun's period practising medicine in Macau to the years following the founding of New China, the statement noted.

Additionally, the exhibition features interactive headsets, allowing visitors to listen to rare historic audio recordings of Dr Sun delivering speeches in Cantonese, the statement added.



This undated and unlocated handout photo provided by the Government Information Bureau (GCS) yesterday shows a themed book display – one of a raft of memorial events to mark the 160th anniversary of the birth of Dr Sun Yat-sen.

Located at the MCC art space, the exhibition will be open to the public from 3:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. tomorrow, and from 10:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. daily from Friday to November 27. Members of the public are welcome to visit the exhibition, according to the statement.

Starting in November, the statement pointed out, various government entities, in collaboration with local community associations, will also roll out a comprehensive series of commemorative activities, including thematic seminars, the issuance of commemorative stamps, guided cultural tours, and school-based educational programmes, providing the public with multifaceted insights into Dr Sun Yat-sen's life and enduring contributions. ■

**Dr Sun Yat-sen (1866–1925) was a physician and political leader revered as the "Father of Modern China" for leading the 1911 Revolution that overthrew the Qing Dynasty, ending more than 2,000 years of imperial rule. His political vision was guided by the Three Principles of the People: Nationalism, Democracy, and Livelihood. In 1892, he became the first Chinese physician trained in Western medicine to practise at Kiang Wu Hospital, where he established its Western medicine department and later opened his own pharmacy on Rua das Estalagens (草堆街). – Gemini*

'The Unknown I-land' explores courage, self-discovery through paper theatre

Khalel Vallo

The local theatre production *The Unknown I-land* will take audiences on a journey of self-discovery through physical theatre, pop-up books, paper art, light, and music when it opens at the Macao Cultural Centre (CCM) in Nape this weekend.

The production, inspired by Portuguese Nobel laureate José Saramago's novella *The Tale of the Unknown Island*, was introduced at a meet-and-greet session at CCM yesterday, attended by director Ip Ka Man and pop-up book designer Mirabella Lao (劉芷蕙).

As part of the Cultural Affairs Bureau's (IC) "Commissioning Performing Arts Productions 2024–2026" programme, the play reimagines the original story by replacing its male protagonist with Stacy, an ordinary cleaning woman who leaves her familiar surroundings to pursue the unknown.

Ip said that the original novella's final line, in which the boat named "The Unknown Island" sets sail in search of itself, inspired him to adapt the work for the stage. He also said that people often look outside themselves when seeking change or fulfilment, whereas the most meaningful discovery may come from within. Ip also described theatre as a mirror through which audiences and creators can examine their own feelings and thoughts.

Meanwhile, Lao said that pop-up books were particularly suited to the story because their transformation from simple sheets of paper into unexpected shapes mirrors the protagonist's journey and the discoveries she makes along the way.

The creative team experimented with different types and shapes of paper throughout rehearsals, exploring how performers could manipulate the materials and interact with the pop-up structures. One recurring visual element is a series of windows through which the performers portray how Stacy is viewed by the people around her as she prepares to leave her hometown.

Ip described the unknown as a form of courage, saying that "courage doesn't have to do something big, but it needs courage to do something different from what you usually do in your daily life."

The production will be staged at Box II of the Macao Cultural Centre on Saturday at 2:45 p.m. and 7:45 p.m., and on Sunday at 7:45 p.m. Combining movement, papercraft, and music, it invites audience members to reconsider their own potential and the possibilities beyond familiar routines. ■



Ip Ka Man (right), director of local theatre production The Unknown I-land*, and pop-up book designer Mirabella Lao (劉芷蕙) pose with their respective props during yesterday's meet-and-greet session at the Macao Cultural Centre (CCM) in Nape. – Photo: Khalel Vallo*

Int'l civilisation forum highlights new UNESP publishing deal, Chinese cultural book launch

Ida Cheong

The closing ceremony of the "International Forum on Mutual Learning Among Civilisations 2026" took place yesterday at the Galaxy International Convention Centre in Cotai, featuring the signing of a publishing cooperation agreement with the São Paulo State University (UNESP) Publishing Foundation, further deepening international exchange and cooperation, alongside the launch of a new book, Selected Works of the "Anthology of the Special Column: Glimpse into Chinese Culture" Special Edition.

Culture and Sports Bureau (DSCD) Director Deland Leong Wai Man noted in a speech that in order to give full play to the city's role as an important bridgehead for the country's high-level opening-up and an important window for exchange and mutual learning between Chinese and Western civilisations, her bureau and the São Paulo State University Press Foundation (UNESP) have reached an understanding to cooperate on the "Eastern Classics Spread to the West: Publishing Programme with Macao as a Translation and Dissemination Platform".

The programme will complete, in batches, the translation, editing, publication and promotion of Portuguese-language translations of 20 Chinese classics, promoting the dissemination of and exchange in classical Chinese culture in Portuguese-speaking countries and regions, Leong added.

In addition, Leong added that the book "Anthology of the Special Column: Glimpse into Chinese Culture" will be launched to enhance the introduction of Chinese culture to readers in Portuguese-speaking countries.

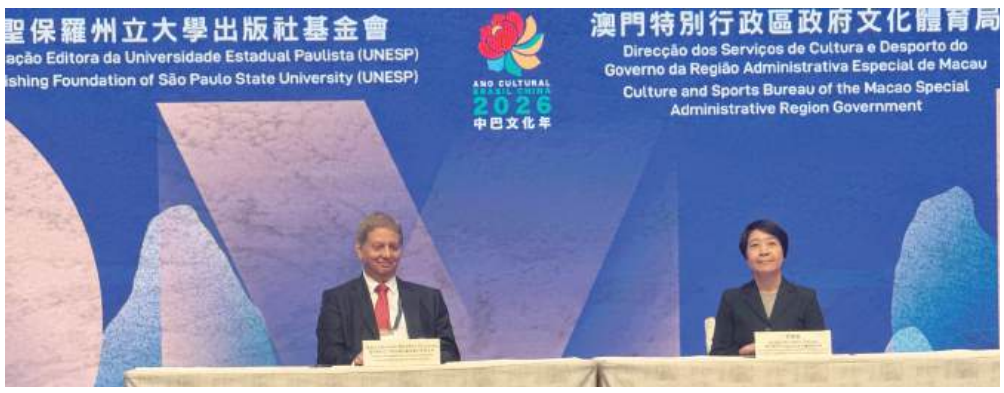
Launched jointly in September 2023 by *Macao Daily News* and the Portuguese newspaper *Diário de Notícias*, the "Anthology of the Special Column: Glimpse into Chinese Culture" project publishes dedicated features designed to introduce Chinese culture to readers across Portuguese-speaking countries, leveraging Macau's role as a bridge between China and Lusophone nations. Over the past three years, the Portuguese special edition has released 160 issues and published nearly 1,470 posts across overseas social media platforms, covering topics such as traditional Chinese festivals, folk customs, literature, and the arts, according to a bureau statement.



The new "Anthology of the Special Column: Glimpse into Chinese Culture" book is displayed during yesterday's closing ceremony of the "International Forum on Mutual Learning Among Civilisations 2026" at the Galaxy International Convention Centre in Cotai. – Photos: Ida Cheong

The statement added that the ""Anthology of the Special Column: Glimpse into Chinese Culture" Special Edition is a two-volume bilingual Chinese-Portuguese publication, showcasing a curated selection of about 150 articles in each language from over the years.

In order to foster youth exchange and intercultural dialogue, the forum also hosted a youth parallel session as part of its side events, the statement said, adding that three overseas scholars attending the forum were invited to local campuses for thematic sessions, engaging in interactive discussions with students to inspire young minds. ■



Culture and Sports Bureau (DSCD) Director Deland Leong Wai Man (right) and São Paulo State University Press Foundation (UNESP) CEO and President Jézio Hernani Bomfim Gutierre pose for a photo during yesterday's closing ceremony of the "International Forum on Mutual Learning Among Civilisations 2026" at Galaxy International Convention Centre in Cotai.

Macau bans flight activities Nov 11-22 for APEC summit: AACM

Khalel Vallo

The Civil Aviation Authority (AACM) announced in a statement yesterday that all flight activities, including unmanned aircraft operations, are prohibited across the Macao Special Administrative Region (MSAR) from today to Sunday, November 22, in order to ensure the smooth conduct of the 33rd Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) Economic Leaders' Meeting.

The two-day APEC Economic Leaders' Meeting will be held on November 18 and 19 in Shenzhen. The straight-line distance between Macau and Shenzhen is about 100 km.

The statement said that the restriction would be imposed under Paragraph 66 of the Air Navigation Regulation of Macao, noting that the prohibition covers all unmanned aircraft operations, including drone flights, but exempts public commercial air transportation.

The statement added that the prohibition does not apply to unmanned aircraft operated by the Public Security Police Force (PSP) for emergency and rescue operations or police duties.

The authority warned that anyone violating the ban would face penalties under Article 59 of Law No. 4/2025, the Civil Aviation Activity Law. ■

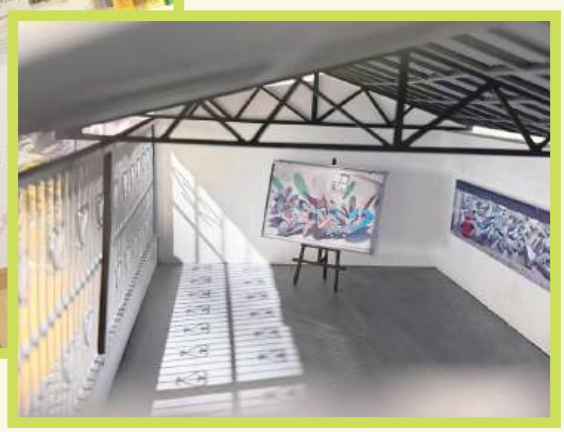


This poster provided by the Civil Aviation Authority of Macau (AACM) yesterday shows its drone ban logo.





Artists WESTONE (left) and F. E. W. share a fist bump at the exhibition on Friday. Photos provided by the organiser



The interior of one miniature resembles the attic of a local building. – Photo: Leong Kit Man



Fragmentos by F. E. W.



Drying Salted Fish by WESTONE

ALL GOES TO TINY – Macao !OUTLOUD Street Art Miniature Exhibition



Interview by William Chan

Macau's streets, shopfronts and historic buildings are being presented in miniature at ALL GOES TO TINY WORLD – Macao !OUTLOUD Street Art Miniature Exhibition, where graffiti and street art meet detailed scale modelling.

Organised by the Macau Old District Promotion Association and curated by Cassidy Chan, the exhibition brings together more than a dozen artists from the Greater Bay Area (GBA), as well as artists from Costa Rica, Portugal and Thailand. It opened at Macpro Gallery on Avenida da Praia Grande on Friday.

Foshan artist WESTONE has created several miniature architectural scenes for the exhibition, reconstructing the details of historic buildings and urban lanes. The models also provide settings for new graffiti interventions, allowing artists to imagine changes to the city without altering its actual structures.

WESTONE, who has worked with graffiti since 2002, said the project grew from his earlier scanned works and his interest in presenting a city as a central theme. As a Foshan native, he had previously worked with images of the city's arcades and older streets. The exhibition allowed him to extend that approach to other cities, including Macau.

"I am from Foshan, so I had already made works based on some of the arcades there," WESTONE said. "I wanted to see how the concept could continue in other cities and how their different characteristics could enter the same project."

Rather than focusing only on Macau's best-known landmarks, WESTONE said he is drawn to older buildings, small streets, guesthouses, shopfronts and everyday scenes. From his perspective, Macau's architectural character comes from the combination of Chinese and Western influences with local life.

The miniature format also creates possibilities that would not be available at full scale. Historic walls and buildings cannot be painted freely, but a model can become a controlled space for experimentation. WESTONE said the format allowed him to place figures and new images on architectural forms while respecting the original sites. "If I want to paint on a historic wall, I cannot simply do that in reality," he said. "With a miniature version, I can create on the architecture while respecting the actual building."

Costa Rican artist F. E. W. (Felipe Wong) approaches the exhibition from the perspective of street culture. F. E. W. has lived in Macau for six years, after spending 10 years in Hong Kong. His practice combines digital art, graffiti and art toys, and is informed by community, friendship and local culture.

F. E. W. said Macau has a smaller graffiti community than Hong Kong, but artists continue to collaborate and develop their own ways of telling stories about the city. "In Macau, we are a very small group, but we have been working together for quite a few years to keep this culture alive," he said. "There are talented people here who can tell interesting stories about local and contemporary culture."

For F. E. W., graffiti can offer a contemporary way to discuss Chinese and Macau identities. He has previously reinterpreted elements such as lion dance heads through street art, treating tradition as something that can be viewed from a new perspective. "Identity is a fusion of many things," he said. "We can show Macau culture and Chinese culture through the eyes of contemporary street culture."

The limited number of walls and public spaces in Macau remains a challenge for graffiti artists. F. E. W. noted that artists need more than a canvas: they need places where they can paint, practise and develop their visual language. "We do not just need a canvas. We need a wall and we need a space," he said. "Those places define our culture."

F. E. W.'s work on display at the exhibition, Quinquilharia e Acessórios de Barco Cheong Heng* (祥興五金船具), reflects his interest in fragments and layered identities. He said that people, like old walls, are formed by pieces accumulated over time. "We are not just one single piece," he said. "As we learn and grow, we add more pieces. Those fragments build our identity."

By bringing the street indoors and shrinking the city to an intimate scale, the exhibition invites visitors to rediscover Macau's architecture and the contemporary culture growing around it. "When the buildings became as small as a little kitty, we grew more aware of how precious and fragile they are - and felt a deeper urge to protect them."

