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AP PHOTO



Portugal A center-right alliance led by the Social Democratic Party has won general election by a slender margin over the ruling Socialists and is set to form a minority government as radical-right populist party Chega that came third in the voting tries to get a hand on the levers of power. Results published yesterday after votes from abroad were counted to decide the last four lawmakers gave the Democratic Alliance a final tally of 80 seats in the 230-seat National Assembly, Portugal's parliament.

AP PHOTO



Japan's exports rose 7.8% in February from a year earlier on strong shipments of cars and electrical machinery, the government said yesterday. Exports in February totaled 8.2 trillion yen (\$55 billion). The report showed the trade deficit sank by more than half on-year to 379 billion yen (\$2.5 billion). Exports to China rose just 2.5% and those to all of Asia edged 2.3% higher on-year, suggesting that demand has moderated.

AP PHOTO



South Korea Shohei Ohtani's interpreter and close friend was fired by the Los Angeles Dodgers following allegations of illegal gambling and theft from the Japanese baseball star. Interpreter Ippei Mizuhara, 39, was let go from the team following reports from the Los Angeles Times and ESPN about his alleged ties to an illegal bookmaker. The team is in Seoul this week as Ohtani makes his Dodgers debut.

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RENATO MARQUES



FDCT SETS AMBITIOUS GOALS FOR 2024: MORE PROJECTS, SAME BUDGET

RENATO MARQUES

THE Science and Technology Development Fund (FDCT) has set some ambitious goals for this year. Among them is the aim to increase project funding from companies by 40%, while keeping the same budget as last year, the president of the Administrative Committee, Che Weng Keong, said yesterday in a press conference organized by the fund to present the results of 2023 and provide insights into the forecast for 2024.

In his presentation, Che noted that one of the four main directions of the FDCT for 2024 is to reinforce support to technology companies, with the aim of achieving a 40% growth year-on-year.

In response to an inquiry from the Times, the president later clarified that the vast majority of projects funded by FDCT in 2023 were associated with institutions, such as tertiary education. According to Che, only 8.4% (MOP37.8 million) of the MOP450 million in funding last year was directed towards company projects.

Therefore, achieving 40% growth year-on-year will represent a modest increase in financing of slightly over MOP15 million, an amount considered relatively small and unlikely to significantly impact the overall annual budget of the fund.

Another of the 2024 FDCT policies aims to attract "exceptional graduates" to return to work in Macau.

While specific strategies to achieve this aim were not elaborated upon, Che mentioned that they intended to incentivize tech

companies to hire locals. Additionally, they also seek to encourage local students to pursue techno-

MORE SUPPORT FOR STATE KEY LABORATORIES

ANOTHER priority for FDCT in 2024 is to provide more financial support to the State Key Laboratories.

According to the FDCT plan, the idea is to support the reorganization of these laboratories "accord-

ing to the development of national scientific investigation" as well as to increase financial support for midstream R&D. Specifically, there is a proposed 25% increase in initial support for results transformation in these labs.

logy studies in Macau universities rather than abroad.

Che noted that there are currently many majors and even post-graduate courses being offered in Macau by local institutions that are of equal quality as those of other institutions abroad. He believes that local students would "prefer to study in Macau than to move abroad."

Another of the main directions for 2024 is to promote and develop research and development (R&D) projects centered in Hengqin.

The idea is that more local tech companies will establish themselves in Hengqin and be supported in their R&D efforts by local universities under a framework termed "Companies in Hengqin ask, Universities in Macau respond."

The idea is to put local universities at the service of the companies in Hengqin to help them solve problems and develop new technologies that can then be transformed into products.

Such aims are also closely related to the development of the "1+4" strategy, particularly focusing on Big Health and High and New Technologies, building on the groundwork laid in 2023.

2023 shows positive results for sci and tech, FCDDT claims

RENATO MARQUES

2023 was a year of very positive results for science and technology projects funded by the Science and Technology Development Fund (FDCT), the president of the Administrative Committee, Che Weng Keong, said yesterday in a press conference. According to Che, from a total of 700 project proposals, 256 were selected and supported by

the FDCT, which provided some MOP450 million in funding.

The same official noted that over 90% of all projects funded in 2023 were geared towards applied research, with the primary focus on Big Health, digital technology, and engineering and materials. These efforts align closely with the guidelines and new direction for Macau's development based on the "1+4" strategy.

Although the projects

submitted by companies comprised just 8.4% of the total, Che noted that some of these projects proved highly successful, generating profits and enhanced credibility for the companies involved.

Among the successful projects were financed by the FDCT, the president of the fund highlighted the launch of the "Macau Science Satellite-1." In addition to receiving praise from the People's Repu-

blic of China President, Xi Jinping, this project was also a prominent topic in multiple conferences and talks.

Many articles and papers were also published by local researchers based on projects supported by FCDDT, he said, with publications in prestigious scientific journals such as Nature, Science, and Cell.

Other successes were also achieved in the Traditional Chinese Medicine

sector, with the development of several new medicines including Leonurine pills and a product named Ginsengcare, among others.

According to the figures presented at the same press conference, the number of research and development (R&D) activities developed over 2023 surpassed 6,000 maintaining a constant upward trajectory since 2013.

Che noted that year-

-on-year, the number of R&D activities increased some 16% when compared with 2022 and experienced nearly five-fold growth over the past decade.

From the 256 projects approved by the FDCT in 2023, the majority (31.6%) were projects related to information technology, followed by Big Health and Engineering and Materials (both at 23%) and Nature Sciences with 20.7%. Other projects totaled 1.6%.

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HOUSING

MNN defends meeting regulatory requirements as netizens bash project quality

ANTHONY LAM

A buyer of a unit in the Macau New Neighbourhood (MNN) residential project in Hengqin has taken to a Facebook group to complain the quality of the project.

In response, the developer of the project, Macau Urban Renewal Limited (MUR) – a private company wholly owned by the Macau government – defended the quality of the appliances pre-installed at the time of ownership transfer, emphasizing that some of them met national regulatory requirements.

Questioning the poor quality despite the project being developed by a government-owned company, the social media user pointed out that the density fiberboards used in their apartment “are of the lowest quality with the highest composition of formaldehyde.”

The buyer also said that they



Fiberboards used in the buyer's apartment

were not allowed to put safety bars on the windows and were not permitted to install a ventilation fan. They also criticized the developer and the constructor for “pushing responsibilities to each other,” suggesting that they were trying to avoid accountability.

The purchaser also criticized the fact that there were only two

internet service providers. “External connections [to ban websites such as Facebook and Instagram] equate to a fare of RMB200 per month,” which in the buyer’s opinion, is even more expensive than CTM. The other service provider, meanwhile, was said to be only able to connect to TVB and its programs, while “still charging

RMB100 per month,” the buyer said.

They added that they still had no idea how their furniture could be delivered from Macau to Hengqin, despite a new mechanism to facilitate transactions between Macau and Hengqin coming into effect on Mar. 1.

The buyer recapped that the government had pledged that the lifestyle in Hengqin would be aligned with that in Macau.

In defense of the project, the MUR said that “the branded kitchen cabinets are made of high-grade fiberboards which have passed the formaldehyde emission test to meet the standards,” although it did not explain which set of standards they were referring to.

In terms of ventilation, the developer recapped that all MNN apartments have two balconies, with windows installed in the bedrooms, kitchens and bathrooms. “A natural ventilation approach is used, which complies with the

relevant ventilation regulations (GB 50096-2011),” the developer added.

It also said that “telecom circuits and optical fiber network [had been] all installed in the flat and were ready for connection by a service provider,” but did not explain the tariff and choice of operators.

The post prompted lively discussions from other social media users on the matter.

A user suggested the buyer quickly to file a complaint ahead of the upcoming parliamentary election next year. Another user wondered why the buyer did not buy an apartment in Macau. “Look at what brand of electric appliances are installed there,” the user commented.

Another user warned about the harms of formaldehyde, which is believed to be a cause of leukemia.

A comment that attracted a larger number of reactions mocked the project name, calling it “Macau Sham Neighbourhood.”

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PUBLIC WORKS SECRETARY DEFENDS GOV'T HOUSING PRICES

ANTHONY LAM

SECRETARY for Transport and Public Works Raimundo do Rosário defended yesterday the pricing of the current phase of Economic Housing, citing legality and roots as the foundation.

Earlier, a group of interested Economic Housing buyers, in the company of lawmaker Ron Lam, submitted a signed petition letter to the Chief Executive to complain the pricing of the housing units. The price is set a MOP3,300 per square foot on average.

Discussing the letter, the official admitted of receiving it, adding that time is needed to analyze the complaint. He said that the pricing cannot be adjusted "because it's not market price."

The official reiterated the "complexity" and "legality" of the calculation of the pricing, when asked to explain why the average prices for the phases in 2019, 2021 and 2023 are similar.



Ending on Mar. 27, the phase of offering involves 5,415 apartments and attracted 5,481 applications. On the contrary, previous phases have attracted up to 35,000 applications in each opening.

The application period has been extended. Demand during this phase has been weak. The major difference between this phase

and previous phases is that apartments from this phase onwards will be banned from resale to the market after blackout period, pursuant to law-in-action.

Given the weak demand, the official said that excessive or undesired Economic Housing apartments cannot be sold as Sandwich-class Housing units, when asked by the press. He explained

that the former apartments are smaller than the latter ones. The construction style and layout for the latter housing are also different, he added. Nonetheless, he promised that studies will be commenced to investigate if Economic Housing projects in the coming phases cannot be converted or adjusted to Sandwich-class Housing projects.

TRANSPORT

LIGHT RAIL COMPANY URGES MTR MACAU TO HANDLE LABOR ISSUES

STAFF REPORTER

THE Macao LRT Corporation, Limited (MLM) issued a statement saying it has asked the MTR Railway Operations (Macao) Company Limited to address labor concerns with its contracted workers appropriately and in accordance with the Labor Relations Law.

This statement follows reports on about 100 employees transferred from MTR Railway Operations to MLM due to a concession change, who have been deprived of their service periods.

At the same time, MLM also called for the firm to provide clear explanations to

workers and the establishment of an exit mechanism.

"MLM has never required the workers to sign any additional documents not issued by MLM in their application for the MLM position," the LRT Corporation said in a statement.