The exhibition is on at Macpro Gallery until 5 December. Opening hours are daily from 2:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m., free admission.

**English translation: Cheong Heng Chandlery and Boat Accessories*





Woman robs illegal currency dealer of HK$60,000 in casino chips: police



Judiciary Police (PJ) officers escort robbery suspect Yi to a PJ vehicle outside the PJ headquarters in Zape yesterday. – Photo: Sherwin Hng

Sherwin Hng

A woman from the Chinese mainland was arrested for robbing an illegal currency exchange dealer of HK$60,000 in casino chips at a hotel in Cotai on Sunday night, Judiciary Police (PJ) spokesman Cheong Kim Fong said during a special press conference yesterday.

Cheong noted that the suspect, a 40-something surnamed Yi who is unemployed, approached the female victim, who was carrying HK$70,000 in casino chips, and offered to exchange yuan into chips. They agreed to exchange chips worth HK$30,000 for 29,500 yuan.

According to Cheong, the two subsequently met at a bench outside the hotel casino area to complete the transaction. During the exchange, Yi pretended to make a bank transfer on her mobile phone before suddenly snatching the chips from the victim when her guard was down.

The victim immediately resisted, and the two struggled over the chips. During the altercation, one of the chips fell to the ground and was picked up by an unidentified male passer-by. Hotel security personnel noticed the incident and reported it to the police.

Police later recovered HK$60,000 in casino chips from Yi. At the time of the press conference, the police were still trying to identify the passer-by and the whereabouts of the missing chip, Cheong said.

In the course of the investigation, the police discovered that the robbery victim, who had been engaged in illegal currency exchange since the middle of last year, is also under investigation in a separate case, Cheong noted.

Yi was transferred to the Public Prosecutions Office (MP) on suspicion of robbery. ■

Swiss, Belgian nationals can now use Macau automated channels

Rui Pastorin

Starting today, the traditional automated channels, i.e., the two-gate channels, at Macau's border checkpoints will also be open to nationals from Switzerland and Belgium, the Public Security Police Force (PSP) announced in a statement yesterday.

The channels were only previously open to nationals from nine countries, namely Australia, Brazil, Germany, France, Malaysia, Portugal, Singapore, South Korea and Spain.

According to the statement, starting today, Swiss and Belgian nationals aged 18 and over can register in person at the designated registration points with a valid passport, after which they can use the traditional automated channels. Meanwhile, those aged below 18 must be accompanied by a parent or guardian during registration as well as present a birth certificate and the ID of the person accompanying them.

The statement added that both registered and unregistered passengers may use the manual inspection channels to complete their immigration clearance procedures, while registrants for the automatic channels must have a passport valid for over 90 days.

The PSP highlighted its various measures in the statement, noting:

"Since 2024, the CPSP has expanded eligibility for the traditional automated channels to foreign visitors in several phases. In 2025, most foreign visitors crossing at the Macao port of the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge were allowed to clear immigration without leaving their vehicles. In 2026, eligibility for the joint inspection automated channels was extended to three categories of foreign nationals. Through these important measures, the PSP is contributing to Macao's goal of becoming a World Centre of Tourism and Leisure".

MSAR passport holders eligible for visa-on-arrival or e-visa for Kuwait: DSI

Meanwhile, the Identification Services Bureau (DSI) announced in a separate statement last night that the local government was notified by the Consulate General of the State of Kuwait in Hong Kong that Macao Special Administrative Region (MSAR) passport holders can apply for a visa on arrival upon entering Kuwait for a maximum of 3 months per entry.

MSAR passport holders may also apply for an entry visa in advance through the Kuwait electronic visa platform.

One can find more details on https://www.kuwaitconsulate.org.hk/Consular_Services.html and https://www.dsi.gov.mo/en/visa.

The statement added that entry policies of various countries may vary, reminding residents to check the relevant information accordingly. ■



This poster provided by the Public Security Police Force (PSP) yesterday announces that Swiss and Belgian nationals are now eligible to use Macau's automated border checkpoint channels.

Sam vows closer legal cooperation with PSCs to boost legal modernisation

Continued from p.1

Sam said that this not only vividly reflects the traditional relations of friendship between Macau and Portuguese-speaking countries, but also constitutes high recognition of the successful practice of "One Country, Two Systems" in Macau and the development of the rule of law and the prosecutorial work in the MSAR. It fully demonstrates the shared commitment to deepening exchanges in prosecutorial matters, jointly combating cross-border crime, and advancing judicial cooperation between the MSAR and Portuguese-speaking countries, he said.

In his speech, Sam underlined that the MSAR's 3rd Five-Year Plan – of which this year is the inaugural year – places strong emphasis on promoting the development of the rule of law, with a commitment to accelerating the modernisation of the MSAR's legal system, effectively respecting and safeguarding judicial independence, and fostering high-quality development in the MSAR's prosecutorial work.

Sam raises 3 proposals for enhanced cooperation

To this end, Sam raised three proposals for deepening legal cooperation between Macau and Portuguese-speaking countries.

The **first** is to study and promote the signing of more legal and judicial assistance agreements between the MSAR and Portuguese-speaking countries. Sam noted that mutual legal and judicial assistance agreements form the fundamental framework for driving cooperation in this area at both international and inter-regional levels. Based on mutual respect and equal consultation, the MSAR Government is committed to promoting the signing of legal and judicial cooperation agreements with an increasing number of Portuguese-speaking countries, thereby building a more solid foundation for jointly combating cross-border crime and deepening judicial cooperation in criminal matters between the MSAR and various countries, Sam said.

The **second** is to deepen pragmatic cooperation in prosecutorial work between the two sides. Sam said that in the new era, exchanges and cooperation between the MSAR and Portuguese-speaking countries are set to intensify across trade, economic activities, and the movement of people. He underlined the need to strengthen pragmatic cooperation between the two sides by ensuring – through high-quality prosecutorial work – the joint protection of bilateral and multilateral trade cooperation and the movement of people, effectively safeguarding the legitimate rights and interests of individuals and enterprises, and more effectively promoting smooth trade, financial integration, and closer bonds between peoples.

The **third** is to strengthen multilateral exchanges among professionals, including reciprocal visits and training, sharing practical experience in handling specific cases, and enhancing the international influence of Portuguese-speaking countries and regions. Sam said that the MSAR Government is currently working on drafting amendments to five major codes including the Penal Code and the Penal Procedures Code, calling for legal experts, academics, and experienced professionals from Portuguese-speaking countries to share – from a comparative law perspective – advanced theories and practical judicial experience on these matters, offering valuable references for the MSAR's legislative amendment process.

Also addressing yesterday's opening ceremony, MSAR Prosecutor-General Tong Hio Fong noted that late last year, with the strong support of the Central People's Government and the MSAR Government, the delegation of the MSAR's Public Prosecutions Office proposed amendments to the conference's regulations during its participation in the 22nd Conference, held in Portugal. The proposal was unanimously approved by all member states, and the conference was renamed the Conference of Prosecutors-General of the Community of Portuguese Language Countries and the Prosecutor-General of the Macao Special Administrative Region.

The 22nd Conference last year also unanimously approved the MSAR Public Prosecutions Office's organisation of the 23rd Conference in Macau, Tong noted.

Nation's top prosecutor voices support for Macau's role

Also addressing yesterday's opening ceremony, Supreme People's Procuratorate Prosecutor -General Ying Yong said that in recent years, under the strategic guidance of President Xi Jinping and the leaders of Portuguese-speaking countries, political mutual trust between China and Portuguese-speaking countries has grown stronger, economic and trade cooperation has continued to deepen, and cultural and people-to-people exchanges have become increasingly close. Against the backdrop of the continuous, in-depth, and practical development of friendly relations between China and Portuguese-speaking countries, the procuratorial organs of China and Portuguese-speaking countries have consistently maintained a profound friendship.

Ying said that Macau serves as a window for the blending of Chinese and Western civilisations, as well as an important bridge and bond connecting China with Portuguese-speaking countries. Hosting this conference in Macau fully demonstrates Macau's unique advantages and will inject new momentum and expand new horizons for procuratorial exchanges and cooperation between China and Portuguese-speaking countries. The Supreme People's Procuratorate of China will, as always, support the MSAR's Public Prosecutions Office in playing a greater role in promoting procuratorial cooperation between China and Portuguese-speaking countries, Ying reaffirmed. ■

HK woman caught smuggling 8.7 kg of silver granules from Macau to Zhuhai in bicycle inner tubes

Sherwin Hng

Gongbei Customs officers seized 8.7 kilograms of silver granules concealed inside bicycle inner tubes from a Hong Kong woman entering Zhuhai through the Gongbei checkpoint on October 22, according to a statement released by Gongbei Customs yesterday.

The woman, surnamed Tai, was pushing a bicycle through the customs "green channel" at the passenger inspection hall at around 11:00 a.m. that day when officers noticed that she appeared nervous and that the bicycle seemed unusually heavy.

Officers subsequently carried out a targeted inspection and discovered a large quantity of silver granules hidden inside the bicycle's inner tubes, weighing a total of 8.7 kilograms.

The case is being handled by Gongbei Customs for further investigation. ■



This undated handout photo provided by Zhuhai's Gongbei Customs yesterday shows 8.7 kg of silver granules seized by its officers at Gongbei Port (Macau-Zhuhai land border checkpoint) on October 22.

How the CPC plans to sustain its anti-corruption drive

Analysis

BEIJING – China has pledged to sustain its anti-graft drive in key sectors and target new and concealed forms of corruption, including those through virtual currency and cross-border financial activities.

At a key Party plenum held in late October, the Communist Party of China (CPC) Central Committee adopted a resolution on persevering with full and rigorous Party self-governance, underscoring the Party's resolve to maintain a tough stance against corruption and strengthen oversight over the exercise of power.

Since the 20th CPC National Congress held in 2022, the Party has stepped up its fight against corruption in key sectors including finance, state-owned enterprises (SOEs), energy, tobacco, pharmaceuticals, and project bidding and tendering.

Special campaigns have also been reinforced to address corruption in grain procurement and sales, as well as in the football sector.

The resolution pledged to investigate and deal with cases involving both political and economic issues, collusion between government officials and businesspeople, and capital penetrating into the political domain.

It also vowed to crack down hard on graft of the "key few," especially officials in top posts, and young officials, and take stern action against corruption committed by leading officials' families and staff.

Over the years, some senior officials – including former members of the Political Bureau and its Standing Committee, senior military officials, former government ministers, and retirees who left their leading positions years ago – have been brought to justice for violations of law.

In February 2026, revised regulations were issued to strengthen oversight of leaders of SOEs, prohibiting them from abusing power, engaging in unauthorized commercial activities or investments, and practicing nepotism or favoritism.

At a press conference on the guiding principles from the October plenum, a senior anti-graft official said the CPC had outlined priorities for steadfastly following a distinctive Chinese path to combating corruption.

They include maintaining a tough anti-graft stance, strengthening oversight of power, fostering a culture of integrity, and enhancing coordinated efforts to prevent corruption by rooting out audacity, opportunity, and desire, said Zhang Fuhai, deputy secretary of the Central Commission for Discipline Inspection of the CPC and deputy head of the National Commission of Supervision.

The resolution pledged to target new and disguised forms of corruption such as receiving returns later for abusing one's power for the beneficiaries, reaping benefits from assets under the name of bribe givers or a third party, the "white glove" or agents concealing corruption activities in ostensibly legal forms, and the "revolving door" phenomenon of bureaucrat-merchant collusion after officials' retirement.

Such offenses feature increasingly concealed actors, diversified channels for illicit benefit transfers, and more obscured connections between power and money.

Investigating these practices requires accurately identifying the concealed parties, turning illicit benefits into quantifiable and comparable data, and developing specialized forensic technologies and tools to facilitate cross-border tracking and asset freezing.

A stronger legal framework is essential, with more clearly defined criteria for establishing criminal liability, determining convictions and imposing sentences for offenses such as offering bribes on behalf of an entity and brokering bribery.

The resolution also calls for greater use of technology and digital tools, including algorithms, data mining and cross-referencing techniques to uncover suspicious patterns, expose hidden connections and sharpen investigative capabilities. *– Xinhua*

Think tank report highlights B&R role in open world economy

BEIJING – The Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) is playing a key role in building an open world economy, according to a report released yesterday by Xinhua Institute, a high-end think tank affiliated with Xinhua News Agency.

Titled "Building an Open World Economy Through Belt and Road Cooperation," the report includes a preface, three chapters and a conclusion, reviewing the initiative's achievements and outlining its future direction in promoting sustained global openness.

Since China proposed the initiative in 2013, it has moved from concept to action, from vision to reality, and from "sketching the outline" to "filling in the details," the report says, adding that it has opened new avenues for global economic growth and contributed to the well-being of people around the world.

China has signed Belt and Road (B&R) cooperation documents with more than 150 countries and over 30 international organizations. A connectivity framework consisting of six corridors, six routes, and multiple countries and ports has largely taken shape, with signature projects including the China-Europe Railway Express, the Jakarta-Bandung High-Speed Railway, the Mombasa-Nairobi Railway and Chancay Port already operational and delivering tangible results, the report notes.

By June 2026, the China-Europe Railway Express had operated more than 130,000 train services, carrying goods worth over US$520 billion and reaching 236 cities in 26 European countries. In 2025, China's trade with B&R partner countries reached 23.6 trillion yuan (US$3.51 trillion), up 6.3 percent year on year and accounting for 51.9 percent of China's total foreign trade.

The report highlights the expansion of B&R cooperation into digital, green and scientific fields, saying the Digital Silk Road and Green Silk Road are flourishing while numerous "small yet smart" livelihood projects are delivering benefits to local communities.

By the end of 2025, the Cross-border Interbank Payment System served more than 5,000 legal entities in 190 countries and regions, and China had signed memorandums of understanding on investment cooperation in the digital, green and blue economies with more than 50 B&R partners.

Acknowledging headwinds facing the global economy, including rising unilateralism, protectionism, geopolitical conflicts and supply chain disruptions, the report argues that isolation offers no path forward while openness enables mutual success. It says B&R cooperation provides concrete action against decoupling, supply chain disruption and bloc confrontation.

Looking ahead, the report says B&R cooperation is moving from major corridors to extensive networks, and is being driven by digitalization and the green transition, adding that it will deepen institutional opening-up, strengthen soft connectivity in rules and standards, and promote inclusive development so that the benefits of growth reach more people more equitably worldwide. *– Xinhua*



This photo shows copies of Xinhua Institute's report titled "Building an Open World Economy Through Belt and Road Cooperation." The think tank released its report on high-quality Belt and Road cooperation in promoting an open world economy yesterday. The report was released during the Belt and Road Forum for International Think Tank Cooperation 2026 & the 4th Silk Road (XI'AN) International Communication Forum in Xi'an, capital Shaanxi Province. – AFP

China completes 1,000-km hollow-core fiber transmission verification

BEIJING – China has completed a 1,000-kilometer hollow-core fiber transmission verification, marking a new breakthrough in key technologies for next-generation communication networks.

The verification, jointly conducted by China Telecom, Yangtze Optical Fibre and Cable (YOFC), and ZTE over a 1,007.48-kilometer fiber link, achieved simultaneous bidirectional signal transmission at 64 Tb per second in each direction, equivalent to supporting the upload and download of 160 films in 4K resolution per second, according to China Telecom on November 4.

The vast majority of optical fibers in widespread use are solid-core fibers, in which signals travel through a quartz glass core at 200,000 kilometers per second, whereas hollow-core fibers carry signals mainly through air channels at close to 300,000 kilometers per second.

This shortens transmission time and lowers latency. A signal takes just 3.43 milliseconds to travel one way across the 1,000-kilometer link, according to test technicians.

The technology doubles transmission capacity and extends transmission distance by 60 percent compared with the best-performing solid-core fibers currently available, according to the technicians.

The experiment confirmed that hollow-core fiber can deliver long-distance, large-capacity and low-latency transmission using existing transmission equipment, providing a key technological reserve for computing power networks, said Huo Xiaoli, chief expert for next-generation information and communications at China Telecom.

The use of hollow-core fibers can improve computing efficiency and reduce investment costs for GPUs or memory chips in AI data centers, which require low-latency, high-speed optical connections and transmission.

Such technology will also boost data transmission speed and bandwidth between data centers, helping AI training and inference.

It is reported that this hollow-core fiber technology has been applied in a commercial line connecting Shenzhen and Hong Kong.

More than 10 commercial and pilot hollow-core fiber projects have also been implemented in Asia, Europe and other regions. *– Xinhua*

French dairy giant bets on China's cheese boom

Interview by Xinhua writers Yao Yuan, Tian Yun and Zhou Rui

SHANGHAI – Denis Vergneau compares Chinese consumers' first impression of cheese to a European's first encounter with stinky tofu: both can seem unfamiliar at first because of their strong aromas, but each has a distinct flavor that can win people over once they try it.

"We believe, as a group, that cheese will become something in China," said Vergneau, general manager of Sinodis, the China subsidiary of the Savencia Group. "It takes a lot of time. It's a work with generations."

The French company showcased its portfolio of dairy, chocolate and pastry ingredients, including cheese and cream products tailored for the Chinese market, at the 9th China International Import Expo (CIIE) in Shanghai. The six-day fair ended yesterday.

While Chinese consumers are no strangers to processed cheese, the kind melted on pizzas or tucked into fast-food burgers, natural cheeses, especially traditional European varieties, remain a niche category in China.

Yet the company has been optimistic about building a market for cheese. Savencia entered the Chinese market in 1996 and was among the first foreign groups to build a cheese factory in China. It now runs two cheese factories in the northern city of Tianjin.

The group has focused on localization and consumer education, developing cheese sticks and other children's snacks to introduce Chinese children to cheese and gradually make it part of their daily eating habits.

"In France, people start eating cheese at one or two years old, just as many Chinese grow up with choudoufu ["stinky tofu"]. Cheese is new to you, just as choudoufu is new to me," said Vergneau.

That sense of novelty can be a source of innovation, Vergneau said, pointing to unconventional uses of cheese and cream in China, such as cheese-topped milk tea or cream mixed with salted egg yolk.

"French consumers grow up with cheese and cream, so they have a framework. The Chinese pastry chef carries no such baggage: he can mix things without a frame, producing combinations no French chef would ever have imagined," he said, adding that the same applies to French chefs experimenting with tofu.

Vergneau said the fast pace of innovation in China has prompted brands to develop products faster. "New products are a constant on the Chinese market. We need to offer new recipes and new solutions," he added.

The CIIE, China's national-level expo dedicated to imports, offers the company an important platform to learn about the Chinese market and its shifting trends, he said.

"Savencia is committed to staying for the long haul in China. We are continuing to invest because we believe in the long-term prospects," he said.

– Xinhua

China's import expo wraps up with record intended deals, global debuts



Volunteers and staff members pose for a group photo at the media center of the 9th China International Import Expo (CIIE) in Shanghai yesterday. The six-day expo concluded yesterday. – Xinhua

SHANGHAI – The ninth China International Import Expo (CIIE) concluded in Shanghai yesterday, with the value of one-year intended deals reaching a record high of US$85.45 billion, up 2.3 percent from the previous edition, according to Xiao Lu, an official with the CIIE Bureau.

This year's expo attracted a record 4,142 exhibitors, and its business exhibition area reached a record 370,000 square meters. For the first time, the number of participating Fortune Global 500 companies and industry leaders exceeded 300.

The six-day event also featured a record 485 exhibits making their global, Asian or China debuts, up from 461 last year.

US exhibitors had the largest exhibition area among participating countries and regions for the eighth consecutive year, occupying over 50,000 square meters. Free exhibition space for the least developed countries increased by 17 percent this year, enabling broader participation.

First held in 2018 as the world's first national-level expo dedicated to imports, the CIIE is part of China's efforts to expand imports and offers global businesses a platform to showcase products and connect with Chinese buyers.

Among the technological highlights this year, US chipmaker Qualcomm showcased the world's first 6G terminal prototype outside a laboratory setting, while German engineering giant Bosch made the global debut of an AI-powered home climate control system that optimizes temperature and energy use.

Consumer innovations also drew attention. Canadian sportswear brand lululemon made the global debut of a running vest designed for cold weather, set to launch first in China on December 8.

The CIIE also served as a platform for emerging innovators. This year's innovation incubation section featured 633 projects from nearly 40 countries and regions, up almost 20 percent from the previous edition.

The ninth expo brought together 51 trade delegations and over 700 sub-delegations, while the number of registered visitors exceeded 470,000, surpassing last year's figure, according to Xiao.

China has remained the world's second-largest import market for 17 consecutive years, importing more than 90 trillion yuan worth of goods between 2021 and 2025.

The country's 15th Five-Year Plan (2026-2030) calls for expanding imports and continuing to host the CIIE, underscoring the expo's role in China's broader opening-up agenda.

With the CIIE set to hold its 10th edition next year, preparations are already underway, with 143 companies and institutions signed up for the 2027 edition and over 100,000 square meters of exhibition space already booked, according to the bureau. *– Xinhua*

China, France should strengthen dialogue, jointly address challenges: Wang Yi

BEIJING – China and France should strengthen dialogue and cooperation, consolidate political mutual trust, and jointly address various risks and challenges, Foreign Minister Wang Yi said yesterday.

During a phone conversation with French Minister for Europe and Foreign Affairs Jean-Noël Barrot, Wang, also a member of the Political Bureau of the Communist Party of China (CPC) Central Committee, noted that China and France are both founding members of the United Nations and permanent members of the UN Security Council.

The two countries' maintaining communication and strengthening coordination on developments and changes in the international situation are important for safeguarding the international system with the United Nations at its core, Wang said.

China is ready to work with France to fulfill their special responsibilities as permanent members of the UN Security Council and safeguard the common interests of the international community, he said.

Maintaining the healthy and stable development of China-France relations serves the interests of both countries and the international community, Wang said, calling on both sides to implement the consensus reached by the two heads of state.

He expressed the hope that France would honor its commitment to the one-China principle through concrete actions and safeguard the political foundation of China-France relations.

China and the European Union (EU) stand to gain from cooperation and lose from confrontation, Wang said, calling on the EU to work with China to build stable and balanced trade ties as key trading partners.

Wang said he believes that France, as a core EU member state, would play a constructive role in this regard.

For his part, Barrot said France has consistently attached great importance to China's status as a major country and remains committed to the one-China policy.

France hopes to maintain high-level engagement with China, deepen strategic mutual trust, and strengthen communication and coordination on such major issues as UN affairs and artificial intelligence, in order to jointly uphold multilateralism, safeguard global security and stability, and promote common development and prosperity, he said.

France stands ready to play an active role in fostering dialogue and cooperation between the EU and China, Barrot said.

The two sides also exchanged views on other issues of common concern, including the election of UN secretary-general. *– Xinhua*

China welcomes US debut of new giant panda pair

BEIJING – Foreign ministry spokesperson Guo Jiakun said yesterday he was delighted that a new pair of Chinese giant pandas have recently made their debut before the American public, bringing more joy to the American people.

Guo made the comments at a regular news briefing when asked to comment on the public debut of a pair of Chinese giant pandas sent to the United States after President Xi Jinping's state visit to the country in September.

On September 24, Xi announced during his visit that a pair of pandas would be sent to Zoo Atlanta and meet with the American people. The pair, Ping Ping and Fu Shuang, arrived on September 27. Before meeting the public last week, they spent more than a month in quarantine, adjusting to the new bamboo, new caretakers and new environment.

To ensure the giant pandas' health and safety, a smooth departure from China and their adaptation to the new environment, China and the United States have made full preparations in strict compliance with the requirements and technical standards for international giant panda conservation cooperation, according to Guo.

"We believe the new round of cooperation will further contribute to enhancing the conservation capacity for giant pandas and other endangered species, advancing global biodiversity conservation, and deepening the friendship between the Chinese and American people," he said. *– Xinhua*

Ex-Malaysian PM Najib home from jail, starts house arrest

Isabelle Leong

KUALA LUMPUR – Former Malaysian prime minister Najib Razak arrived home yesterday to start serving the rest of his jail sentence for corruption under house arrest, an AFP reporter saw.

Najib, 73, was jailed for his role in one of the largest global plunders of a sovereign wealth fund, the now-defunct 1Malaysia Development Berhad (1MDB).

He arrived at his residence in an upmarket Kuala Lumpur residential enclave in a silver car that was part of a convoy of vehicles.

The AFP journalist on the scene also heard on a police two-way radio that "Datuk Seri Najib has arrived" in Malay, as supporters waited outside.

The Kuala Lumpur High Court cleared the way for Najib's transfer earlier yesterday and issued a fresh order after the attorney general disputed a previous directive.

Najib was granted a conditional pardon by Malaysia's king in September, allowing him to serve out the rest of his sentence at home provided that he paid a US$12 million fine.

His political party, the United Malays National Organisation (UMNO), paid the fine on Friday, but the attorney-general blocked Najib's transfer on legal grounds.

"In accordance with the order of conditional pardon, the accused shall serve the remainder of the reduced sentence of six years' imprisonment under house arrest," Kuala Lumpur High Court judge Aslam Zainuddin said after meeting defence lawyers and public prosecutors.

The road leading to Najib's residence was cordoned off before his arrival, with yellow police tape and traffic cones blocking access to the area.



Jailed former prime minister of Malaysia Najib Razak (centre) arrives for a court hearing where he seeks to land a new ruling allowing him serve the rest of his sentence under house arrest, at the Kuala Lumpur High Court in Kuala Lumpur yesterday. *– AFP*

'It's a relief'

Malaysia's king warned on Saturday that the attorney general risked denying a royal order by delaying Najib's transfer, adding that there was no ambiguity about the pardon he was granted.

Najib was originally sentenced to 12 years in prison in July 2020 in a first trial over vast sums of money siphoned from a former 1MDB subsidiary.

A pardons board later halved the term and reduced his fine. That sentence is due to be completed by August 2028.

Najib was also sentenced to another 15 years in a separate trial linked to the 1MDB scandal, against which he has also lodged an appeal.

Asked about Najib's reaction to his house arrest, defence lawyer Muhammad Shafee Abdullah said: "It's a final relief, a great sigh to him because he's been waiting for this."

However, he added that house arrest is "still an imprisonment because he can't leave the house unless he gets special permission or for a special reason".

Transport Minister Anthony Loke, leader of a political party that is part of the ruling coalition and who has opposed corruption and abuse of power, resigned in protest yesterday over the decision.

But Najib supporter Mohd Jamal Omar, 47, said he was happy and had driven four hours from another state.

"I feel so grateful and happy that I get to see Datuk Seri Najib arrive at his house, to be with his family," he told AFP, one of a handful of supporters who waited for Najib's arrival.

Najib, the son of one of Malaysia's founding fathers, was groomed for leadership from a young age but fell from power spectacularly as public anger mounted over the corruption scandal.

Investigations under successive governments have ensnared him and his wife, Rosmah Mansor, in graft allegations since his loss in 2018 elections.