As MLM will be directly responsible for most of the operation and repair work of the Macao Light Rail from April 2024, MLM successively initiated staff recruitment last year to ensure that it does not affect the daily operation of the Macao Light Rail. By the end of 2023, 109 former MTR (Macao) employees had joined MLM.

AD



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REGIÃO ADMINISTRATIVA ESPECIAL DE MACAU
科學技術發展基金

FUNDO PARA O DESENVOLVIMENTO DAS CIÊNCIAS E DA TECNOLOGIA

Notice

Proposal for 2024 Funding Scheme for Enterprise Innovation and R&D (Type A & B) of FDCT

I. Objectives

To align with the policy address of the Government of the Macao Special Administrative Region, this Funding Scheme aims to enhance innovation and R&D in Macao enterprises, create a research-friendly environment, and inspire enterprises to increase their R&D investment through providing financial support, so as to further promote the industry-university-research partnership, facilitate the transformation of scientific research achievements, cultivate emerging industries, and promote the appropriate diversified development of related industries in Macao.

II. Types of Application

Type A: not exceeding MOP 1,000,000;

Type B: exceeding MOP 1,000,000, but not exceeding MOP 3,000,000;

The applying entity shall invest self-owned R&D funds in a supporting manner, and the amount of investment shall not be less than the amount funded by FDCT.

III. Target Group and Eligibility for Application

Commercial entrepreneurs or commercial enterprises that fulfill the following conditions are eligible to submit application:

- Enterprises registered in the Macao SAR for one year or more.
- Enterprises not in arrears with tax and social security contributions (if any) in the Macao SAR.
- The applying entity shall also fulfill the following conditions:

Type A	Type B
i. No less than three full-time employees. ii. In case of full-time employees less than three, the applying entity shall be recommended by a nation-level makerspace established in Macao.	i. No less than five full-time employees. ii. The applying entity shall be an "enterprise engaged in scientific and technological innovation activities" accredited by the "Scientific and Technological Innovation Commercial Enterprise Accreditation Committee" according to law as stipulated in Article 6 of Law No. 1/2021 - Tax Preference System for Enterprises Engaged in Scientific and Technological Innovation Activities, or certified under the Technology Enterprises Certification Program by the DSED.

IV. Application Period

March 22 to April 22, 2024

V. Funding Priorities:

- For Types B, priority goes to the research projects that align with the Second Five-Year Plan for Economic and Social Development of the Macao Special Administrative Region (2021-2025), the Development Plan for Appropriate Economic Diversification of the Macao Special Administrative Region (2024-2028), the Policy Address for the Fiscal Year 2024, and related planning and programs of Guangdong-Macao In-Depth Cooperation Zone in Hengqin, etc., especially those that can promote scientific research and industrial development in the fields such as Chinese medicine, integrated circuits, electronic components, Internet of Things, big data, artificial intelligence, new energy, space science, advanced materials and biomedicine.
- Enterprises that have been certified under the Technology Enterprises Certification Program by the Economic and Technological Development Bureau (DSED).

VI. Requirements for Project Findings

- The expected project findings shall include software, hardware (prototype, mock-up), technical standards, formulas, new materials, new technologies, etc., and specify the economic or social benefits produced after the utilization of the project.
- Upon project conclusion, the expected TRL of the Type A projects shall aim to reach TRL 4 or above, the expected TRL of the Type B projects shall be TRL 5 or above.

VII. Assessment Criteria

The assessment is performed by FDCT according to the Funding Regulations of the Science and Technology Development Fund as approved by the Chief Executive's Dispatch No. 93/2023 as its integral part.

Key considerations will be given to the followings:

- Assessment of technologies and research findings, including: economic or social benefits, technical level, and real-life application.
- Competence of the applying entity, including: R&D team and research basis, industry-university-research partnership, qualifications and quantity of team members, and research conditions.
- Project planning, including: assessment of work plan, soundness of budget, and project feasibility.

VIII. Applying Method

Applying entity can apply for funding of part of the costs from FDCT through the Online Funding Application System (<https://apps.fdc.gov.mo/sams/public/main-page.faces>).

Documents submitted to: Room K, 11/F, the Macau Square, No.43-53A Avenida do Infante D. Henrique, Macao;

Enquiry: 28788777.

President of FDCT Administrative Committee,
Che Weng Keong
2024/03/21

Barra 'living art in style' as series of activities kicks off

STAFF REPORTER

MGM has organized a variety of activities in the Barra district in bid to "inject contemporary, trendy, artistic, and lifestyle elements into Barra and drive the continuous development of the district."

As part of the "Barra District Revitalization Series," MGM is introducing various forms of art into the district.

The activities include mural creation, art group parades, floral displays, and historical photo exhibitions. The highlight of the project is a collaboration with local street artist AAFK and over 150 students and elderly individuals to create a 64-meter-long mural showcasing the colors of Macau.

"We wanted to express the diverse and international aspects of this city and highlight that Macau is a city composed of different cultures. I hope that in the future, Macau will have a more diversified creative per-



formance space like places in Europe and the United States," said local artist Anny Chung.

"I did not expect the community to be so happy to partake in the painting of the mural, as groups often go over their time slot to continue to paint," she added.

The finished sculpture will be displayed during the Easter holiday. Additionally, performance teams from different countries participating in the parade will

perform in the district, combining Mazu culture with Latin and Western cultures. Floral art is also emphasized, with florists creating on-site and teaching flower art to the public.

A joint exhibition organized by MGM and cultural organizations displays historical photos and artworks, providing insights into the area's past and future development.

MGM China last year revealed it will support the government's

revitalization plan for the A-Ma district, which it plans to turn into a cultural and creative area. The project is part of its pledge to the government in bid to promote the development of non-gaming elements.

Chairperson and executive director, Pansy Ho, has previously said that the gaming operator hopes to "revitalize the A-Ma area into a cultural and creative park, where more cultural elements will be added."

ELECTRICITY CONSUMPTION PROJECTED TO JUMP 5% THIS YEAR

Macau's only electricity supplier forecasts a 4% to 5% increase in the city's electricity consumption this year. Benjamin Yue, chief advisor of the Executive Committee of Companhia de Electricidade (CEM) said in an interview with TDM that the consumption rate in the previous year had a year-on-year increase of 9.3%, driven primarily by the city's economic recovery and an increase in visitor numbers. The majority of this growth is attributed to the government's electricity usage, which saw a surge of 18.7%, and businesses, which utilized 11.6% more power. Conversely, household electricity usage declined by 1.2% in 2023.

AUTHORITIES UNCOVER 58 ILLEGAL WORKERS

Authorities identified 58 suspected illegal workers in February in a joint operation between the the Public Security Police and the Labour Affairs Bureau, in which 327 different locations were inspected. These included construction sites, private buildings and commercial and industrial establishments. In January, the bureaus apprehended 126 people on suspicion of working illegally in Macau.



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Notice

Proposal for 2024 Funding Scheme for Scientific Research and Innovation (Type A & B) of FDCT

I. Objectives

To align with the policy address of the Government of the Macao Special Administrative Region, this Funding Scheme aims to assist local research institutions and researchers in launching all kinds of in-depth research projects, continue enhancing the scientific research strength and cutting-edge original innovation ability in Macao, and maintain the leading position of Macao's dominant discipline. Besides, it also promotes the industry-university-research partnership, facilitates the production of application-based research findings, and improves the contribution of scientific and technological innovation to social and economic development in Macao.

II. Types of application and requirements for Project Findings

1. Type A: for research projects conducive to enhancing scientific research strength and cutting-edge original innovation ability, with funding amount applied not exceeding MOP 3,000,000. The expected project findings, not limited to academic or applied research findings, may include papers, monographs, research (consultation) reports, patents, talent cultivation, software, hardware (prototype, mock-up), technical standards, formulas, new materials, new technologies, etc.
2. Type B: for research projects with application-oriented scientific research findings, with funding amount applied not exceeding MOP 3,000,000. The expected project findings shall include software, hardware (prototype, mock-up), technical standards, formulas, new materials, new technologies, etc., and specify the potential economic or social benefits after the utilization of the project; upon project conclusion, the expected TRL of the Type B projects shall be TRL 4 or above.

III. Target Group and Eligibility for Application

1. Local higher education institutions under the supervision of the Macao SAR Government.
2. Private non-profit organizations registered in the Macao SAR.
3. Researchers engaged in R&D activities in the Macao SAR.

IV. Application Period

March 22 to April 22, 2024

V. Funding Priorities

1. To facilitate the industry-university-research collaboration in Macao, priority goes to Types B in case of limited budget.
2. For Types B, priority goes to the research projects that align with the Second Five-Year Plan for Economic and Social Development of the Macao Special Administrative Region (2021-2025), the Development Plan for Appropriate Economic Diversification of the Macao Special Administrative Region (2024-2028), the Policy Address for the Fiscal Year 2024, and related planning and programs of Guangdong-Macao In-Depth Cooperation Zone in Hengqin, etc., especially those that can promote scientific research and industrial development in the fields such as Chinese medicine, integrated circuits, electronic components, Internet of Things, big data, artificial intelligence, new energy, space science, advanced materials and biomedicine.
3. Priority goes to partnerships with enterprises in Macao or Hengqin, especially those that have been certified under the Technology Enterprises Certification Program by the DSED.

VI. Self-owned Investment

In case of collaboration with a commercial entrepreneur or commercial enterprise, such commercial entrepreneur or commercial enterprise shall provide the self-owned funds no less than 10% of the amount funded by FDCT. The self-owned investment shall meet the conditions of "Eligible Expenditures" prescribed in Article VIII.

VII. Assessment Criteria

The assessment is performed by FDCT according to the Funding Regulations of the Science and Technology Development Fund as approved by the Chief Executive's Dispatch No. 93/2023 as its integral part.

Key considerations will be given to the followings:

1. Competence of the applying entity, including: R&D team and research basis, qualifications and quantity of team members, research conditions, and cooperative research.
2. Project planning, including: assessment of work plan, soundness of budget, and project feasibility.
3. Type A: it shall also consider the scientific value and cutting edge, including innovativeness and cutting edge, research findings and academic value, and assessment of research methods.
Type B: it shall also consider the assessment of technologies and research findings, including technical level, application prospect, and real-life application

VIII. Applying Method

Applying entity can apply for funding of part of the costs from FDCT through the Online Funding Application System (<https://apps.fdc.gov.mo/sams/public/main-page.faces>).

Documents submitted to: Room K, 11/F, the Macau Square, No.43-53A Avenida do Infante D. Henrique, Macao;

Enquiry: 28788777.