Prosecutors said Najib abused his positions as prime minister, finance minister and 1MDB advisory board chairman to move vast sums from the fund into his personal accounts.

Proceeds from the fund were used to bankroll high-end real estate, a luxury yacht and precious artworks, including a Monet and a van Gogh, according to investigators. *– AFP*

Aircraft carrying 6 foreign nationals crashes into cliff in S Philippines

MANILA – Search and rescue operations were underway yesterday after an aircraft carrying six foreign nationals crashed into a cliff on Mindanao Island in the southern Philippines, local media reported.

The retrieval work was continuing at the site, said Philip June Caminade, an official of a local disaster management office.

Residents saw the aircraft flying low before it hit the cliff, Caminade said.

The plane reportedly came from Butuan City in the northeastern part of Mindanao Island, and those aboard were believed to be exploring Mount Apo, according to media reports. *– Xinhua*

Thailand sets noise, water use limits for data centres

BANGKOK – Thailand's cabinet agreed new rules on noise and water use for data centres yesterday, after a review sparked by public concern over an AI-driven construction boom.

"The use of national resources must not adversely affect the public," Finance Minister Ekniti Nitithanprapas told a news conference.

The government said in September it would tighten oversight of data centres, asking developers of nearly 50 under-construction projects to pause work until new rules were drawn up.

Proposed standards include limiting noise at site boundaries to 70 A-weighted decibels (dBA), according to a government data centre board.

That is slightly quieter than a vacuum cleaner, according to a comparison chart published by Yale University.

The government also proposed capping nearby temperature increases to one to two degrees Celsius, and said cooling water must be recirculated and tested before discharge.

New zoning rules were also approved in principle, with centres consuming more than 20 megawatts of energy set to be located in industrial zones and face stricter oversight.

Narit Therdsteerasukdi, from Thailand's Board of Investment, said 57 data centre projects have been approved across the country.

Seventeen are operating, 20 have received construction permits and 20 are preparing to invest.

Ekniti said the government also received a large number of speculative applications.

More than 110 applicants had requested over 30,000 megawatts of electricity, he said, but only about a quarter or fewer had genuine investment plans.

Eligible projects approved before August 14 will have one year to meet environmental guidelines. *– AFP*

Indonesian president grants national hero status to his grandfather

JAKARTA – Indonesian President Prabowo Subianto declared his grandfather a national hero yesterday, a year after honouring his former father-in-law, deceased dictator Suharto, despite objections over his human rights record.

In a decree issued on the national Heroes' Day, Prabowo's paternal grandfather Margono Djojohadikusumo joined a list of over 200 luminaries including the country's first president and several women's rights and independence activists.

Candidates for the posthumous title are proposed by a committee and approved by the president.

The honour comes with an annual stipend for the family of some 50 million rupiah (about US$2,770).

Margono, born in 1894, was a member of a committee that helped lay the groundwork for Indonesian independence from Japanese colonial rule.

He was also the founder and president of Bank Negara Indonesia, the first bank established following Indonesia's 1945 independence and the issuer of the country's first official currency.

Yesterday's decree called Margono "a national hero in politics and economics" who "made extraordinary contributions to the struggle for independence".

Last year, Prabowo ignored rights groups' protests to grant national hero status to Suharto, who died aged 86 in 2008. Suharto was the father of Prabowo's ex-wife.

He had governed Indonesia with an iron fist for more than three decades after grabbing power in 1967 following a failed military coup, his rule marred by corruption allegations and crackdowns on political dissent.

Activists and NGOs filed a lawsuit in a Jakarta court to challenge Suharto's national hero status. No judgment has been issued. *– AFP*

Japan court dismisses suit against Meta over celebrity investment scams

TOKYO – A Tokyo court dismissed yesterday Japanese billionaire Yusaku Maezawa's lawsuit against US tech giant Meta and its Japan unit over the use of his name and image in fraudulent investment ads on their platforms.

Online fraudsters commonly use Maezawa's name and picture without his permission to lure victims. One typical advert captions his image: "Started with 10,000 yen (US$63). Gained 1.3 million yen in four days."

Maezawa, the founder of Japan's largest online clothing retailer, filed the lawsuit in 2024, saying Meta was "not making efforts" to stop the incidents.

He said at the time he sought to "clarify whether their actions are legal or not" and demanded just one yen in damages.

Meta argued that unidentified posters had placed the advertisements and said the company had no obligation to constantly monitor content in order to detect and remove rights-infringing material, according to public broadcaster NHK.

The Tokyo District Court yesterday "turned down the plaintiff's claims", a court spokesman told AFP.

The ruling was made on the grounds that Meta "is merely a platform operator and was not directly involved in the posting of the ads", private broadcaster TBS reported.

The court, however, acknowledged Maezawa's publicity rights and portrait rights had been infringed, TBS said.

Neither Maezawa nor Meta could immediately be reached for comment on the ruling.

But Maezawa's lawyer told reporters after the decision that "the number of scam ads has not decreased, and even now we are detecting a considerable number of scam ads featuring Mr Maezawa".

"With this ruling, I'm worried we'll end up with a society where people think, 'So in the end, even if you fight in court, it's useless,' and quietly resign themselves to their losses," the lawyer said, according to TBS. *– AFP*

N Korea slams UN chief over call for dialogue

SEOUL – North Korea's Kim Yo Jong, the leader's powerful sister, accused UN chief Antonio Guterres yesterday of adopting a "prejudiced and irresponsible attitude" after he called for renewed dialogue with the South.

Guterres last week expressed concerns about a potential escalation on the Korean peninsula, calling on Pyongyang and Seoul "to resume communication channels, including on the military-to-military level, to avoid unintended accidents or miscalculations", according to UN spokesman Stephane Dujarric.

Tensions between the two Koreas, which remain technically at war, have soared since a landmine explosion along their heavily fortified border in September wounded three South Korean soldiers.

Seoul blamed the explosion on a North Korean mine, while Pyongyang sent a letter to the UN Security Council accusing the South of fabricating the incident. It has also vowed to further fortify its border areas.

The UN chief's push for increased dialogue, which South Korea has also called for, sparked the ire of the North, which insists the issue was Seoul's "reckless" behaviour.

"I express my regret over the fact that the top official of the UN, which regards impartiality and objectivity as its lifeline, took such a prejudiced and irresponsible attitude," Kim Yo Jong said, according to state news agency KCNA.

The sister of leader Kim Jong Un accused Guterres of echoing South Korea's "unilateral and provocative sophism" and the "words of the provokers... without having proper understanding of the facts".

That was "not helpful to the detente", Kim Yo Jong added.

"If he is sincerely interested in the detente on the Korean peninsula, he should refrain from chiming in with the hypocritical attitude of Seoul," she said, referring to Guterres.

"If the reckless military provocations of the ROK gangsters lead to an undesirable incident in the southern border area, UN Secretary-General Guterres will never be free from the blame for it," she added, using the acronym for South Korea's official name.

Kim also defended North Korea's efforts to fortify its southern border, describing them as "the most righteous, reasonable and regular exercise of its right to self-defence" and saying they did not violate the UN Charter. *– AFP*

Bangladesh prosecutor says ex-PM Hasina will be executed if she returns

DHAKA – The Bangladeshi prosecutor who secured the death sentence against ousted leader Sheikh Hasina said yesterday she will be executed if she returns home.

Hasina, whose 15-year rule was ended by a mass uprising she tried to crush, has vowed to return in December to Bangladesh, where she was sentenced to death for crimes against humanity over the 2024 crackdown on protesters.

"Sheikh Hasina has no option but to face the execution of the verdict," Md Aminul Islam told reporters, responding to reports she planned to return from self-imposed exile in India.

He added that she missed the deadline to appeal her conviction, leaving her with no further legal recourse.

"The statute says that an appeal must be filed within 30 days of the delivery of the judgement," he said.

Hasina, 79, fled to neighbouring India by helicopter in August 2024 as angry crowds stormed her palace.

She has remained there ever since, hidden from public view. Only occasionally has she addressed news conferences by telephone, her voice sounding frail.

Hasina has repeatedly said she intends to return to Bangladesh in December, telling AFP she is "fully aware" she faces being hanged if she returns.

She said "fear cannot decide" her "duty to the people".

Critics have accused Hasina of jailing political rivals, enacting harsh anti-press laws and overseeing widespread human rights abuses, including the killing of opposition activists.

Her 2024 crackdown left up to 1,400 people dead, according to the United Nations.

Hasina defied orders from the court to return to Bangladesh to attend her trial last year on whether she bore command responsibility for the bloody crackdown on the student-led uprising.

Witnesses included a man whose face was ripped apart by a gunshot.

Hasina, who was assigned a state-appointed lawyer, called the trial a "jurisprudential joke".

In November 2025, a court in Dhaka sentenced her to death in absentia after finding her guilty on three counts of crimes against humanity, including incitement, ordering killings and failing to prevent atrocities.

Bangladesh's foreign ministry has sought her extradition from India, which says the request is under legal review.

Her continued presence there has strained relations between the neighbouring countries.

She also faces a string of other cases, including corruption charges. *– AFP*

Oxford museum makes 'historic' return of Naga human remains



A Naga delegation poses for a group photo at the end of a ceremony at Oxford University's Pitt Rivers Museum in Oxford on Monday, to mark the return of the remains of 39 people taken during Britain's colonial era to the Naga community in northeast India. The museum, which holds the world's largest collection of Naga artefacts, has confirmed it was preparing the repatriation after the university approved a restitution request by the Forum for Naga Reconciliation (FNR). – AFP

Anna Malpas

Oxford – An Oxford University museum on Monday returned the remains of 39 people taken during Britain's colonial rule in India to members of its Naga community.

Almost 30 people from the community based in northeastern Nagaland, a mountainous state bordering Myanmar, travelled to Britain for the ceremony, which the museum's director, Laura Van Broekhoven, called a "historic moment".

The handover at the Pitt Rivers Museum came as part of a broader trend among Western museums reassessing how they acquired exhibits from other cultures, particularly human remains, and in some cases returning them.

The Pitt Rivers, an ethnographic museum founded in the 19th century, has already handed back human remains to Indigenous communities in Australia, New Zealand and the United States.

The Oxford museum has more than 6,000 objects representing Naga culture, the largest collection in the world, and is giving back "ancestral human remains", mainly skulls, to the Naga people.

Van Broekhoven hailed it as "a historic moment that will be part of stories told to next generations" in a speech as both sides signed a formal agreement on the handover.

The remains were already "on their way to Heathrow" airport, the museum director said, after overcoming "so much red tape everywhere".

The museum only removed all human remains from display in 2020, much later than most museums, and still has around 2,700 remains in storage, she told AFP.

These "were collected in times that had different ethics, different thinking, which was not unproblematic when we look at it with the eyes of today", she said.

'Respectful rest'

Housed in a Victorian Gothic building, the museum is a dark atmospheric space with glass cases crammed with objects, many with handwritten labels.

Naga tribal leaders united for the handover and planned to bury the remains together under a joint memorial in a park.

"We shall put them to respectful rest," one of the tribal leaders, Thejao Vihienuo, told AFP.

The 73-year-old, draped in a traditional shawl, also visited with other Nagas last year as part of the lengthy process.

"It's been six years of working alongside each other on a very delicate matter," the museum director said.

The Naga remains were brought to Oxford between 1910 and 1940. Most were collected by two colonial administrators who were anthropologists.

The museum says on its website that items collected during this era were "frequently confiscated during punitive military expeditions, rather than freely given".

While in Oxford, the delegation met descendants of one of the anthropologists.

"The manner in which these human remains were taken away from our land leaves much for us to speculate," said Vihienuo.

"I suspect that nobody would have given the skull of his father or his grandfather as a gift to another person."

The Naga people once practiced headhunting, severing heads of enemies as trophies, but also kept heads of their own chiefs "at the centre of the villages" and one of the remains is a chief's head, said anthropologist Dolly Kikon, a member of Nagaland's Lotha-Naga community. *– AFP*

N Korea tests new 'high-speed' torpedo system

SEOUL – North Korea test-fired a new high-speed torpedo system, state media reported yesterday, as Pyongyang ramps up arming its navy during heightened tensions on the Korean peninsula.

The weapon, tested Monday in the East Sea, the body of water also known as the Sea of Japan, is scheduled to enter service with the North Korean navy from early 2027, according to the official Korean Central News Agency (KCNA).

The launch follows a series of new weaponry the nuclear-armed country has trialled in recent weeks, including attack drones, a new precision-guided torpedo system and an intermediate-range hypersonic missile.

The test comes during a wider drive by Pyongyang to expand its maritime capabilities and underwater strike capabilities, including new destroyers and increasingly sophisticated torpedoes.

"The Academy of Defence Sciences, the Missile Administration and the Torpedo Weapon Research Bureau verified the combat effectiveness of the new-type high-speed torpedo weapon system" on Monday, KCNA said.

The launch "is part of the obligatory activities of the defence scientific research institutes for putting the technology of weapon systems on a highly-developed basis," KCNA said.

It did not provide further details about the torpedo's specifications, capabilities or launch platform.

Last month, North Korea said it separately tested its Zam-2.0, a "super-speed" precision-guided torpedo that Pyongyang said incorporated artificial intelligence for target detection and guidance.

KCNA said that test verified technologies designed to improve propulsion efficiency and rocket propulsion, following more than 180 tests over five years.

Torpedoes are designed to strike enemy targets underwater at high speed, but the stated introduction of AI could also allow North Korea to carry out evasive manoeuvres and make autonomous decisions to confuse an adversary, analysts say.

Last year, North Korea unveiled a 5,000-tonne destroyer, with leader Kim Jong Un saying various new surface and torpedo weapon systems were under development. *– AFP*

New Israeli parliament to take aim at Netanyahu as Eisenkot seeks government

Yaelle Ifrah

JERUSALEM – Israel's new parliament convened yesterday with plans to take aim immediately at caretaker Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, as his rival Gadi Eisenkot vowed to quickly cobble together a new government.

Eisenkot, leading a broad left-to-right bloc, will control the agenda from the outset in the new parliament with the help of Israeli-Arab parties, although neither he nor the right-wing Netanyahu, Israel's longest-serving prime minister, hold a majority on their own.

"I am committed in this complex situation to form a national-emergency government as quickly as possible," Eisenkot, a 66-year-old former military chief who only recently entered politics, said before his swearing-in.

President Isaac Herzog, ceremonially opening the session, called on all sides to work together and avoid a fresh election in a deeply polarised country weary from three years of war.

"Nearly 80 percent of the people went to the polls and elected you. You must do everything to avoid a repeat election," Herzog said.

"Reach out a hand for compromise, even between rivals."

Eisenkot's allies hope to use their newfound legislative power to move rapidly on key priorities, including a commission to investigate security failures under Netanyahu that allowed the Hamas attack on October 7, 2023, the deadliest day in Israel's history.

Herzog on Sunday gave Eisenkot the initial mandate to form a government, starting the clock for him to piece together a coalition within 28 days, with a possible 14-day extension.

Hours before the opening of the parliament, known as the Knesset, Eisenkot's party announced agreements on key people to replace allies of Netanyahu, who has been in and out of office for nearly 20 years.



Caretaker Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu speaks at the Israeli parliament (Knesset) during the opening day of the new parliament in Jerusalem yesterday. Netanyahu again urged a national unity government as he warned of threats from Iran, acknowledging an international shift following US elections last week. – AFP

Eisenkot's bloc announced it had the votes to install as parliament speaker Matan Kahana, a former senior military figure who clashed with ultra-Orthodox Jews during a past stint in government.

Avigdor Liberman, a right-wing member of Eisenkot's bloc who has played a key role in deciding who can enter the government, will be nominated as chair of the foreign affairs and defence committee.

Arab-Israeli lawmakers said they would support Kahana, all but guaranteeing he will take the helm in the parliament.

Parties representing the Arab minority – descendants of Palestinians who stayed after Israel's creation in 1948 – won a record number of seats in the October 27 election on the back of anger at Netanyahu's hard-right government.

But Eisenkot needs 61 votes – a majority – to become prime minister. Liberman has made clear that he will refuse to join a government that relies on Arab-Israelis, even if they stay out of the coalition and prop it up from the outside.

"A minority government would only lead to the return of Netanyahu with 70 members of the Knesset," Liberman told reporters.

Arab-Israeli lawmakers under fire

Netanyahu has accused Arab-Israeli parties of supporting Hamas and accepting foreign funding, allegations the lawmakers deny and call smear tactics.

Liberman, a former aide to Netanyahu turned critic who shares hawkish views, said he would use his new position to investigate allegations of foreign funding to the parties.

Entering parliament, Mansour Abbas, leader of the Israeli-Arab party Raam, rejected Netanyahu's accusations of fraud by Israeli-Arab parties and pointed out that Netanyahu faces corruption charges that could land him in jail if he loses power.

"We will keep up the process of replacing the government," Abbas told reporters. "We aspire to be part of the solution."

Abbas confirmed he supports a two-state solution with the Palestinians, a stance shared by neither Netanyahu nor Eisenkot, who has sought to appeal to the centre.

Shunning Arab-Israelis, Liberman has instead proposed an alliance with ultra-Orthodox Jews, despite his years of bitter denunciations of the community for its singular priority on maintaining an exemption from mandatory military service.

Eisenkot's core bloc has 48 seats, but would achieve a majority if the 19 Arab-Israeli lawmakers either enter the government or, more likely, vote for it without joining.

The two ultra-Orthodox parties hold 13 seats. United Torah Judaism, which has seven, has stopped short of recommitting to Netanyahu, leaving him with 46 seats.

An alliance with either the ultra-Orthodox or Arab-Israelis would likely be fragile, with a small number of lawmakers able to bring Eisenkot down over their particular concerns. *– AFP*

'Go forth and be saints!' Pope Leo tells Argentines

Clare Byrne

CÓRDOBA – Pope Leo XIV urged Argentines to "go forth and be saints" yesterday as he rallied hundreds of thousands of faithful in the northern city of Córdoba.

The 71-year-old leader of the Catholic Church is on a 12-day Latin America tour less than a month after he underwent surgery for lung cancer.

Calling on the country's citizens to follow the example of a litany of Argentinian saints, the pontiff encouraged them to evangelize in everyday life.

Throughout his three days in Argentina, the pontiff has frequently challenged the country's rightist leader Javier Milei to make the economy more inclusive, support trade unions and arrest funding cuts that hurt the poor and those with disabilities.

At a Mass on the esplanade of a military aircraft factory in Cordoba, which officials said drew 650,000 pilgrims, the pope continued his evangelising message.

In Argentina's saints, he said, there is "a unity between passion for the Gospel and commitment to building a fraternal and caring nation."

The call extends to daily life, he said, "at school and in the square, in the family and with friends, in the countryside and in the city, at the dairy farm and in the office. Go forth and evangelise!"

On Monday, some 2.5 million people gathered in the Palermo district of Buenos Aires for the largest Mass of his pontificate so far.

As pilgrims waited for the pope, giant screens broadcast images of Leo's arrival in Córdoba, sparking cheers from the crowd as his plane touched down.

Many people filmed the screens on their mobile phones while others sang the national anthem.



Pope Leo XIV waves to the faithful from the popemobile as he arrives to celebrate a Mass at the Military Aviation School on the grounds of the Argentine Aircraft Factory (FAdeA) in Córdoba, Argentina, yesterday. – AFP

The gathering reflected the broad appeal Leo has enjoyed in Argentina, extending beyond regular churchgoers.

Joaquin Assad, a 24-year-old student, said he rarely attended Mass outside Christmas and Easter but still considered himself close to God.

Like many young Argentines, he was drawn by the pope's recent comments about artificial intelligence.

"I've brought personal problems to ChatGPT," Assad said with a sheepish smile.

His friend Giovanni Giglio, 23, sipping mate and wearing aviator sunglasses, said he appreciated Leo's message that AI should be used as a tool rather than become something essential.

Others said they were encouraged by the pope's criticism of an economic model they believe has left many Argentines behind.

Laura Sosa, 49, who works on maintenance of Hercules aircraft at the state-owned aviation company Fadea, said workers there had endured delayed wage payments and periods of reduced activity.

"There are a lot of people on the streets and people eating out of the garbage because their subsidies were taken away," she said, describing what she sees as rising poverty in Córdoba.

Carlos Rubio, a 75-year-old retired YPF worker attending the Mass with his wife while visiting relatives in the region, said he hoped Leo would continue speaking out on social issues.

"There is no social justice," Rubio said. "I hope the pope's message on that is clear for our president." *– AFP*

French students keep up pressure with blockades, protests

PARIS – French students kept up the pressure on the government yesterday, blocking the entrances to dozens of high schools and holding protests across the country to demand better learning conditions.

Student protests in France since September have spiralled into larger cost-of-living demonstrations, some marked by fringe violence and accusations of police brutality.

The unrest comes before elections to replace President Emmanuel Macron next year.

With the European Union's second-biggest economy under pressure to rein in debt, the government has limited scope to appease protesters through additional spending.

Forty-nine of the country's 3,700 high schools for 15 to 18-year-olds were blockaded yesterday morning, the ministry said.

Leonore, an 18-year-old university student, was among those protesting in solidarity with the high-school movement in Paris.

"We've been mobilised from the start, we're not giving up. A little rain isn't going to stop us," she said, refusing to give her surname.

In the southern city of Toulouse, Laurent Besson-Imbert, a special needs support assistant at one high school, also took to the streets.

He said public servants like himself had not received a pay raise in 25 years.

"How are we supposed to put up with that?" he told AFP, adding that some workers in public education lived in poverty.

The government has announced measures, including the gradual replacement of an online selection platform to access higher education, as well as funds for some of the worst-off schools.

But students say this is not enough.

Trade unions are not happy either, with one leader saying on Monday that a government pledge to increase the minimum wage by 0.6 percent on top of a standard adjustment for inflation was "crumbs".

They have called for a new day of strikes and protest next Tuesday.

Around 575,000 people demonstrated across the country during cost-of-living strikes and protests last Thursday, according to authorities. Unions put the number at 1.5 million. *– AFP*

UK children's author David Walliams accused of grooming teens

LONDON – UK media yesterday published allegations that British comedian and children's author David Walliams groomed teenagers as young as 15 for sex and sexually harassed female colleagues.

The claims, published by *The Guardian* newspaper and ITV news channel, came after a joint investigation about allegations by multiple women dating as far back as 2003.

Walliams, who lost a High Court battle against being identified in the UK media and did not appeal, denied targeting teenagers and using his fame to manipulate them to have sex, his lawyers told media.

His lawyers did not immediately respond to a request for comment from AFP.

The Guardian published a letter yesterday from Walliams, saying he "behaved thoughtlessly" in casual relationships.

But he said: "I am not a sexual predator. I have not broken the law".

Now 55, Walliams starred in the "Little Britain" sketch show in the early 2000s and was a judge on "Britain's Got Talent".

He also penned books such as "Mr Stink", "Gangsta Granny" and "The Boy in the Dress", with his work translated into more than 50 languages and reportedly selling 50 million copies.

When seeking to block the publication of the reports, Walliams' legal team argued he was "highly likely" to die by suicide if they were published.

The High Court heard he made two suicide attempts this year and was detained in a secure hospital last month.

Almost all the women making claims were identified only by first names, some changed at their request.

One woman, named as Jade, said Walliams contacted her in 2007 via her social media page showing her age as 15.

Then aged 36, he invited her to his house and pulled up her top and sucked her breast, she said, alleging "a sexual assault" and "grooming".

It is illegal in Britain for someone aged over 18 to intentionally communicate with a child under 16 for a sexual purpose.

Walliams' lawyers said he never engaged in grooming young women and denied sexual contact with Jade.

Another woman, named as Alex, told *The Guardian* Walliams first met her when she was a 15-year-old aspiring comedy writer and he was 32.

He phoned her and gave her tickets to shows. They had sex for the first time at his home when she was 17 and he was 34, she said.

She said this was consensual but Walliams was "pushy" and treated her "like a prostitute".

"I think I was groomed, 100 percent. We met when I was 15 and he was promising to help me ... He used that power," she said.

Walliams' lawyers told *The Guardian* he believed she was 18 and that she had got back into contact with him.

His publisher, HarperCollins, dropped him last year after he faced accusations of harassing female staff, which he denied, and he has not posted on social media since. *– AFP*

Paraguay partially reimburses almost all bank crisis victims

ASUNCIÓN – Almost all eligible depositors who lost access to their money in a bank seizure that rocked Paraguay have had part of their funds reimbursed, the Central Bank said yesterday.

The November 3 takeover of Ueno Bank amid major insolvency concerns locked almost half the population of the normally stable country out of their accounts.

Senators impeached president Santiago Peña, who is linked to Ueno, over the crisis – a key demand of large-scale nationwide protests along with the return of the money.

The government, now led by Peña's former vice president Pedro Alliana, sped up the return of deposits via a guarantee fund.

Ninety-three percent of eligible depositors had been at least partially reimbursed via the fund as of Monday, its director José Maciel told a press conference.

"They finally transferred the money I was missing," 45-year-old Rosario, who preferred not to give her surname, told AFP.

Between Thursday and Monday, US$340 million had been reimbursed to nearly 1.7 million people, according to Central Bank data.

The bank has identified 1,867,000 Ueno clients entitled to access the guarantee fund, its press office told AFP, without specifying how many people do not qualify.

Ueno began as a small fintech company with a digital-first model that attracted many low-income customers.

Within three years it became a major bank handling state pensions and the accounts of several government entities.

The number of individuals affected by the crisis surpasses the number of direct clients of the bank, which held over US$800 million in public funds. *– AFP*

Nations urged to exit fossil fuels as Turkey touts oil find

Nick Perry and Laurent Thomet

ANTALYA – UN chief António Guterres yesterday urged nations at COP31 to plan for a future without fossil fuels, even as summit hosts Turkey celebrated the discovery of new oil reserves.

Fossil fuels took centre stage at the UN climate summit where Turkey is seeking pledges to electrify the global economy rather than concrete new commitments to tackle coal, oil and gas.

Turkey's "electrification" push comes as scientists warned that emissions from burning fossil fuels – the primary driver of climate change – were projected to remain near-record highs for another year.

Guterres said "an accelerated transition away from fossil fuels is fundamental" to rein in global temperature rises on track to blow past the 1.5C target in a matter of years.

"Let's be clear: fossil fuels are not only driving the climate crisis. Dependence on them carries a steep economic and security price as the crisis in the Middle East has laid bare," he said.

Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan struck a different note yesterday, hailing the discovery of two oil fields – potentially containing 135 million barrels of crude – as "good news".

The contrast underscored a central challenge facing countries deadlocked over how quickly the world should move away from polluting fuels to cleaner forms of energy.

Since agreeing in 2023 for the first time to transition away from fossil fuels, nations have struggled to advance that goal at the annual COP conferences.

At last year's COP30 in Brazil, fossil fuels were not explicitly mentioned by name in the final agreement.

No major fossil fuel breakthrough is expected either from this year's negotiations between nearly 200 nations, which are being hosted by Turkey but chaired by Australia, itself a major coal exporter.