President of FDCT Administrative Committee,
Che Weng Keong
2024/03/21

FOOTBRIDGE OF AVENIDA DO NORDESTE COSTS UP TO MOP258 MILLION

The footbridge at the Avenida do Nordeste is expected to cost between MOP229 million and MOP258 million, according to the Public Works Bureau. The construction of the bridge in the northern district, which attracted bids from 11 construction firms, is slated to commence in the second quarter of this year. The first phase includes the construction of a pedestrian crossing on Avenida do Nordeste, which can be linked to the common corridor of the Avenida Venceslau de Morais, with 12 access points along its route.

MEDIAN SALARY FOR WORKING GRADUATES AT MOP15,000:UM

The University of Macau (UM) kicked off its UM Career and Internship Fair 2024 yesterday, featuring more than 115 enterprises and organisations. Offering some 2,300 job opportunities, the university has also organised a series of career guidance activities to help graduating students find jobs. According to UM's Graduate Further Studies and Employment Survey 2022/2023, 90% of graduates found a job or furthered their studies within three months after graduation. The median monthly income of working graduates was MOP15,000, and the top five industries they worked in were education (19.8%); hospitality and catering (16.8%); banking, finance and insurance (16.0%); trade, wholesale and retail (10.4%); and construction and engineering (6.1%).

EDUCATION

MPU SIGNS COOPERATION AGREEMENT WITH LISBON UNIVERSITY

ANTHONY LAM

DURING a visit to Portugal, the Macau Polytechnic University (MPU) Vice Rector Lei Ngan Lin signed a cooperation agreement with Rector Luís Ferreira of the University of Lisbon, the local university announced in a statement.

Having a positive relationship for nearly 20 years, the two universities have come to consensus on a number of topics, such as strengthening teacher-student exchanges, carrying out scientific research projects, jointly organizing academic seminars and lectures, as well as exchanging academic publications in the fields of language, science and technology, and general health.

Lei said that the MPU has always been committed to deepening cooperation with higher education and scien-



tific research institutions in Portugal and other Portuguese-speaking countries, aiming to promote collaborative innovation and talent cultivation in higher education, and to live out the role of Macau as a bridge in Sino-Portuguese

higher education cooperation and exchanges.

Moreover, Ferreira noted that the University of Lisbon attaches great importance to cooperation with higher education institutions in Macau and China, and has high

expectations in the opportunities underlying the Greater Bay Area and Hengqin. He added that, in future, cooperation between the MPU and the University of Lisbon will develop in many different directions.

AD



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FUNDO PARA O DESENVOLVIMENTO DAS CIÊNCIAS E DA TECNOLOGIA

Notice Proposal for 2024 Funding Scheme for Industry-University-Research Partnership for Enterprises of FDCT

I. Objectives

To align with the policy address of the Government of the Macao Special Administrative Region, this Funding Scheme aims to encourage enterprises to focus on scientific research and development, facilitate the industry-university-research partnership in tackling technical issues occurring in their production and operation, as well as provide funding for part of the R&D costs to enterprises that have successfully matched with their partners through the "Online Industry-University-Research Matching Platform" of FDCT, so as to promote the implementation of R&D achievements and solutions.

II. Target Group

Commercial entrepreneurs or commercial enterprises that fulfill the following conditions are eligible to submit application:
1. Enterprises registered in the Macao SAR for one year or more. In case of an incubated enterprise of a nation-level makerspace established in Macao, the required registration period can be less than one year.
2. Enterprises not in arrears with tax and social security contributions (if any) in the Macao SAR.
3. Enterprises having no less than three full-time employees. In case of full-time employees less than three, the applying entity shall be recommended by a nation-level makerspace established in Macao.

III. Type and Scope of Funding

The funding type of the Scheme is non-reimbursable. The applying entity shall invest self-owned R&D funds in a supporting manner, and the amount of investment shall not be less than the amount funded by FDCT. In case of an incubated enterprise of a nation-level makerspace established in Macao, the amount of investment shall not be less than 50% of the amount funded by FDCT.

IV. Requirements for Project Findings

1. The expected project findings shall include software, hardware (prototype, mock-up), technical standards, formulas, new materials, new technologies, etc., and specify the economic or social benefits produced after the utilization of the project.
2. Upon project conclusion, the expected TRL of the project shall be TRL 6 or above.

V. Application and Funding Amount

1. The funding ceiling for a single project is MOP 250,000. If the technology provider is a local university, the funding ceiling is MOP 500,000.
2. The funding amount granted by FDCT shall not be higher than the amount of funding applied.

VI. Funding Duration

The funding duration of the Scheme is from six months to one year.

VII. Application Period

1st-10th of each month in April, July and October 2024.

VIII. Assessment Criteria

The assessment is performed by FDCT according to the Funding Regulations of the Science and Technology Development Fund as approved by the Chief Executive's Dispatch No. 93/2023 as its integral part.

Key considerations will be given to the followings:

- (1) The effect the project result might have in solving the technical difficulties for enterprises.
- (2) The value of solving the technical difficulties to enterprises.
- (3) Technical capabilities of the technology provider.
- (4) Project feasibility and work plan.
- (5) Soundness of budget.

IX. Applying Method

1. The applying entity shall be successfully matched with a university through the "Online Industry-University-Research Matching Platform" (<http://iurm.fdct.gov.mo/>) of FDCT.
2. After successful match, local enterprises can apply for funding of part of the costs from FDCT through the Online Funding Application System (<https://apps.fdct.gov.mo/sams/public/main-page.faces>). Documents submitted to: Room K, 11/F, the Macau Square, No.43-53A Avenida do Infante D. Henrique, Macao; Enquiry: 28788777.

President of FDCT Administrative Committee,
Che Weng Keong
2024/03/21



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ADVERTORIAL

SANDS CHINA NEWS

Sands China Hosts 'Responsible Gaming Hong Kong Training Tour'

Sands China recently hosted a **Responsible Gaming Hong Kong Training Tour** in January, aimed at supporting the Macao SAR government's 'Seeking Help for Winning the Future' responsible gaming initiatives, while enhancing attendees' understanding of related practices being implemented in Hong Kong to help them provide better support to those in need in Macao.

The 55 participating **Responsible Gaming Ambassadors** from Sands China visited the Tung Wah Group of Hospitals Even Centre, a leading counselling and treatment services organisation for gamblers with gambling disorder.

They learnt about the centre's Anti-Gambling Ping Wo Truck, which tours around Hong Kong territories and schools conveying anti-gambling messages and raising awareness about the harms of gambling disorder through exhibitions, interactive games, and consultations.

The Even Centre's peer counsellors also shared their valuable personal insights on gambling disorder, including how to effectively approach and assist patrons who may be dealing with gambling addiction.

One of the key objectives of the tour was to establish connections with Hong Kong's responsible gaming organisations and bridge resources between the two cities, enabling Sands China to offer enhanced assistance to patrons, further improving its responsible gaming initiatives.

As part of the tour, participants had the opportunity to exchange ideas on the causes and effects of gambling disorder. They also learned about the financial and debt management strategies employed by Even Centre to assist those who are affected by the disorder.

The **Responsible Gaming Hong Kong Training Tour** is part of the Sands China's ongoing efforts to promote education and well-being among its guests and team members. The company has been at the forefront of responsible gaming initiatives in Macao, being the first integrated resort operator to launch a self-exclusion program in 2004. The company has also included responsible gaming training in its company-wide team member orientation program since its inception.

Established in 2007, Sands China's comprehensive responsible gaming program aims to contribute to the continuous development of the Macao community. The company is dedicated to addressing social issues, bearing corporate responsibility, and fostering a culture of responsible gaming in Macao.



CRIME

Card fraud syndicate busted, losses of MOP5.9m

ANTHONY LAM

A payment card fraud syndicate resulting in the loss of MOP5.9 million from 71 victims has been uncovered, with three people under arrest, the Judiciary Police (PJ) announced yesterday.

According to the police, the three suspects have stolen at least MOP4.4 million.

The suspects, identified by their surnames as Sio (33), owner of three car service centers and a beauty parlor; Fok (32), owner of an engineering company; and Che (31), an insurance broker, face charges of computer fraud, money laundering, and participation in a criminal syndicate.

As of yesterday, no local resident card-data has been detected as part of the fraud, the PJ reported.

On Dec. 19 last year, the police were notified by a local bank and an external non-mainland card issuer that they had flagged as suspicious over 100 transactions in Macau that month involving non-local card holders, amounting to the loss of MOP5.9 million.

The police traced the transactions to the commercial establishments of the three suspects.

On Wednesday morning, the police arrested the suspects in various locations across the city. They also searched the commercial establishments and staff were taken for questioning.

The police believed that the

suspects had gathered payment card data and made the fraudulent transactions online through their businesses. The cards were connected to mobile devices and had been used to facilitate MOP4.4 million in unauthorized transactions.

The investigations also uncovered a cigarette smuggling operation, which was referred to the Macao Customs.

The PJ discovered a high volume of smuggled cigarettes in a shop and apartment during their investigations for the payment card abuse case. A local woman with a prior criminal history was arrested.

The woman, surnamed Chan, said she was the shopkeeper. Customs officers found 434,200 cigarettes in a shop and an apartment on Rua do Bocage in near San Ma Lu, which equate to MOP220,000 in base value and MOP651,300 in unpaid import duties. She confessed that she had been buying smuggled cigarettes to resell in her store since 2021.

She is subject to a maximum penalty of MOP100,000 in fines and the cigarettes have been confiscated. She also faces penalties under laws concerning smoking prevention and control, and the Health Bureau has been informed for appropriate follow up.

Three other people – Chan's relatives – were found living in the apartment but reported having no knowledge about the source of the cigarettes.

COURTS

NYPD fired officer accused of spying for China although charges were dropped

DAVE COLLINS

BAIMADAJIE Angwang thought he would be reinstated to his dream job as a New York City police officer after federal prosecutors dropped criminal charges alleging he spied for China. Instead, he is fighting the police commissioner's decision to fire him.

In a decision made public recently, Commissioner Edward Caban ordered the immediate firing of Angwang on Jan. 29, saying he disobeyed an order to submit to questioning by internal affairs investigators about the spying case.

Angwang, 37, said he declined to appear before the investigators last year on the advice of his lawyers, because the NYPD refused to give them department documents ahead of the questioning that would have allowed them to prepare. Now he is considering taking the commissioner to court over his firing.