Swedish climate-change activist Greta Thunberg (centre) poses for selfies as she arrives at the UN Climate Change Conference (COP31) in Antalya yesterday. Global fossil fuel emissions are projected to fall slightly this year due to the expansion of renewable energy and the oil price shock sparked by the Iran war, researchers said yesterday. – AFP

"Expectations are low – that's just a reflection of reality," the European Union's climate envoy Wopke Hoekstra said.

The leaders of a number of major economies are skipping the event, though Swedish climate activist Greta Thunberg made her first COP appearance in several years to slam what she called "greenwashed circuses".

Difficult transition

After the lacklustre outcome last year, Brazil produced a much-anticipated report encouraging each country to choose its own path away from fossil fuels at their own pace.

"My last message is start now... don't wait. Planning is a good thing," said COP30 chief executive Ana Toni at an event promoting the voluntary "roadmap", which is not part of the COP31 negotiations.

Guterres urged countries to draw up plans with clear timelines for exiting fossil fuels: "Now, here at COP31, we must move from discussing the transition to organising it, financing it, and delivering it," he said.

But many countries – particularly developing economies dependent on oil and gas revenue – have resisted these calls and stressed that each country should go at its own pace.

"We also have the right to develop. We cannot allow those assets to be stranded," said Antwi-Boasiako Amoah of Ghana, who chairs a group of African nations including oil-rich states.

Adão Soares Barbosa, who chairs the Least Developed Countries bloc, said it would be "very difficult" for the world's poorest nations to transition to clean energy without significant financial support.

Rather than revisiting this fraught debate, Turkey has sought to unite countries around a global goal to raise the share of final energy demand by electricity from around 20 percent to 35 percent by 2035.

The hosts unveiled yesterday the first draft of this electrification pledge that stresses the use of "clean electricity and technologies" will differ among countries.

Officials from Germany, Ethiopia, Norway and Pakistan voiced support for the Turkish initiative.

Around one-third of electricity is produced using coal and some nations have raised concerns that meeting this increased share with fossil fuels would not achieve climate aims.

"Of course, the cleaner that electrification is, the better it is," said Hoekstra. *– AFP*

Czech, Slovak PMs slam Merz over Ukraine funding

BRATISLAVA, Slovakia – The Czech and Slovak prime ministers yesterday slammed German Chancellor Friedrich Merz for urging "a collective commitment" by fellow European Union members to help fund Ukraine.

Merz has said in a letter seen by AFP that the EU needs to agree on funding to keep Ukraine going next year, before the bloc can resolve a standoff over the next budget.

Brussels has said Kyiv is facing a 70-billion-euro (US$78 billion) shortfall in 2027, of which the 27-nation EU should look to cover some 45 billion euros.

Merz told EU chief António Costa in the letter that "a collective commitment that all of us, without exception, will contribute fairly to closing this gap is an essential prerequisite for resolving this issue".

Slovakia's Prime Minister Robert Fico told reporters in Bratislava that "what the chancellor is doing is typical blackmail, and I will not give in to it.

"We are a sovereign country... [and] we have our own opinion on the matter."

Fico, who fosters close ties with the Kremlin, has rejected direct military aid to Ukraine.

Visiting Bratislava yesterday, Czech Prime Minister Andrej Babis, whose government also rejects military aid to Ukraine, dismissed Merz's comment.

"I do not know why he is saying it," Babis said.

The EU last year came up with a 90-billion-euro loan for Ukraine, but it has become increasingly clear that those funds will run out before the end of next year.

Merz said yesterday that support for Ukraine was a "task for all of Europe, not just for individual member states" of the EU.

Speaking alongside Hungarian Prime Minister Peter Magyar in Berlin, Merz said that "Ukraine policy must be fully reflected in the EU budget".

He noted that last year only "24 of the 27 member states" were able to agree on the loan, with the Czech Republic, Slovakia and Hungary exempted from participation.

"In my view, it is not a good option to continue along this path," Merz said.

Magyar said he did "not consider it a good approach to link the EU budget (...) in any way to another issue".

However, he added that he did not regard Merz's stance as "blackmail". *– AFP, MPD*

Cape Verde to pick president, with incumbent battling first woman candidate

Maria da Luz Neves and Lucie Peytermann

PRAIA – Cape Verde holds a presidential election on Sunday with incumbent José Maria Neves favoured to win a second term as head of state of the west African archipelago renowned for its democratic stability.

The island nation made world headlines this year when its national football team reached the knockout stages in its first ever World Cup, and when a cruise ship containing people infected with the hantavirus docked off its shores.

Located in the middle of the Atlantic approximately 600 kilometres off the coast of Senegal, this Portuguese-speaking country comprising 10 volcanic islands is attracting more tourists every year.

Stability, hospitality

Unlike several of its west African neighbours where presidential elections have been tense in recent years, Cape Verde is known for its political stability and good governance.

It is considered a model of democracy in Africa, with strong economic growth.

The country is known for its "morabeza" ("open-hearted hospitality" in local Creole), openness, racial mixing and carnivals. It also has its own style of music.

The archipelago has a semi-presidential system in which the executive is dominated by the prime minister.

The president does not govern but acts more as an arbiter, working to guarantee unity and uphold the constitution.

The head of state appoints the prime minister based on the results of legislative elections and represents the country abroad.



A supporter of Cape Verde's President and presidential re-election candidate José Maria Neves waves a flag bearing his image during a campaign rally in Mindelo, on the island of São Vicente, on October 30. Cape Verdeans vote on Sunday in a presidential election, with incumbent Neves favoured to win a second term as head of state of the west African archipelago renowned for its political stability. The island nation made international headlines in 2026 for its national football team's historic performance at its first ever World Cup. *– AFP*

Frontrunners

Among the six candidates in the running on Sunday, two are frontrunners: incumbent Neves, 66, and Joana Rosa Amado, 61, a lawyer and former minister of justice who is the country's first woman presidential candidate.

Each is supported by one of the country's two main parties.

Neves, a strong favourite, was first elected president in 2021. From 2001 to 2016 he also served as prime minister and the president of the African Party for the Independence of Cape Verde (PAICV). He has also served as a mayor and a deputy.

Neves has the support of the PAICV, which won legislative elections in May.

When he presented his candidacy, he promised to put his experience "towards the service of Cape Verde's future challenges, to anticipate transformations and to strengthen political consensus in these difficult times."

Amado is supported by the Movement for Democracy (MpD), the main opposition party.

Her slogan is "Listen to Cape Verde," which she says "does not mean promising everything, but rather, knowing the real concerns and expectations of the population."

"The election of a woman to the presidency would show many young women and young girls that no government job is barred from them," she told the press.

Among the other candidates are 45-year-old surgeon Gilson Alves, an authoritarian figure who is promising to fight corruption, allow gun ownership and reinstate the death penalty.

Challenges

In July 2026, Cape Verde was officially classified as an upper-middle income country by the World Bank thanks to economic growth in the tourism sector and a 16.8 percent increase in gross national income (GNI) per capita between 2023 and 2024.

However, the country faces many challenges, including persistent social inequality, geographic isolation and a lack of affordable options for travelling between islands.

If elected, the main candidates have promised to implement measures to improve air and sea travel between the islands and also to construct new accommodation for tourists.

Among the major concerns of the population are increased cost of living, fuel prices and youth unemployment.

Since the end of the COVID-19 pandemic many young Cape Verdeans, including graduates and those with professional training, have emigrated and continue to move abroad, causing a labour shortage.

How to create employment opportunities across the archipelago was a key theme in the election campaign. *– AFP*

5 things to know about Cape Verde ahead of presidential vote

PRAIA – Voters in Cape Verde, a small Portuguese-speaking archipelago off the coast of west Africa, are heading to the polls on Sunday for a presidential vote.

The string of volcanic islands is renowned for its political stability and good governance. Here are five things to know about the tiny country.

A democratic model

Located some 600 kilometres off the coast of Senegal, Cape Verde is something of an exception in west Africa where coups and authoritarian rule have been on the rise in recent years.

Following independence from Portugal in 1975, Cape Verde was initially governed by a single-party system. A multiparty system was established in 1990 however and the first democratic elections were held.

Following legislative elections in May 2026, the country underwent its fourth peaceful transfer of power.

Cape Verde is governed under a hybrid presidential-parliamentary model.

Between 2011 and 2016, and again from 2021 to 2026, the government and the president came from different parties, representing a period of cohabitation.

Rise of the Blue Sharks

The archipelago nation gained a wide international following during this year's World Cup, when its national football team, the Blue Sharks, had a stunning run in their first-ever appearance at the competition.

The squad reached the knockout stages, where they took eventual champions Argentina to extra time before bowing out.

Goalkeeper Vozinha was one of the tournament's standouts, delivering heroic performances at age 40.

Huge diaspora

The number of Cape Verdeans living abroad is three times greater than the archipelago's approximately 550,000 inhabitants.

People live on nine of the volcanic chain's 10 islands, which span a total area of 4,030 square kilometres.

It is estimated around 1.5 million Cape Verdeans and their descendants (up to the fourth generation) live abroad, primarily in the United States and Portugal.

Historically, migration has been driven by endemic poverty and famine, most notably during the 18th and 19th centuries and continuing into the 1940s and '50s.

The country has a semi-arid climate, is subject to droughts and has few natural resources.

Remittances sent from abroad by its diaspora totalled 284 million euros (US$317 million) in 2025. The transfers account for around 12 percent of Cape Verde's GDP.

Robust tourism

Cape Verde is highly dependent on tourism, which accounts for 25 percent of the country's GDP.

In 2025, the country welcomed approximately 1.25 million tourists at its hotels, an increase of six percent over 2024, with most visitors coming from Europe.

The archipelago is famous for its beaches, particularly on the islands of Sal and Boa Vista with their turquoise waters and pristine sands. The country also has a strong ecotourism sector.



A woman walks past a mural depicting late Cape Verdean singer Cesária Évora in Mindelo, a port city on Cape Verde's island of São Vicente, on May 27. *– AFP*

On the island of São Vicente and in its capital Mindelo, which is home to a magnificent bay, tourists can follow in the footsteps of celebrated Cape Verde singer Cesária Évora and take in the island's rich arts culture.

The island of Santo Antão is becoming increasingly popular among hikers who come for its volcanic, mountainous landscapes. The island of Fogo is meanwhile famed for its volcano, as well as its coffee and wine cultivation.

Following Cape Verde's 2026 World Cup success, flight and hotel bookings spiked.

Cesária Évora and music

Cesária Évora introduced the world to "morna" ("lamentation"), one of the many music styles unique to Cape Verde.

The international icon and unforgettable performer is known for "Sodade" ("Longing"), a sentimental song blending nostalgia, melancholy, the pain of exile and a deep attachment to homeland.

Another of her most famous hits was "Miss Perfumado". She died in 2011.

Today artists from across the globe visit the archipelago to take in its rich musical heritage, while new Cape Verdean talent is increasingly gaining international attention.

In Cape Verde, music is omnipresent in everyday life – in homes, bars, at family gatherings, at religious festivals and beyond. *– AFP*

Football shorts

Struggling Serie A side Sassuolo sack coach Aquilani

ROME – Sassuolo sacked Alberto Aquilani on Monday, becoming the sixth Serie A club already this season to dismiss their head coach following a difficult start to the campaign.

Aquilani only lasted 13 matches in charge having been appointed in the close-season, after a run of five straight defeats left Sassuolo 17th in the Italian top-flight table and just one point above the relegation zone.

"Sassuolo Calcio announce that Alberto Aquilani has been relieved of his duties as (the) first team's coach, along with his staff," the club said in a brief statement, two days after a 3-0 loss at Roma.

Former Liverpool, Roma and Italy midfielder Aquilani was given the job after leading Catanzaro to the Serie B play-offs last season.

He follows in the footsteps of a slew of Serie A coaches to lose their jobs this term, kicked off by Fabio Grosso's sacking by Fiorentina just three games into the campaign. *–AFP*

Recovering Kompany returns to Bayern training centre

BERLIN – Bayern Munich coach Vincent Kompany has returned to the club's training centre as he continues his recovery from meningeal irritation, the Bundesliga champions said yesterday.

The Belgian was rushed to hospital after collapsing on the training pitch in Munich last month, before being diagnosed with the illness.

"Vincent Kompany is on the road to recovery and has been back at the training ground at Sabener Strasse since the start of the week," Bayern said in a brief statement.

"Kompany was under medical care recently, with assistant coach Aaron Danks filling in."

The club also said Kompany was receiving treatment for a shoulder injury at the training centre.

Bayern said after his collapse that the 40-year-old would return to take back head coaching duties from Danks in a "matter of weeks, not days".

The Bavarians' next match is not until November 20, against Cologne, due to the international break.

Kompany was visibly sick and walked with a limp during Bayern's 6-1 home win over RB Leipzig in mid-October.

He was in doubt for their home Champions League clash with Arsenal four days later, but took to the dugout for the 2-2 draw, two days before his training-pitch collapse. *– AFP*

Infantino re-election a 'foregone conclusion', says AFC official

ALEY, Lebanon - Gianni Infantino's re-election as FIFA chief is "a foregone conclusion", Asian Football Confederation vice-president Hashem Haidar told AFP on Monday.

"We fully and publicly support Infantino," Haidar, who is also president of the Lebanese Football Federation, said at an event in Lebanon which Infantino also attended.

Infantino had faced stinging criticism and calls to quit after his plan to sell off commercial interests in the World Cup came to light in July.

With European confederation UEFA and CONCACAF in North America, and initially the Asian Football Confederation (AFC) leading the opposition, it seemed Infantino would have a fight on his hands.

But the Swiss now appears to be in a strong position to secure re-election for a fourth and final term as FIFA president in March after the AFC performed a U-turn and endorsed the 56-year-old last month.

Kozo Tashima, the honorary president of the Japan Football Association, announced last week he would stand against Infantino, but Haidar said he would not have the necessary support globally.

"Kozo Tashima might get a few votes, but it will be difficult for him to compete, as the FIFA presidency requires maintaining relationships in all regions of the world," Haidar said. *– AFP*

Spaniard Carlos Vicens appointed Lyon coach

LYON – Spaniard Carlos Vicens has been appointed coach of French club Lyon on an 18-month deal, the Ligue 1 outfit announced on Monday.

The 43-year-old, a former assistant to Pep Guardiola at Manchester City, replaces Portuguese Paulo Fonseca who left for Sporting Lisbon.

Fonseca's assistant Jorge Maciel had stepped in on an interim basis guiding the club to a 3-2 win over Crystal Palace in the Europa League but losing Sunday's Ligue 1 trip to Brest 2-0.

Vicens played in the lower tiers of Spanish football as a semi-professional until the age of 27.

It was also at this level he began his coaching career in Spain in 2010, before moving to England in 2017 to join Manchester City.

There he rose through the ranks of the academy progressing from the U12s to the U18s with whom he won the FA Youth Cup.

In 2021, he joined Guardiola's first-team coaching staff, where he spent four years overseeing set-pieces.

In 2025, he was appointed head coach of Braga, marking his first experience as a manager at the highest level.

During his first season, he led Braga to a fourth-place finish in the Portuguese league and reached the semi-finals of the Europa League.



Lyon's newly-appointed Spanish coach Carlos Vicens leads his first training session at Olympique Lyonnais' training centre in Decines-Charpieu, near Lyon, yesterday. – AFP

Braga also reached the final of the Portuguese League Cup. Vicens was dismissed on October 20 following three defeats that left his team eighth in the league.

He arrives in Lyon with four assistants and is under contract until June 30, 2028. He oversaw his first training session yesterday.

His first match with Lyon will be against Lille on November 21, following the international break.

Lyon are currently fifth in Ligue 1, five points behind leaders Paris Saint-Germain having won five of their 10 matches so far this campaign. *– AFP*

Lens sack coach after Champions League rout

PARIS – Lens have sacked coach Yannick Cahuzac less than a week after their 9-1 Champions League defeat at home to Como, a source close to the French club told AFP yesterday, confirming a report from sports daily *L'Equipe*.

Cahuzac, who was appointed by Lens less than two months ago, lost his job after the French Cup winners' humiliating loss to Como last Wednesday, as well as a subsequent 2-1 reversal at their Stade Bollaert-Delelis home against Marseille on Sunday in Ligue 1.

"We feel like we're in a bad way. We feel that Wednesday's result has left its mark," Cahuzac admitted after the match against Marseille.

"We've managed to pick ourselves up. But we've got quite a few gaps in the team, and we feel we've lost our confidence."

The former Lens captain took over from Dino Toppmoeller in mid-September following the German coach's surprise departure after just four Ligue 1 matchdays.

In nine matches in charge of Lens, Cahuzac has secured just three wins and suffered six defeats across all competitions as Lens lounge in 11th place domestically.

Crucially, the 41-year-old has failed to pick up a single point in Europe, losing to Sporting Lisbon and Club Brugge, as well as the Como thrashing - the joint record for the biggest winning margin in the modern Champions League.

"In front of our fans, here at Bollaert, this is unacceptable," Lens chairman Joseph Oughourlian told Ligue 1+ on Sunday, adding that he had had the words "never again" painted on the walls of the changing room.

Last season under current Crystal Palace manager Pierre Sage, Lens won the French Cup and finished second in the league behind Paris Saint-Germain. *– AFP*

Endrick considering leaving Real Madrid to play more

SINGAPORE – Brazil international forward Endrick said yesterday that he wants to play regularly, whether at Real Madrid or elsewhere, as was the case when he joined Lyon on loan last January.

The 20-year-old is set to play a role with the Seleção in a friendly against Japan in Singapore on Saturday.

He spent the second half of last season on loan in the French Ligue 1, where he scored eight goals and provided eight assists in 21 matches for Lyon.

At Real he has been a bit-part player this season, as he was in the first half of the last campaign.

It has left him eyeing another potential January move when the transfer window reopens.

"I don't know what will happen in January, all I ask for is that it is the best thing for my career," he said from Singapore.

"I'm very young... I'm still 20 and I'll see what happens. I just want to play, to be happy, to help my teammates, score goals, provide assists, as I was able to do at Lyon, which was one of the best things that happened to me in my life."

That move helped Endrick make coach Carlo Ancelotti's World Cup squad.

But in Madrid, he faces tough competition to make Jose Mourinho's team.

"It's an opportunity to be at Real Madrid, but I know that there, in my position, there is one of the best players in the world, Kylian Mbappe," he added.

Endrick was injured at the start of the campaign and has played only 141 minutes this season across seven appearances in all competitions, scoring one goal. *– AFP*



Brazil's player Endrick attends a press conference ahead of the Mizuho Blue Challenge Kallang Football Series in Singapore yesterday. – AFP

China sweeps gymnastics team golds, adds 3 athletics medals at YOG

DAKAR – China claimed titles in both men's and women's team gymnastics at the Dakar 2026 Youth Olympic Games (YOG) on Monday, and added two silver medals and a bronze in athletics.

China's women's 3x3 basketball team also took silver after a narrow final defeat.

At the Dakar Exhibition Center, China's men's gymnastics team, comprising Yang Lanbin, Li Lezheng and Zhao Ruiyang, delivered strong performances in floor exercise, horizontal bar and parallel bars to score 158.463 points and finish ahead of Japan and Britain.

In the women's final, Chen Ziyan, Zhong Qi and Xie Guying combined solid performances on the uneven bars and balance beam to secure gold with 107.798 points, edging Japan by 0.234 points.

Yang said the gold medal had not come easily, noting that the team had undertaken intensive routine training every week during preparations while working to manage fatigue and avoid injuries.

"The competition went very smoothly today, and everyone was able to perform with confidence," he added.

Xie said the team had delivered as expected in its traditionally strong events, the uneven bars and balance beam. She added that unity and cooperation among teammates had been key to their success.

"In a team event, the most important thing is for everyone to work together and support one another," she said.

At Iba Mar Diop Stadium, China collected two silver medals and a bronze in athletics.

Chen Shijie clocked a personal best of 13.40 seconds to take silver in the men's 110m hurdles, while Jamaica's Marquies Page won the gold in 12.95 seconds.

Chen said he had been overly excited and a bit nervous, which affected his rhythm during the race.

Noting that he had bruised his foot while practicing the hurdles, he said: "I still lack experience in major competitions."

In the men's high jump, Liu Sen cleared 2.14 meters, setting a personal best and earning silver. South Africa's Matao Le Roux took gold with 2.16 meters. Liu Han claimed bronze in the men's 400m in 47.16 seconds, while the United Arab Emirates' Saeed Omar won gold in 46.40 seconds.

Among other events featuring Chinese athletes, Italy's Poko Silvia Canape won the women's long jump, with Liu Lixuan finishing sixth. Colombia's Ilsa Mayerlin Cordoba claimed the women's javelin title, while Wang Changle also placed sixth. Wang Tengfei finished fourth in his men's 400m hurdles semifinal heat to qualify for yesterday's final.

Ethiopia was the most successful nation on the athletics track, winning three gold medals. Junedin Abdo triumphed in the men's 2,000m steeplechase, Wabi Seblega won the men's 1,500m, and Netsanet Selemon claimed the women's 800m title.

Egypt's Yahya Sawaby won the men's discus, Brazil's Pyetro Henrico Souza took the men's shot put, Nigeria's Praise Ugoh claimed the women's 400m, and Kenya's Faith Rono won the women's 3,000m.

In 3x3 basketball, China's women's team edged host Senegal 21-19 in the semifinals to reach the final, where it narrowly lost 12-11 to Poland to take silver.

China's coach Liu Shengbin said the team had faced numerous challenges during preparations, with the young players lacking experience in international competitions.

Despite overcoming difficulties related to weather, time differences and food, the players felt considerable psychological pressure in the final and made some mistakes, Liu said, adding, "They gave everything they had. I don't think there is anything to regret."

In the men's final, Senegal edged Lithuania 14-13 to claim the gold medal.

In Saly, China's women's beach handball team lost 2-1 to Spain before beating Croatia by the same score in the group stage. The team faced Mexico in its final group match yesterday.

In the women's windsurfing, Wu Ziyan slipped to third overall after finishing sixth and seventh in races four and five, respectively, and recording a DNC in race six. Races seven to nine were scheduled for yesterday.

In fencing, Hong Kong, China's Ho Shing Him Harris defeated Japan's Maeda Masashi 15-8 to win the men's individual foil title. In taekwondo, Chinese Taipei's Cheng Po-Yu won the men's 55kg gold, while South Korea's Lee Si-woo claimed the women's 49kg title.

Türkiye's Dunya Yenihayat defeated Whang Ye-Eun from the United States to win the women's individual archery title. *– Xinhua*

Games photos on page 16



Medal Tally

Rank	National				
1	CHN	14	7	3	24
2	JPN	9	7	7	23
3	RUS	7	4	1	12
4	EGY	6	1	4	11
5	ETH	5	3		8
6	KEN	4	2		6
7	SEN	4		4	8
8	FRA	3	4	3	10
8	RSA	3	4	3	10
10	CRO	3	4		7
11	AZE	3	1		4
12	NGR	3			3
13	TPE	2	3	3	8
14	HUN	2	3	1	6
15	NZL	2	3		5
16	ESP	2	2	3	7
17	BRA	2	2	1	5
17	USA	2	2	1	5
19	JAM	2	2		4
19	ROU	2	2		4
21	HKG	2	1	3	6
22	POR	2	1	2	5
22	SUI	2	1	2	5
24	UAE	2	1	1	4
25	TUR	2		3	5
26	KAZ	2		1	3
27	ECU	2			2
28	COL	1	2	3	6



Aryna Sabalenka returns a shot in her singles match against Karolina Muchova of Czechia during the FAGE WTA Finals at Indian Wells Tennis Garden on Monday in Indian Wells, California.
Sabalenka battled past Muchova in straight sets to make a winning start at the season-ending WTA Finals in Indian Wells on Monday.
Former world number one Sabalenka was forced to dig deep before finally prevailing 7-6 (7/2), 7-5 in just under two hours.
Second-seeded Sabalenka is chasing her first ever WTA Finals victory after suffering defeats in the 2022 and 2025 finals.
– AFP

FIA chief says Qatar, Abu Dhabi GPs to go ahead

F1

PARIS – The final races of the Formula One season in Qatar and Abu Dhabi will go ahead as planned despite tensions in the Middle East, the president of motorsports' governing body Mohammed Ben Sulayem said yesterday.

The last two grands prix of the year are scheduled for November 29 in Qatar and December 6 in Abu Dhabi.

The Saudi Arabia Grand Prix earlier this year was scrapped following the outbreak of the United States and Israel's war with Iran, while the Bahrain race was delayed and moved to Malaysia.

"We are ready for Qatar and Abu Dhabi," FIA chief Ben Sulayem said on social media.

"We are fully prepared and committed to delivering two outstanding grands prix weekends and a spectacular conclusion to the Formula One world championship.

"We look forward to welcoming drivers, teams and fans to two iconic circuits for an unforgettable finish to the season. See you on the grid."

Ben Sulayem's comments echo those made by F1 boss Stefano Domenicali last month.

F1 drivers have expressed mixed feelings about racing in the Middle East, with four-time world champion Max Verstappen among those to air his reservations.

Italian youngster Kimi Antonelli has already wrapped up the drivers' world championship title, while his Mercedes team secured the constructors' crown last weekend in Sao Paulo.

Several events in Saudi Arabia, which borders Qatar and the UAE, have been cancelled or postponed in recent weeks following attacks on the country by Yemen's Houthis. *– AFP*

UK writer M. John Harrison wins Booker for AI-tinged apocalyptic novel

Marie Heuclin and Akshata Kapoor

LONDON – UK author M. John Harrison won the Booker Prize on Monday for his enigmatic novel "The End of Everything", which echoes concerns about artificial intelligence in a darkly satirical depiction of post-apocalyptic Britain.

Harrison, 81, became the oldest winner of the award, which comes with a £50,000 (US$67,000) prize and a boost in sales and profile for the winner.

A veteran of the British science fiction literary scene, it was Harrison's first time being shortlisted for the coveted prize, which critics have said was long overdue.

He beat shortlisted authors Marlon James, Douglas Stuart, Elizabeth Strout, Luke Kennard and Rebecca Perry, whose entries ranged from a queer epic unfolding in 1980s Kingston to a campus satire set in modern-day London.

"The End of Everything" came out "ahead in terms of both its extraordinary expert writing, but also huge ambition," chair of the judges Mary Beard told a press conference.

Harrison's 13th novel follows the beachcomber Phillip Tennent and his dementia-stricken, free-spirited aunt Marnie, set in the near-future on the windswept English coast invaded by mysterious objects known as the iGhetti.

An unnamed catastrophe plunges the characters into a murky post-apocalyptic world where the European continent seems to have disappeared and the arrival of the iGhetti, which can imitate humans, evoke interactions with artificial intelligence.

"One main point of the book is that if, or when, such an apocalypse comes it will be incomprehensible," Beard said, adding the book spoke to the present "moment".