"It's extremely disappointing," Angwang told The Associated Press in a phone interview yesterday [Macau time]. "I have to continue to fight, not just for me, for anyone who were wrongfully accused in the past who's getting the wrongful treatment I just got at this moment, or any potential discrimination victims in the future. ... I will not give up until I find the justice."

Police officials declined to comment and referred the AP to Caban's written decision to fire Angwang.

"The Department is a parami-

AP PHOTO



Baimadajie Angwang

litary organization, and failure to obey and comply with questioning under an official investigation undermines its ability to carry out its mission," Caban wrote.

Angwang, who was born in Tibet and granted asylum in the U.S. in his teens, was arrested by federal agents in September 2020, charged with feeding information about New York's Tibetan community to the Chinese consulate in New York. He denied the allegations but spent six months in detention before being freed on bail awaiting trial.

In a surprise move in January 2023, federal prosecutors in Brooklyn suddenly dropped the charges and did not fully explain

why, saying only that they uncovered new information and were acting "in the interest of justice." Prosecutors still haven't elaborated on their decision.

Angwang, who also served in the U.S. Marines and was deployed to Afghanistan, said he believes he got caught up in the Trump administration's effort to root out Chinese espionage across U.S. institutions, and alleges there were shades of racism targeting people with Chinese links.

In firing Angwang, Caban chose a harsher penalty than what was recommended in November by an NYPD disciplinary judge who held a hearing on the firing and listened to testimony and

arguments from both sides. The administrative judge, Vanessa Facio-Lince, found that Angwang violated department rules by disobeying the order to submit to internal affairs questioning.

Facio-Lince said, however, that he should not be terminated, after citing his good record as a police officer and praise by his superiors. Instead, she recommended an alternate manner of Angwang leaving the department that would allow him to negotiate some terms of his departure, including partial retirement benefits.

Angwang's lawyer, Michael Bloch, said even the judge's proposal was out of line with department disciplinary guidelines.

Bloch said the maximum penalty Angwang should have faced was a 20-day suspension. Bloch said there have been many other officers who committed more serious misconduct and were allowed to keep their jobs, despite administrative judges recommending their firing.

For Angwang, losing the job has been painful. He said his desire to be a police officer sprouted years ago when an NYPD officer was nice enough to give him directions when he got lost riding the subway. Before his 2020 arrest, he served at a precinct in Queens as a community liaison officer.

"Every time I could help a person, that makes me the happiest person in the world," he said. "And now, with the decision, I cannot continue to serve the community as a police officer."

He said it was ironic that the NYPD was firing an officer who immigrated to the U.S. and was supported by the immigrant community, when the department is struggling to make the force more diverse.

"I just want people to be aware as an immigrant I served in the Marines. I went to combat. I went to Afghanistan," he said. "I was able to become a police officer. I was able to become a community affairs officer. I was able to build a bridge between the underserved community and the NYPD, which never happened in the past. I gained a lot of support. ... And now, unfortunately, NYPD terminated that opportunity between the NYPD and the community." **MDT/AP**

OVERSEAS CHINESE

Angela Chao, Mitch McConnell's sister-in-law, was drunk when she drove into pond, police say

ANGELA Chao, a shipping industry CEO and sister-in-law to Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell, was intoxicated when she drove into a pond and died last month in Texas, according to a law enforcement report released yesterday [Macau time].

The investigation by the Blanco County Sheriff's Office concluded that Chao's death was an "unfortunate accident" and her blood alcohol level was nearly three times the state's legal limit.

Chao, 50, died the night of Feb. 10 after having dinner with a large group at a ranch near Johnson City, west of Austin. The report describes a frantic scene as friends and deputies tried to pull Chao from her Tesla after she backed it into the pond near a guest lodge on the property.

A friend, Amber Keinan, told detectives that Chao called her at 11:42 p.m. and said the car was in the water and she was trapped inside. The conversation lasted 8

minutes as the car slowly sank.

"Chao told Keinan the water was rising and she was going to die and said 'I love you,'" the report says. "Chao then said her good byes to Keinan."

Friends swam to the car while another paddled out with a kayak, according to the report. Someone else called 911 at 11:55 p.m. and remained on the phone for 11 minutes.

When law enforcement officials and firefighters

arrived, they went into the water and attempted to enter the Tesla, the report said. They broke the window on the driver's side, and a deputy felt around until he located Chao's hand.

Emergency crews pulled her out of the car and brought her to shore, where she was pronounced dead at 1:40 a.m. Feb. 11.

A toxicology test determined that Chao had a blood alcohol concentration level of 0.233 grams per 100 milliliters, above the le-

gal limit in Texas of .08, the report says.

Chao was the chair and CEO of her family's shipping business, the Foremost Group, and the president of her father's philanthropic organization, the Foremost Foundation. She lived in Austin, which is about 50 miles east of Blanco County.

Chao was the youngest of six sisters to immigrant parents who moved to the U.S. from China in the late 1950s. Her eldest sibling,

Elaine Chao, is married to McConnell and served as transportation secretary under President Donald Trump and labor secretary under President George W. Bush.

"Angela's name in Chinese sounds like the characters for peace and prosperity," her father, James S.C. Chao, said in a family statement shortly after her death. "Her absence leaves a void not only in our hearts, but in the Asian-American community."

Her father was named chairman of Foremost Group following her death. Michael Lee, a former president, became president.

Chao is survived by her husband, father and four sisters. **MDT/AP**

EXCLUSIVE

GRUELING CONDITIONS IN INDIAN SHRIMP INDUSTRY

MARTHA MENDOZA,
MAHESH KUMAR & PIYUSH
NAGPAL, SAN FRANCISCO

NORIKO Kuwabara was excited to try a new recipe she'd seen on social media for crispy shrimp spring rolls, so she and her husband headed to Costco's frozen foods aisle. But when she grabbed a bag of farm-raised shrimp from the freezer and saw "Product of India," she wrinkled her nose.

"I actually try to avoid shrimp from India," said Kuwabara, an artist. "I hear some bad things about how it's grown there."

She sighed and tossed the bag in her cart anyway.

Kuwabara's dilemma is one an increasing number of American consumers face: With shrimp the leading seafood eaten in the United States, the largest supplier in this country is India, where the industry struggles with labor and environmental problems.

The Associated Press traveled in February to the state of Andhra Pradesh in southeast India to document working conditions in the booming industry, after obtaining an advance copy of an investigation released yesterday [Macau time] by the Chicago-based Corporate Accountability Lab, a human rights legal group, that found workers face "dangerous and abusive conditions."

AP journalists obtained access to shrimp hatcheries, growing ponds, peeling sheds and warehouses, and interviewed workers, supervisors and union organizers.

India became America's leading shrimp supplier, accounting for about 40% of the shrimp consumed in the U.S., in part because media reports including an AP investigation exposed modern day slavery in the Thai seafood industry. AP's 2015 reporting led to the freedom of some 2,000 enslaved fishermen and prompted calls for bans of Thai shrimp, which had been dominating the market.

In India, residents told the AP newly dug hatcheries and ponds had contaminated neighboring communities' water and soil, making it nearly impossible to grow crops, especially rice they depend on for food.

From the ponds, trucks hauled the shrimp to peeling sheds. In one shed, dozens of women, some barefoot, stood on narrow wooden benches enduring 10-hour shifts peeling shrimp covered in crushed ice. Barehanded or wearing filthy, torn gloves, the women twisted off the heads, pulled off the legs and pried off the shells, making it possible for American cooks to simply tear open a bag and toss the shrimp in a skillet.

From India, the shrimp travels by the ton, frozen in shipping containers, to the U.S., more than 8,000

AP PHOTO



miles away. It is nearly impossible to tell where a specific shrimp ends up, and whether a U.S.-bound shipment has a connection to abusive labor practices. And Indian shrimp is regularly sold in major U.S. stores such as Walmart, Target and Sam's Club and supermarkets like Kroger and Safeway.

The major corporations that responded to AP's queries said they deplore human rights violations and environmental damage and would investigate.

"If we learn that serious issues may be present in a supplier facility, whether through allegations made or audits, we deploy Walmart investigators to gather facts through on-site visits to facilities or through other means," Walmart, the world's largest retailer, said in a statement. "As such, we are looking into the allegations raised by the Associated Press."

Pradeep Sivaraman, secretary of India's Marine Products Export Development Authority, a government agency, traveled to the U.S. this month to represent his country's shrimp industry on the bustling floor of the Seafood Expo North America in Boston. A chef at India's booth sauteed a sizzling shrimp curry in front of a case filled with frozen shrimp.

Before ending a brief interview, Sivaraman said India is committed to providing quality shrimp to U.S. buyers. He refused to answer questions about labor and environmental problems.

ERUGULA PLIGHT

Erugula Baby, 51, widowed and destitute, sold her gold jewelry — her only savings — and then took out loan after loan in her rural In-

dian village as her son lay dying of liver disease. Her debt topped \$8,500 and her son didn't survive. Today she's raising her granddaughters and trying to repay the loans, help her daughter-in-law get an education and, on a good day, eat a small amount of rice. She said she works in brutal conditions, peeling, cutting and grading shrimp in a factory for less than \$4 a day, which is \$2 less than minimum wage.

"The working conditions are tough," she said, wiping away tears with the corner of her red sari. "Standing for long hours in the cold while peeling and cutting shrimp takes a toll on my body."

Baby and other workers said they pay recruiters about 25 cents a day out of their salaries just to set foot inside the processing shed. Transportation in company buses is also deducted from some workers' salaries, along with the cost of lunch from company canteens. Many workers have no contracts, and no recourse if they are hurt on the job.

Another peeler, Penupothula Ratnam, said she suffers back pain all the time from the arduous work, for which she's paid about \$3 a day.

"It's not enough for our living," she said, breaking into tears. Rarely does she get a day off, she said.

Many people in India struggle to survive amid endemic poverty, debt and unemployment. The women AP spoke with said this work, despite the oppressive conditions, is their only chance to avoid starvation. The economic drivers go beyond shrimp, and beyond India, to issues of globalization and Western power.

Desperately poor women told AP they weren't paid overtime as mandated by law, in addition to not being paid India's minimum wage.

Some said they were locked inside guarded hostels when they weren't peeling shrimp. The work was unsanitary to the point that workers' hands were infected, and they lacked safety and hygiene protection required under Indian law. And it doesn't meet U.S. legal food safety standards required for all seafood imports.

Dr. Sushmitha Meda, a dermatologist at a nearby government hospital in the city of Kakinada, said she treats four to five shrimp peelers every day. Some have nail fungus, caused by small cracks that allow germs to cause infections. Other women have fingers or even their entire hands darkening with frostbite. Meda said that sometimes she has to amputate.

It's a preventable problem, she said. Cotton gloves covered with latex gloves can protect peelers' hands, but few can afford a \$3 box of gloves.

The Corporate Accountability Lab said American importers may never encounter desperate and abused shrimp peelers, because large Indian exporters invite auditors into their own state-of-the-art facilities and use them as a "showcase to foreign buyers."

In contrast, "auditors are unlikely to audit peeling sheds," the report said.

And while the larger corporate processing facilities appear to meet hygiene and labor standards, CAL said, there are hidden abuses at the onsite hostels where shrimp peelers are housed. CAL found workers living in "overcrowded and often unsanitary conditions under the careful surveillance of company guards," only allowed off the premises once a month.

"No one can enter, no one can leave without permission," labor organizer Chekkala Rajkumar, district secretary for the Centre of Indian Trade Unions, told AP about the large facilities in his region. He compared them to British colonial penal colonies. "Anyone talking about the working conditions is kicked out. It's not a worker friendly atmosphere." He said pregnant women sometimes miscarry because of the arduous work.

POOR SANITATION
IN LABOR-INTENSIVE PEELING

At one tin-roofed processing shed, AP journalists observed dozens of women working in unsanitary and dangerous conditions. The shrimp, pulled from outdoor ponds in barrels, were swished around by hand in grimy water. Once rinsed, they were dumped onto ice-covered tables, where women stood, peeling them one shrimp at a time. Many handled shrimp with bare hands. Some women had bandages on injured fingers. Some women's long hair dangled into the shrimp.

The shrimp at this facility were later loaded in large plastic crates into a truck with the brand "NEKKANTI" painted in large letters. Managers at the small shed said Nekkanti Sea Foods and other major brands often outsource the labor-intensive peeling and de-veining work to keep down costs.

Nekkanti, however, says all its shrimp is processed in a handful of massive company-owned processing facilities approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration. A marketing video produced by Nekkanti, which is projecting \$150 million in revenues this year, shows shrimp peelers in a spotless room, with shiny tables, and workers wearing gloves, head coverings, face masks, rubber boots and waterproof aprons.

John Ducar, an advisor to the board of Nekkanti Sea Foods, said the company had nothing to do with the peeling shed that AP visited and said their branded truck was there only because it was being leased to another company. He provided a document that said Nekkanti was paid \$3,600 for the four-month lease of a truck with the license number the AP observed.

"It appears that you observed the operations of an entirely separate company," he said.

The company named in the document did not respond to a request for comment.

Though Nekkanti had no connection to the shed or the shipment observed by the AP, Ducar said, the company will work to improve conditions at neighboring shrimp sheds and is reconsidering leasing its trucks.

U.S. trade records show Nekkanti shipped more than 726 U.S. tons

THAT REPORT CALLS 'DANGEROUS AND ABUSIVE'

of farmed shrimp from India to the U.S. in the past year, according to ImportGenius trade data. Records show shipments went to major American seafood distributors including AJC International Inc., Eastern Fish, CenSea, Jetro Cash & Carry Enterprises, King & Prince Seafood, Red Chamber Co. and Rich Products Corp. Those companies, in turn, sell Indian shrimp under popular brand names including Costar, Good & Gather, Great Value and Mrs. Friday's at supermarkets, box stores and restaurants across the U.S.

Importers that responded to requests for comment about possible labor abuses said they would investigate, with some suspending business in the meantime.

"We at Rich Products treat these allegations with the utmost seriousness," said the owners of frozen SeaPak brand shrimp. "We are always fully prepared to investigate any allegations and take decisive corrective measures in response to any substantiated claims."

DAMAGING THE ENVIRONMENT

Alongside a busy highway last month, men pulled nets of shrimp from shrimp ponds that had been dug into fields and mangroves, destroying critical ecosystems. Local villagers said the growing industry hasn't just brought abusive working conditions, it's also damaging their environment.

The massive, murky ponds and their toxic algae, chemicals and sewage have made it impossible to grow crops and poisoned their water, they said. Investigators from CAL say antibiotic use is widespread to control disease outbreaks. Antibiotic use in shrimp farming and other agriculture can lead to rising drug-resistant infections, a growing problem in the U.S.

"Essentially, we feel lost," said Areti Vasu, a farmer who said he was badly beaten and jailed during failed protests that sought to stop the development of a 57-acre shrimp processing and cold storage plant adjacent to his rice fields. "Our lives, our land, our farming pride, fresh air, and clean water – everything is lost. We are destined to live here in disgrace."

Jonnalagaruvu village vice president Koyya Sampath Rao initially helped build the massive facility, ignoring warnings from environmentalists.

"Sadly their predictions came true," he said. "Our water streams are now polluted, farmland is turning barren, yields are shrinking, and the night air is thick with pollutants."

Official complaints about a lack of environmental impact studies and coastal regulation violations have usually been dismissed by Indian authorities.

Among the trucks being loaded

with the shrimp at a pond in the village was one with a large sign: "Wellcome KingWhite." In the past year Wellcome shipped 3,800 tons of shrimp to the U.S., according to ImportGenius trade data. The records show these include distributors Great American Seafood Co., Pacific Coral Seafood and Ore-Cal. The Great American Seafood Co. says on its website that it sells to dozens of food suppliers and supermarket chains, from Sysco and US Foods to Whole Foods and Win-Co Foods.

Sysco, the nation's largest food distributor, has imported in the past from both Nekkanti and Wellcome. A spokesperson said they stopped doing business with Wellcome in 2022 after the Indian firm "refused to allow us to conduct a required social responsibility audit in their facility." Wellcome did not respond to requests for comment.

The Sysco spokesperson said the company suspended receipt of any products from Nekkanti after AP's query this month, and would immediately begin an investigation.

Sysco "will continue to hold all its suppliers to the highest standards of labor and human rights," the company said in a statement.

UNFAIR TRADE PRACTICES

Most American consumers say they would rather buy U.S.-produced food. But with only 5% of shrimp sold in the U.S. caught there, shrimp from the U.S. can be harder to locate and considerably more costly.

In the 1970s, the U.S. led the world in shrimp production. Shrimp was considered a delicacy. Diners were served expensive shrimp cocktails with less than a dozen shellfish harvested off the East, West and Gulf coasts.

Over the next two decades, the use of inexpensive shrimp-farming technologies soared in Asia, and imports flooded the market. To

day in the U.S., where more than 5 pounds of shrimp per person is eaten per year, consumers expect all-you-can-eat shrimp buffets and \$10 frozen bags at their markets.

There are a number of systems failing to prevent shrimp that is produced by forced labor or causes environmental damage from arriving on Americans' dinner tables.

For one, there is plenty of shrimp in the Gulf of Mexico, but U.S. fishing communities have stricter, and more costly, labor and environmental standards than their Asian counterparts. Last year officials in the region sought financial relief, asking for state and federal declarations of a fishery disaster because they cannot compete with cheap imports that make up 95% of the market.

The request is pending. If approved, boat owners typically receive checks for a few thousand dollars, well below their losses.

"The many small, family-owned commercial shrimping businesses in Louisiana are facing an unprecedented risk of collapse due to the devastating impacts that large volumes of imported shrimp are having on domestic shrimp dockside prices," said then-Gov. John Bel Edwards last fall.

U.S. Customs and Border protection is responsible for blocking imports of products produced with forced labor, and in recent years has prohibited imports of some cotton from China, gold from Democratic Republic of Congo, and sugar from the Dominican Republic. No products have been prohibited from India.

Eric Choy, executive director of CBP's office of trade, said CBP does investigate allegations of abuse.

"You'd hope that there was a magic button that you can push and then everything created by forced labor is prohibited from entering, but it's a much harder task," he said. "It does require us

to follow the trail."

Last year, the FDA refused entry of 51 shrimp shipments citing antibiotics; 37 of those were shrimp exported from India.

The departments of Labor and Commerce haven't taken significant action, despite U.S. shrimpers' complaints of unfair trade.

"For too long India has engaged in unfair trade practices causing economic damage to our domestic shrimp industry," said Trey Pearson, president of the American Shrimp Processors Association.

U.S. firms rely on industry organizations and auditors to make sure their shrimp imports are raised and processed in a safe, legal and environmentally responsible way.

The National Fisheries Institute, America's largest seafood trade association, works with seafood importers to improve working and environmental conditions in shrimp farming.

"Any labor abuses in the value chain are abhorrent and they need to be addressed immediately," said NFI chief strategy officer Gavin Gibbons.

The Global Seafood Alliance's Best Aquaculture Practice stamp of approval is on almost all Indian imports, certifying the supply chain meets their high standards.

"We take these matters very seriously," the organization said in an emailed statement.

CAL said the Best Aquaculture Practice certifications are often performative.

"Despite strong standards on paper, implementation is often weak," said the report.

SHRIMP WILL GROW IN A LAB, SAYS FISHERMAN

Fisherman and author Paul Greenberg said he sees a future where the shrimp Americans eat is neither wild caught nor farmed: it will grow in a lab. He said the science is underway to develop those

products, and because shrimp isn't flaky like fish, it should be an easier seafood to produce with living cells.

In the meantime, he's been trying out vegan shrimp, "the shrimp that never died." The texture is good, he said, and the sweetness impressive.

Human rights advocates say cost-cutting from U.S. supermarkets, restaurants and wholesalers squeeze producers to provide cheaper shrimp without addressing labor and environmental conditions.

CAL says Indian companies need to pay living wages and abide by labor, health, safety and environmental laws. In addition, the organization says U.S. companies need to ensure that the price they pay for shrimp is enough for Indian exporters to treat workers equitably. And, they say, both the Indian and U.S. governments need to enforce existing laws.

"The presence of widespread labor abuses and environmental destruction in the Indian shrimp sector is undeniable," said Allie Brudney, a CAL senior staff attorney. "U.S. restaurants and grocery stores need to purge these unethical practices from their supply chains."

Ecologist Marla Valentine, who heads non-profit Oceana's illegal fishing and transparency campaign, said consumers can help.