"This is the politics of now seen through the lens of the future," Beard said in a statement.

In dream-like episodes this tight, 198-page novel alludes to Brexit, the COVID-19 pandemic and the invasion of technology into daily life.

As is often the case with Harrison's writing, which has been described as genre-bending and singular, the plot counts less than the atmosphere, and the author's elliptical and poetic style heightens the feeling of gradual collapse.

AI concerns

"Current affairs provided the themes and the satire," Harrison said of his book. "What happens when all of our expectations and explanations of the world become an ongoing disaster, but we still have to make a life?"

The author previously said he was inspired by the 2008 financial crisis, and wanted to write a novel about the "failure of explanation in society".

Born in Rugby, England, in 1945, Harrison, is the author of numerous science fiction books, including the Viriconium saga (1971-1984) and "Light" (2002), the first volume of a trilogy known as The Kefahuchi Tract, renowned as major works of the genre.

Little known to the general public beyond circles of science fiction enthusiasts, when he was shortlisted, *The Telegraph* newspaper wrote: "Finally, he's getting his due."

The theme of artificial intelligence has been on the judges' minds through the year-long selection process, which saw them whittle down 163 entries to a shortlist of six novels.

Beard pointed out concerns surrounding AI were "pretty high on this book".

"Phillip has got this object, this artefact, and it's not clear how sentient it is. It's not clear what it is," Beard said in a press conference to announce the winner.

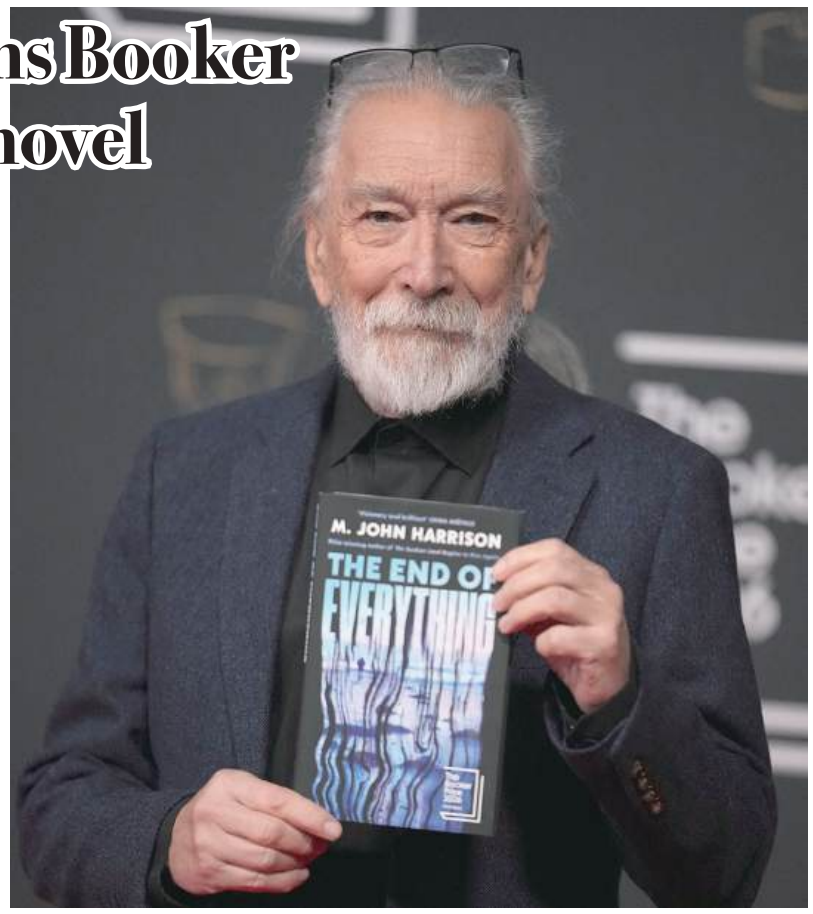
In an earlier interview with AFP, Beard said the prize-awarding panel would have to think about the role of AI in publishing and writing in the coming years.

"I think for the future it's inevitable that that will be on the agenda. You can't bury your head in the sand about that," she said.

The other judges have talked about wanting to create a shortlist of books that were distinctly human, and could not be replicated by AI.

The prize, which celebrates the best work of long-form fiction by writers of any nationality, written in English and published in the last year, was awarded on Monday at a London ceremony.

Last year, British-Hungarian author David Szalay won the prize for "Flesh", his tortured tale of a Hungarian émigré in London. – *AFP*



British author M. John Harrison poses with his book 'The End of Everything' on the red carpet upon arrival for the Booker Prize Award announcement ceremony at the Old Billingsgate in London on Monday. – *AFP*

'You Can See Everything' captures weirdness of 'post-truth era'

Raphaël Hermano

NEW YORK – Breakout hit documentary "You Can See Everything" has spawned a cultural moment.

The three-hour-long film plunges audiences into the surreal world of Elizabeth Holmes, one-time doyenne of Silicon Valley imprisoned for fraudulent claims about her supposedly revolutionary blood-testing tech.

A smash box office success, the film – which begins one month before Holmes heads to prison – has spawned ubiquitous internet memes, lookalike contests and commentary from influencers enamoured by the darkly comic, deadpan style of her mock inquisitor, Nathan Fielder.

Holmes's legend as a rare woman tech founder has proven fertile ground for numerous media postmortems of her sham business's implosion.

"I've followed this story a lot over the years," said filmgoer Alexandra Lesnik, 29, at a packed afternoon screening in Brooklyn, the first time she had watched a documentary in a cinema.

"This was a new, different perspective of her."

Another cinemagoer, Nathan Sayers, said he had "read a lot about her" ahead of the film's release.

"What brought me was a lot of buzz among friends," added Sayers, 53, who concluded the A24 film was in his "top five movies."

Kate Rennebohm, assistant professor of film studies at Lawrence University, said she had "students waiting after class every day to talk about the film – as well as emailing me out of the blue."

Weaving a web combining reality TV, mockumentary and exaggerated naivety, Fielder peels back the layers of a convicted liar who nonetheless does everything to convince the viewer, and maybe herself, she is truthful.

Throughout the lengthy immersion in Holmes's weird world, the viewer is invited to grapple with the question of whether the former billionaire businesswoman truly believed she created a medical marvel, and whether she was manipulated by others.

"The story just changes in so many ways, and I feel like the villain also changes a lot in the story too," said New Yorker Avery Smith, 27.

'Deny, deny, deny'

"The film has fully transcended the documentary label," said Nora Stone, an assistant professor of film production at the University of North Alabama.

The film, which has generated persistent Oscar buzz and pulled in some US$80 million at the domestic box office, has benefited from the marketing muscle of the A24 studio, she added.

Columbia University researcher Geoffrey Lokke said the filmmakers' call to fans not to spread spoilers "added to its intrigue and mystery."

None of the film's participants emerge unscathed. Even the producers themselves catch strays for their handling of the film's anti-heroes, including Holmes's husband.

Through the film's slow-burn, Holmes becomes a cypher for the explosion of power and influence wielded by the tech giants in the age of AI, according to Rennebohm.

"[She] inevitably represents the broader ethos of self-delusion and reality-denial underlying Silicon Valley and the American tech industry," she told AFP.

Stone, the film professor, said that "You Can See Everything" is about something even bigger, mirroring the political moment.

"It is a perfect encapsulation of the post-truth era," she said.

"Elizabeth Holmes does exactly what Donald Trump does – deny, deny, deny." – *AFP*

GTA VI downloads begin ahead of launch next week

PARIS – US studio Rockstar Games allowed gamers to begin downloading its much-anticipated "Grand Theft Auto VI" yesterday ahead of enabling consoles to play the game on November 19.

Fans in New Zealand were the first to be able to download the latest offering in the gangster saga as access was rolled out at the stroke of midnight in each time zone.

Players will still have to wait to start gaming until midnight on Thursday of next week.

The game, available on PlayStation 5 and on the Xbox Series, will require 212GB of storage, according to Rockstar Games, making it one of the most ambitious ever launches in terms of memory.

Depending on the quality of the connection, a download will therefore take between approximately one hour to as much as several hours.

Access over a week ahead of the actual product launch will help avoid a rush of gamers seeking to download the title crashing Rockstar's servers due to extremely high demand.

The release of GTA VI comes 13 years after its predecessor scaled new heights in terms of gameplay and profitability.

Two weeks out from release, nearly eight million copies had already been pre-ordered, according to analytics firm Sensor Tower.

Players who have opted for a physical copy of the game will be able to collect it from shops from tomorrow.

The game box will contain only a download code, however, not a disc.

The standard edition is priced in Europe at 79.99 euros (US$89.67). The edition containing various in-game bonuses such as new weapons and cars costs 99.99 euros.

The latest instalment in this gangster saga, which has sold over 475 million copies worldwide since its launch in 1997, has been eagerly awaited by fans for more than a decade.

Previous incarnation GTA V sold more than 230 million units according to Take-Two Interactive.

Industry observers say this will be the biggest launch of an entertainment product ever in revenue terms. – *AFP*

World Weather

CHINA	ASIA-PACIFIC	WORLD	LUSOPHONE
Beijing -1°C~14°C	Manila 24°C~32°C	New York 12°C~19°C	Lisbon 16°C~20°C
Shanghai 12°C~19°C	Bangkok 22°C~32°C	London 5°C~10°C	Rio de Janeiro 19°C~26°C
Hong Kong 19°C~24°C	Tokyo 5°C~14°C	Frankfurt 7°C~13°C	Luanda 24°C~28°C
Taipei 18°C~23°C	Singapore 25°C~32°C	Vancouver 12°C~15°C	Maputo 18°C~30°C
Guangzhou 13°C~24°C	Kuala Lumpur 23°C~32°C	Paris 8°C~15°C	Dili 23°C~33°C
Nanjing 8°C~17°C	Jakarta 24°C~34°C	Moscow 0°C~4°C	São Tomé 24°C~31°C
Guilin 11°C~21°C	Seoul 4°C~16°C	Las Vegas 11°C~25°C	Praia 22°C~32°C
Xi'an 1°C~13°C	Sydney 17°C~27°C	Monte Carlo 15°C~18°C	Bissau 22°C~35°C



Sun Hanyun (left) and Gu Manjie (right) of China defend Gabriela Stefanowicz of Poland during the women's 3x3 basketball gold medal game between China and Poland at the Dakar 2026 Youth Olympic Games in Dakar, Senegal, on Monday. Poland won the game. – Xinhua



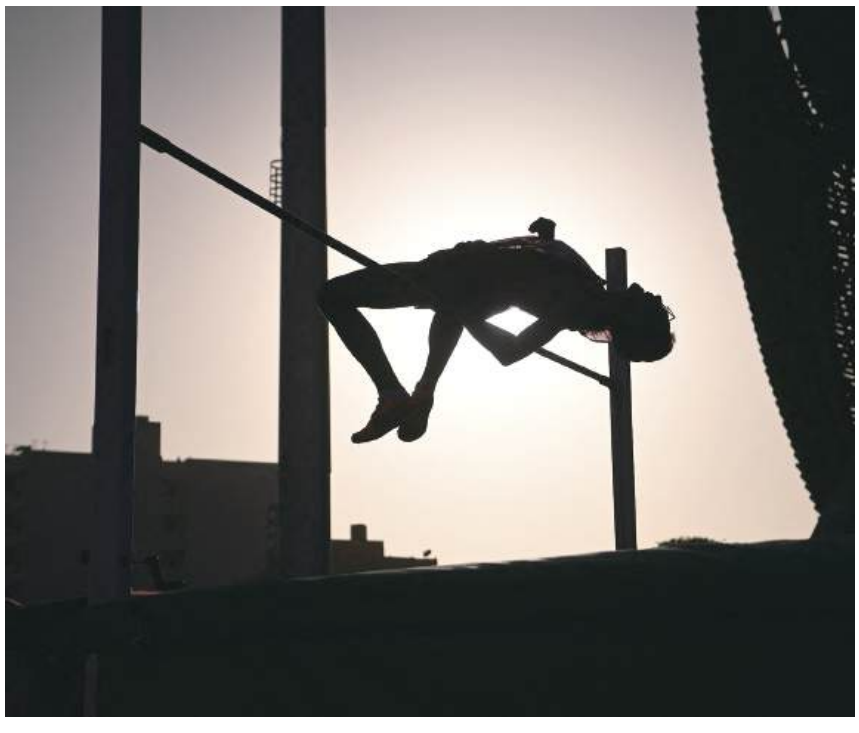
Ukraine's Mykyta Kuzmenko (left) competes against Iran's Kiarash Torabi (right) in the men's 70kg beach wrestling bronze medal match during the Dakar 2026 Youth Olympic Games at Saly Plage Ouest in Saly, Senegal on Sunday. – AFP



Senegalese spectators and musicians celebrate their athletes' victory along the beach during the Dakar 2026 Youth Olympic Games at Saly Plage Ouest in Saly, Senegal on Sunday. – AFP



Dai Jiarong (centre) of China gets injured during the women's preliminary round group A match of beach handball against Croatia at the Dakar 2026 Youth Olympic Games in Saly, south of Dakar, Senegal, on Monday. – Xinhua



China's Sen Liu competes at the Men's High Jump Final during the Dakar 2026 Youth Olympic Games at Complexe Iba Mar Diop (CID Stadium) in Dakar, Senegal on Monday. – AFP



Romania's gymnasts Aniela Tudor (left) and Alexandra Nica prepare to compete in the women's artistic gymnastics team final uneven bars event during the Dakar 2026 Youth Olympic Games at the Dakar Expo Center (CICAD) in Diamniadio, Senegal on Monday. – AFP