"You can use your dollar to make a difference," she said. "When this isn't a lucrative business anymore, it will stop."

It has worked in the past, she said.

"Thailand has been called out for labor abuses many times, particularly regarding shrimp, and we are seeing the seafood industry and the Thai government really try to make some of those changes," she said. "They are answering the market power, so it shows that change can happen." **MDT/AP**



A worker peels shrimp in a tin-roofed processing shed in the hamlet of Tallarevu, in Kakinada district, in the Indian state of Andhra Pradesh, last February



Erugala Baby, 51, widowed and destitute, wipes tears from her eyes during an interview at her residence in Bhogapuram, Kakinada district, Andhra Pradesh

AP PHOTO



EDS NOTE: GRAPHIC CONTENT - Police and a forensic attend to the body of a person lying in the street in the Delmas area of Port-au-Prince

HAITI

Gangs target peaceful communities in new attacks on the capital

PIERRE-RICHARD LUXAMA,
PORT-AU-PRINCE

ARMED gangs launched new attacks in the suburbs of Port-au-Prince yesterday [Macau time], with heavy gunfire echoing across once-peaceful communities near the Haitian capital.

Associated Press journalists reported seeing at least five bodies in and around the suburbs, and gangs blocked the entrances to some areas.

People in the communities under fire called radio stations pleading for help from Haiti's national police force, which remains understaffed and outmatched by the gangs. Among the communities targeted in the pre-dawn hours were Pétion-Ville, Meyotte, Diègue and Métivier.

"When I woke up to go to work, I found I could not leave because the neighborhood was in the hand of the bandits," said Samuel Orelus. "They were about 30 men with heavy weapons. If the neighborhood had mobilized, we could have destroyed them, but they were heavily armed, and there was nothing we could do."

By the afternoon, another victim had been reported: a police officer killed in broad daylight in a Port-au-Prince neighborhood known as Delmas 72, according to the SYNAPOLHA police union.

As the attacks continued, the U.S. State Department announced yesterday that it had completed its first evacuation of American citizens from Port-au-Prince. More than 15 Americans were airlifted to neighboring Santo Domingo, the capital of the Dominican Republic.

More than 30 U.S. citizens will be able to leave Port-au-Prince daily aboard the U.S. government-organized helicopter flights, the agency said.

"We will continue to monitor demand from U.S. citizens for assistance in departing Haiti on a real-time basis," the department said.

On Sunday, the agency evacuated more than 30 U.S. citizens from the coastal city of Cap-Haitien in northern Haiti to Miami International Airport.

"We hope that conditions will allow a return of commercial means for people to travel from Haiti soon. We and the international community and the Haitian au-

thorities are working for that to become a reality," the State Department said.

Also on the same day, a plane chartered by the Florida Department of Emergency Management evacuated 14 Florida residents, including children, out of Haiti, said Kevin Guthrie, executive director of the state agency, at an airport in Sanford, Florida where the passengers were expected to land.

More than 300 Floridians are in Haiti, and the Florida-sponsored operation was working on getting them out on future flights despite bureaucratic obstacles from the U.S. government and safety threats in Haiti, Guthrie said at a news conference, where he was accompanied by Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis.

"We understand there are people really in danger right now who are fellow Floridians," DeSantis said.

The attacks in parts of Port-au-Prince came two days after gangs went on a rampage through the upscale neighborhoods of Laboule and Thomassin in Pétion-Ville, with at least a dozen people killed.

The violence forced the closure of banks, schools and businesses across Pétion-

-Ville, which until now had been largely spared from the attacks that gangs launched on Feb. 29.

Gunmen have set fire to police stations, forced the closure of Haiti's main international airport and stormed the country's two biggest prisons, releasing more than 4,000 inmates.

Scores of people have been killed and some 17,000 others have been left homeless amid the violence.

Meanwhile, Haitians await the possibility of new leadership as Caribbean officials rush to help form a transitional presidential council that will be responsible for appointing an interim prime minister and a council of ministers.

A top official with regional trade bloc Caricom who was not authorized to speak to the media told The Associated Press yesterday that the Pitit Desalin party of Jean-Charles Moïse accepted to be a voting member of the council after initially rejecting a seat. The party was the last remaining holdout, meaning that the nine-member council is now fully formed, although its members have not been disclosed publicly.

Moïse recently formed an alliance with Guy Philippe, a former rebel leader who helped overthrow former President Jean-Bertrand Aristide and who was repatriated to Haiti in November after serving time in a U.S. prison after he pleaded guilty to money laundering.

Prime Minister Ariel Henry, who was locked out of Haiti when the airports closed, has said he will resign once the council is formed. **MDT/AP**

this day in history

1956 KING CONVICTED FOR BUS BOYCOTT



Civil rights leader, the Reverend Martin Luther King, has been convicted of organising an illegal boycott by black passengers of buses in the US state of Alabama.

Mr King, 27, was fined \$500 (£178) and ordered to pay an equal amount in costs.

However, his lawyers immediately gave notice of their intention to appeal and the fine was converted into a prison sentence of 386 days, suspended until the appeal hearing.

The 17-week-old boycott in the town of Montgomery was sparked by the arrest of a black woman, Rosa Parks, who refused to give up her seat for a white passenger on 1 December last year.

The town's segregation laws stipulate separate areas on buses for blacks and whites and require blacks to give up their seats for whites if necessary.

Black travellers have long complained of being called racist names by bus drivers and being forced to stand even if seats were vacant in the whites-only section.

Mrs Parks, 42, was not the first to be arrested for refusing to give up her seat but she was a well-known and respected figure in Montgomery's black community.

Four days after her arrest an almost universal boycott of the town's buses by black passengers began which has seriously diminished the companies' revenues.

Mr King was found guilty under an archaic law dating from 1921 designed to break trade union action.

The law carries a maximum penalty of \$1,000 and six months in prison.

But Judge Eugene Carter said he had been lenient with Mr King because he had advocated non-violence.

Courtesy BBC News

IN CONTEXT

The bus boycott lasted a total of 382 days. It ended in December 1956 after bus companies throughout Alabama were forced to comply with a US Supreme Court ruling that segregation on public transport was illegal. Martin Luther King organised non-violent campaigns for equal rights throughout the 1950s and 1960s and was jailed many times. In August 1963 he made his famous "I have a dream" speech at a march in Washington which attracted more than 250,000 demonstrators.

The following year he was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize.

He survived several attempts on his life but was assassinated in April 1968.

MACAU'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

YOUR STARS

ARIES
Mar. 21-Apr. 19
Relax and consider the possibilities. An obstacle could block romantic plans. A flexible attitude opens potential options. Get creative. Prioritize fun and family.

TAURUS
Apr. 20-May. 20
Do the research before plunking down good money on something for your home. Check reviews and comparisons. Consider materials and the long-term impact.

GEMINI
May. 21-Jun. 21
Develop creative ideas and projects. Restraint serves you well, especially around short tempers. Keep your objective in mind. Don't push. Let things flower naturally.

CANCER
Jun. 22-Jul. 22
Focus on bringing home the bacon. Avoid risky business. Stick to reliable routines to maintain positive cash flow. Develop a project with lucrative potential.

LEO
Jul. 23-Aug. 22
Go ahead and flex. Advance a personal matter thoughtfully. Take another's sensitivities into account. Consider consequences before making your move.

VIRGO
Aug. 23-Sep. 22
Fantasize and speculate. Imagine your perfect utopia. What would it take? Small steps add up with time and repetition. Convert chosen ideas into plans.

LIBRA
Sep. 23-Oct. 22
Discuss hypotheticals, visions and possibilities with your team. Listen and learn. Together, you can see farther. Share news, ideas and resources. Support each other.

SCORPIO
Oct. 23-Nov. 21
Professional fantasies and illusions dissipate. Revise with practical details. Do the homework and profit. A change may be better than imagined. Adapt and shift.

SAGITTARIUS
Nov. 22-Dec. 21
Get drawn into a fascinating inquiry. Unexpected deviations could reveal hidden treasure. Solve a puzzle. Tackle a challenge. Investigate potential for practical solutions.

CAPRICORN
Dec. 22-Jan. 19
Collaborate to manage shared financial obligations. Don't force an issue. Allow things to develop naturally. Contribute for growth. Coordinate and share.

AQUARIUS
Jan. 20-Feb. 18
Abandon a preconception. Things may not be as imagined. Discover something new about someone familiar. Romance sparks in conversation.

PISCES
Feb. 19-Mar. 20
The rules could seem to change mid-game. Slow to avoid accidents or breakage. Nurture your health and work despite a challenge. Prioritize healthy practices.

The Born Loser by Chip Sansom



SUDOKU

EASY					EASY+							
8	2		5	7	9		4	1				
	9	6	5	1		1	6	7		5		
	5	8	4			4			6	1	2	
2	9	7		3			3			5	7	
4		3	1		6	7	9			2	3	
	6		8	2	7	2	3		7			
		6	1	4		7	8	2			4	
	5	7	4	3			4			8	9	5
1	4	5			8	2			6	4		

MEDIUM					HARD					
5	6		3				5			4
				5	9					
	9		7		6					
		7			1					
	1	4			2	8				
2			8							
3		2			5					
	6	8								
			8	1	4					

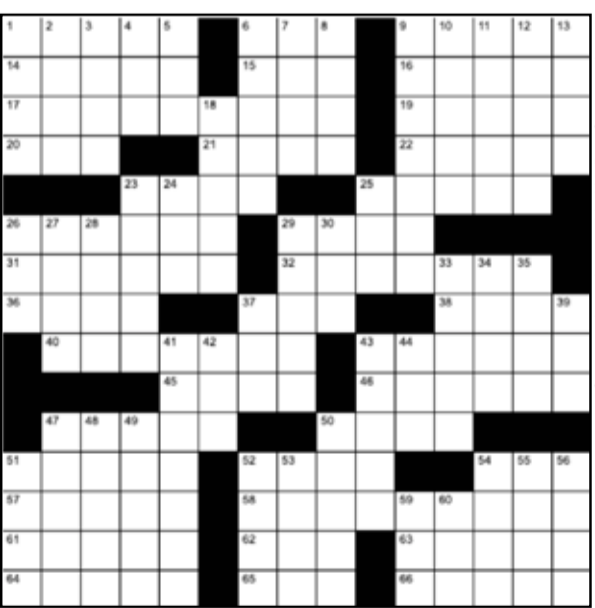
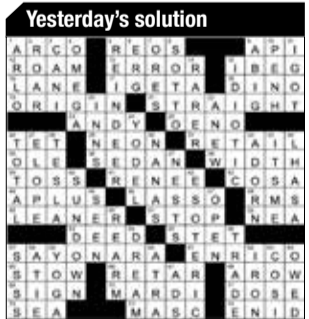
WEATHER

	MIN	MAX	CONDITION
CHINA			
Beijing	4	22	fine
Changchun	-2	5	rain
Chengdu	13	24	overcast
Chongqing	15	26	cloudy
Fuzhou	12	25	overcast
Guangzhou	17	26	cloudy
Guiyang	10	24	cloudy
Haikou	20	29	cloudy
Hangzhou	11	25	cloudy
Harbin	-4	9	cloudy
Hefei	10	25	cloudy
Nanjing	11	26	cloudy
Shanghai	10	21	fine
Taipei	14	23	overcast
Wuhan	10	26	cloudy
Hong Kong	22	23	cloudy
WORLD			
Moscow	2	4	cloudy
Frankfurt	8	18	cloudy
Paris	7	18	overcast
London	4	11	cloudy
New York	5	6	overcast

CROSSWORDS

ACROSS 1- ___ Grows in Brooklyn; 6- Pro ___ (for now); 9- Data; 14- Stretch the neck; 15- Mr. Onassis, to friends; 16- Ancient Greek colony; 17- Bicycle steering mechanism; 19- Short letters; 20- Prefix with center; 21- Misplace; 22- Irish county; 23- Do ___ others...; 25- Affirmatives; 26- Sound system; 29- Slightly open; 31- Distorted; 32- Green citrus beverage; 36- Rind; 37- Pole worker; 38- Nike's swoosh, e.g.; 40- Error; 43- Portland's place; 45- ___-deucey; 46- Sweet dessert; 47- Beetle Bailey's boss; 50- Convene; 51- ___ once; 52- Shake ___ (hurry); 54- Fortune 500 listings; Abbr.; 57- Sierra ___; 58- Brief article; 61- Conductor Zubin; 62- Samuel's teacher; 63- Without ___ in the world; 64- Sudden convulsion; 65- Speck; 66- Singer Tucker;

DOWN 1- Feel sore; 2- Ensnare; 3- Hindu princess; 4- Call off; 5- Conger; 6- Verboten; 7- Periods; 8- Bog down; 9- Genuine; 10- Implements; 11- Architectural piers; 12- Layers; 13- Freelancer's encl.; 18- Singer John; 23- Russian range; 24- ___ and improved; 25- Thanksgiving tuber; 26- Indy 500 sponsor; 27- Not us; 28- ___ saw Elba; 29- Narrow street; 30- Peanut butter brand; 33- Aboriginal Alaskan; 34- Canines; 35- Swelled heads; 37- Squeeze (out); 39- United; 41- Two wrestlers on the same side; 42- Pass with flying colors; 43- Last letter of the Greek alphabet; 44- Caviar; 47- Bed down; 48- Hi hi; 49- Tirades; 50- Reason for a raise; 51- Donations to the poor; 52- Mimicked; 53- "Le Roi d'Ys" composer; 54- James of "The Godfather"; 55- Grand Ole ___; 56- Queens stadium; 59- Gangster's rod; 60- Color TV pioneer;



USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

- Emergency calls 999
- Fire department 28 572 222
- PJ (Open line) 993
- PJ (Picket) 28 557 775
- PSP 28 573 333
- Customs 28 559 944
- S. J. Hospital 28 313 731
- Kiang Wu Hospital 28 371 333
- Commission Against Corruption (CCAC) 28326 300
- IAM 28 387 333
- Tourism 28 333 000
- Airport 59 888 88
- Taxi 28 939 939 / 2828 3283
- Water Supply - Report 2822 0088
- Telephone - Report 1000
- Electricity - Report 28 339 922
- Macau Daily Times 28 716 081



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DRIVE IN

A REMAKE OF 'ROAD HOUSE' WITH GYLLENHAAL TURNS INTO A MUSCULAR, FLORIDA ROMP

MARK KENNEDY, MDT/AP
ENTERTAINMENT WRITER

ELWOOD P. Dalton is a classy sort of bouncer. While five tough guys circle him outside a bar looking to bash his skull in, he has a question for them: "Before we start, do you have insurance?" And after savagely beating each up, he kindly drives them to the hospital.

Dalton — played by a muscular and languid Jake Gyllenhaal — is a former UFC fighter with a dark past in "Road House," a reworking of the pulpy 1989 action film starring Patrick Swayze.

"You sure you thought this all the way through?" Dalton at one point asks an assailant who has the nerve to plunge a knife into his abdomen. The same question can be asked of the filmmakers: Is it really wise to retread this old flick? The answer is as shocking as a sucker punch: Yes, indeed.

Gyllenhaal is a sort of Spider-Man-meets-Jack Reacher-meets Jason Bourne, an oddball loner with ferocious fighting abilities who makes a living in illegal fights and lives in his car, haunted



Conor McGregor (left) and Jake Gyllenhaal in a scene from "Road House" (Prime Video)

by what he did to a friend in the octagon. He douses booze on his open wounds and uses electrical tape instead of a bandage, yet he also oddly uses wheelee luggage. (You expected a big old black duffel, right?) What's in the baggage? A death wish, of course.

He is lured to the Florida Keys by a roadhouse bar owner (the always brilliantly tart Jessica Williams), who needs an excellent

bouncer to protect her from nightly violence. He's offered \$5,000 a week to stop thugs in sleeveless jean jackets from throwing bottles, flipping tables and breaking pool cues. (The Florida tourist board will love this movie).

"I'm hoping you're different," a bar employee says and he is. Dalton settles in the fictional Glass Key, dates a cutie, makes friends with the good folk and lives in

what all damaged loners gravitate to, a houseboat. He soon teaches the other bouncers the tricks of the trade, Zen-like, and finds excellent reasons to take off his shirt.

"I'm just some guy," he says. "You don't want to know me."

Like a night of heavy drinking, things gets a little bizarre toward the end of the movie as it starts straying far from the roadhouse.

Speed boats go flying, explosions go bang and someone uses arson to send a message. A deadly crocodile that plays an outsized role is sadly abandoned.

"The Bourne Identity" director Doug Liman seems to be having fun, his camera lingering on the chiseled beefsteak and mixing in honky tonk songs by the deliciously named Rockin' Dopsie Jr. & The Zydeco Twisters. The action scenes are dynamite, layering POV camera work with great, thundering, bottle smashing stunts. It knows it's silly, but it's still a good time.

That's reason enough that Liman is upset the movie is avoiding cineplexes and going straight to streaming. But he could rectify that. He could hire, like, an unstable, but gracious, former fighter who lives in his car. For a few thousand, that guy can make things right.

"Road House," an Amazon MGM Studios release streaming on Prime Video from March 21, is rated R for "nudity, violence, alcohol use and foul language." Running time: 114 minutes. ★★★★★

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IN MACAU (2023)



MACAU'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

BOOK IT

'Newshawks in Berlin' illustrates tough choices news organizations face in wartime

JOURNALISM is often referred to as the first draft of history, especially when covering war and international conflicts.

"Newshawks in Berlin: The Associated Press and Nazi Germany" explores the challenges the world's largest news organization faced in trying to balance journalistic ethics with ability to cover World War II within the confines of a dictatorship. The book is a fair but blunt assessment of AP's work during that time.

The book is written by two veteran AP journalists — Randy Herschaft and the late Larry Heinzerling — along with Columbia Journalism School professor emerita Ann Cooper.

It follows up on a 2017 in-depth review Herschaft and Heinzerling authored for the AP looking at the news organization's operations in Nazi Germany. That review was prompted by an academic paper a year earlier that asserted the AP ceded influence to Nazi propagandists over the production of its German photo service.

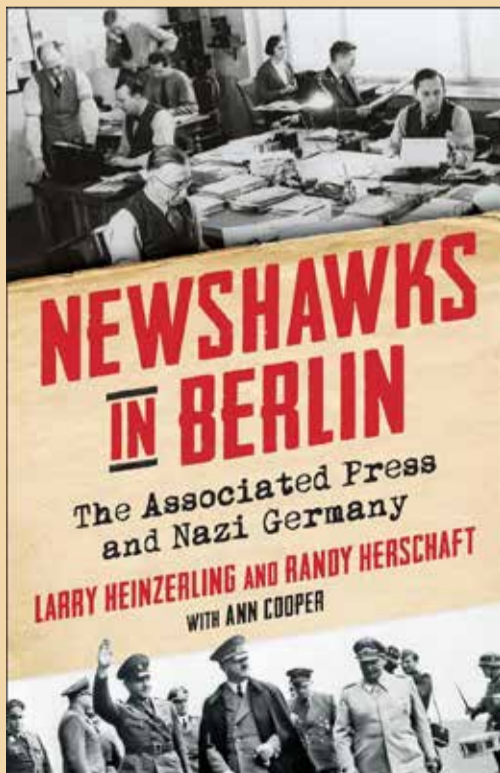
"Newshawks," however,

goes beyond looking at the photos operations that were the focus of the 2017 review. It richly mines AP's vast archives and other sources to provide a fascinating inside account of a journalistic era that's completely different from now but poses many of the same questions.

It examines the role of the organization's top journalists who steered its coverage and stoked controversy along the way, including Berlin bureau chief Louis Lochner and AP general manager Kent Cooper.

The challenges AP and other news organizations face battling misinformation seem all too familiar. A discarded "rumor deflator" briefly launched by AP to address outlandish stories during the war was a precursor to the fact checks and accountability pieces that are commonplaces throughout today's journalism.

The book richly illustrates journalistic conflicts that resonate today, as reporters risk their lives to cover the Russia-Ukraine and Israel-Hamas wars. **ANDREW DEMILLO, MDT/AP**



"Newshawks in Berlin: The Associated Press and Nazi Germany" by Larry Heinzerling and Randy Herschaft (Columbia University Press)



TASTE OF EDESIA

Inspired by nature

IRENE SAM, MDT

THE Macallan, legendary maker of Highland single malt Scotch whiskies, hosted an invitation-only media launch event for The Harmony Collection III: Amber Meadow at Galaxy Macau's Andaz Kitchen Studio with Portuguese influenced cuisine.

Inspired by The Macallan's deep-rooted connection to nature for nearly two centuries, The Macallan Harmony Collection is a series of limited annual releases that explores the distiller's future packaging journey. Each edition unveils distinctive packaging that fuses innovative techniques with materials from the natural world at the end of their life to see them reborn with a renewed purpose.

The third edition of the series, The Harmony Collection Amber Meadow, has been created in collaboration with Stella and Mary McCartney to celebrate the lush, fertile lands of Scotland, connecting all those who have stood upon them for generations. The McCartney sisters' love of their native

land stems from their memories of summer days in amber fields at the family farm in the Scottish countryside. They describe nature as both energizing and serene, contrasting qualities rekindled by this collaboration and inspiring joyful recollections of family, sisterhood, and community.

To mark this deep connection with the land, discarded meadow cuttings have been given new life in Amber Meadow whisky's presentation box and bottle labels. The box also features photography of The Macallan Estate by Mary McCartney.

Taking inspiration from natural Scottish grasslands, The Macallan Whisky Mastery Team has created Amber Meadow, using a combination of sherry-seasoned oak and bourbon casks. "There is so much to discover with The Macallan Harmony Collection Amber Meadow," says Whisky Maker Steven Bremner. "It is a single malt redolent of warm meadows and mature barley fields, with a rich, citrus-scented finish.

"The 100 percent natural summer evening colour derived from our exceptional sherry-seasoned

oak and bourbon casks reflects the richness of the flavour that awaits. On the nose, fresh citrus fruits and honeysuckle are complemented by hints of vanilla, coconut, and ripe barley fields. On tasting, notes of oak, lemon, and melon are prominent, accompanied by flavours of classic scone and almond with green tea, before giving way to a rich and sweet long finish."

Augmenting the release of The Harmony Collection III is TOGETHER: A Collection for The Macallan by Stella and Mary McCartney. Inspired by nature and skillfully realized by master artisans and craftspeople, the collection of eleven lifestyle pieces brings the senses alive and introduces the spirit of The Macallan harmoniously into the home.

TOGETHER, which is exclusively sold as a complete set and is available in limited numbers, showcases a curated selection of bespoke pieces. They include handmade glassware coloured in vibrant shades using natural minerals, an ombre ceramic flask encased in an apple leather alternative sleeve, a pair of brass ice stamps with ceramic handles meticulously hand-painted using a green and amber ombre colour blend, and a brass napkin weight in the shape of an acorn as a tribute to the exceptional oak casks that mature The Macallan whisky.

OPINION

The Conversation

Soeren Mattke & Ying Liu, Scholars

**NEW STUDIES SUGGEST
 MILLIONS WITH MILD
 COGNITIVE IMPAIRMENT
 GO UNDIAGNOSED**

Mild cognitive impairment – an early stage of dementia – is widely underdiagnosed in people 65 and older. That is the key takeaway of two recent studies from our team.

In the first study, we used Medicare data for about 40 million beneficiaries age 65 and older from 2015 to 2019 to estimate the prevalence of mild cognitive impairment in that population and to identify what proportion of them had actually been diagnosed.

Our finding was sobering: A mere 8% of the number of cases with mild cognitive impairment that we expected based on a statistical model had actually been diagnosed. Scaled up to the general population 65 and older, this means that approximately 7.4 million cases across the country remain undiagnosed.

In the second study, we analyzed data for 226,756 primary care clinicians and found that over 99% of them underdiagnosed mild cognitive impairment in this population.

Mild cognitive impairment is an early symptom of Alzheimer's disease in about half of cases and progresses to dementia at a rate of 10% to 15% per year. It includes symptoms such as losing the ability to remember recent events and appointments, make sound decisions and master complex tasks. Failure to detect it might deprive patients of an opportunity to get treated and to slow down disease progression.

Mild cognitive impairment can sometimes be caused by easily addressable factors, such as medication side effects, thyroid dysfunction or vitamin B12 deficiency. Since mild cognitive impairment has the same risk factors as cardiovascular disease, such as high blood pressure and cholesterol, medication management of these risks combined with diet and exercise can reduce the risk of progression.

In 2023, the Food and Drug Administration approved the drug lecanemab as the first disease-modifying treatment for Alzheimer's disease, the most common cause of mild cognitive impairment.

Lecanemab, a monoclonal antibody, reduces amyloid plaques in the brain, which are toxic protein clumps that are believed to contribute to the progression of the disease. In a large clinical trial, lecanemab was able to reduce the progression of early-stage Alzheimer's disease. A similar drug, donanemab, also succeeded in a clinical trial and is expected to be approved sometime in 2024.

However, these drugs must be used in the early stages of Alzheimer's disease, ideally when a patient has only mild cognitive impairment, as there is no evidence that they are effective in advanced stages.

Many factors contribute to the lack of timely detection. But researchers don't have a good understanding of the relative importance of those individual factors or how to reduce the high rate of underdiagnosis.

While distinct, symptoms are subtle and their slow progression means that they can be overlooked or misinterpreted as normal aging. A neurologist in China told our research team that diagnosis rates spike in China after the New Year's holiday, when children who haven't seen their parents for a year notice changes that are harder to pick up when interacting with someone daily.

Doctors also commonly discount memory concerns as normal aging and doubt that much can be done about it. While cognitive tests to distinguish mild cognitive impairment from pathologic decline do exist, they take about 15 minutes, which can be hard to come by during the limited time of a doctor's visit and may require a follow-up appointment.

People, particularly those in their 60s and beyond, as well as their families and friends need to be vigilant about cognitive decline, bring it up during doctor's appointments and insist on a formal assessment.

[Abridged]

The General Assembly is set to vote today [Macau time] on what would be the first United Nations resolution on artificial intelligence, aimed at ensuring the powerful new technology benefits all nations, respects human rights and is "safe, secure and trustworthy."

The United States, which sponsored the resolution, has said it hopes the world body will adopt it by consensus, meaning it would have the support of all 193 U.N. member nations.

U.S. National Security Advisor Jake Sullivan said that if the resolution is adopted it will be a "historic step forward" in fostering

the safe use of AI.

The resolution "would represent global support for a baseline set of principles for the development and use of AI and would lay out a path to leverage AI systems for good while managing the risks," he said in a statement to The Associated Press earlier in March.

The draft resolution aims to close the digital divide between rich developed countries and poorer developing countries and make sure they are all at the table in discussions on AI.

It also aims to make sure that developing countries have the technology and capabilities to take advantage of AI's benefits.



Britain's Prince Harry

**PRINCE HARRY'S
 LAWYER IMPLICATES
 MURDOCH IN
 COVER-UP OF SNOOPING
 BY HIS TABLOIDS**

BRIAN MELLEY, LONDON

PRINCE Harry's lawyer leveled explosive new allegations yesterday [Macau time] that Rupert Murdoch was aware of cover-ups at his British tabloids that used unlawful techniques to spy on the Duke of Sussex and others.

Attorney David Sherborne said Murdoch was among the executives who were aware that public statements made about phone hacking and other unlawful information gathering at News Group Newspapers were untrue.

Harry and other claimants, including actor Hugh Grant, sought during the first of a three-day hearing in the High Court to amend their lawsuit against the publisher to include allegations that executives were part of an effort to conceal and destroy evidence of wrongdoing.

"It is inferred that they would not have been carrying out this extensive concealment and destruction strategy without the knowledge and approval of Rupert Murdoch," Sherborne said in a court filing.

Defense lawyer Anthony Hudson said the proposed changes to the case were unnecessary and seemed aimed at "campaigning against the tabloid press"

and as a "substitute for a public inquiry."

"They appear to be designed to grab headlines," Hudson said.

Harry's lawsuit against News Group Newspapers is one of three he's brought against Britain's biggest tabloids over alleged unlawful activity carried out by journalists and private investigators they hired that came to light after a phone hacking scandal erupted at Murdoch's News of the World in 2011. The case is tentatively scheduled to go to trial in January.

Harry, 39, the younger son of King Charles III, has used the courts in his crusade against the press that he blames for a host of personal grievances.

His litigation has put him at odds with the royal family that has avoided airing their disputes in public. He made history in June when he became the first senior royal in over a century to testify in court.

In December, his efforts led to a big victory after a judge found phone hacking at Mirror Group Newspapers was "widespread and habitual." In addition to a court judgment, he recently settled remaining allegations that included his legal fees. The total sum wasn't announced, but he was due to receive an interim pay-

ment of 400,000 pounds (\$508,000).

He has another case pending against the owner of the Daily Mail.

In the News Group case, Harry and other claimants allege that between 1994 and 2016, journalists at The News of the World and The Sun violated their privacy through widespread unlawful activity that included intercepting voicemails, tapping phones, bugging cars and using deception to access confidential information.

The claims also allege that executives lied about the wrongdoing and oversaw an effort to delete millions of emails and "buy" the silence of those who might tell the truth about what occurred.

In 2011, News of the World shut down amid the phone hacking scandal that led to a government inquiry and News Group Newspapers, or NGN, issued an unreserved apology to all the newspaper's victims.

Sherborne said Murdoch, 93, was among the executives who either made, endorsed or had someone else make statements — including at public inquiries — to promote the false narrative that there was only "one rogue reporter" at News of the World. **MDT/AP**



Australia and the United Kingdom signed a new defense and security cooperation agreement with the defense ministers of both countries saying it was required to meet "contemporary challenges" to maintain a global rules-based order. The treaty was signed by Australian Defense Minister Richard Marles and his U.K. counterpart Grant Shapps following annual bilateral ministerial defense talks in Canberra yesterday, as part of the Australia-UK Ministerial meeting, which was first held in 2006.



EU leaders gathered to consider new ways to help boost arms and ammunition production for Ukraine and to discuss the war in Gaza amid deep concern about Israeli plans to launch a ground offensive in the city of Rafah. Ukraine's munition stocks are desperately low, and Russia has more and better-armed troops. There is also a growing awareness that the EU must provide for its own security, with election campaigning in the U.S. raising questions about Washington's commitment to its allies.



Middle East U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken arrived in Cairo and met with Egypt's President Abdel Fattah el-Sissi yesterday. Blinken was in Saudi Arabia the day before, where he met with Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman. A senior State Department official traveling with Blinken said the Saudi talks focused on the bilateral portion of a larger plan in which Saudi Arabia would recognize Israel in return for credible progress on the creation of a Palestinian state.