



AFTER RECORDING LOSSES IN THE PREVIOUS YEAR, FSS BOOKED A TOTAL INCOME OF MOP12.8 BILLION IN 2023, THE FUND'S ANNUAL REPORT NOTED P3

SAM HOU FAI ADDRESSES THE CITY'S CHALLENGES AND SHORTCOMINGS P5

PAKISTANI SEPARATISTS CLAIM BOMBING THAT KILLED TWO CHINESE NEAR KARACHI AIRPORT P10



AP PHOTO



Myanmar Zaw Myint Maung, a senior member of Myanmar's former ruling party, died in prison while serving a politically motivated 29-year sentence. A close ally of Aung San Suu Kyi, he was arrested during the 2021 military coup. He had been battling leukemia.

AP PHOTO



Philippines Former President Rodrigo Duterte, infamous for his deadly anti-drug campaign, yesterday registered to run for mayor of Davao city. Duterte's legacy, including extrajudicial killings, is under investigation by the International Criminal Court, but he remains a popular figure in the Philippines.

AP PHOTO

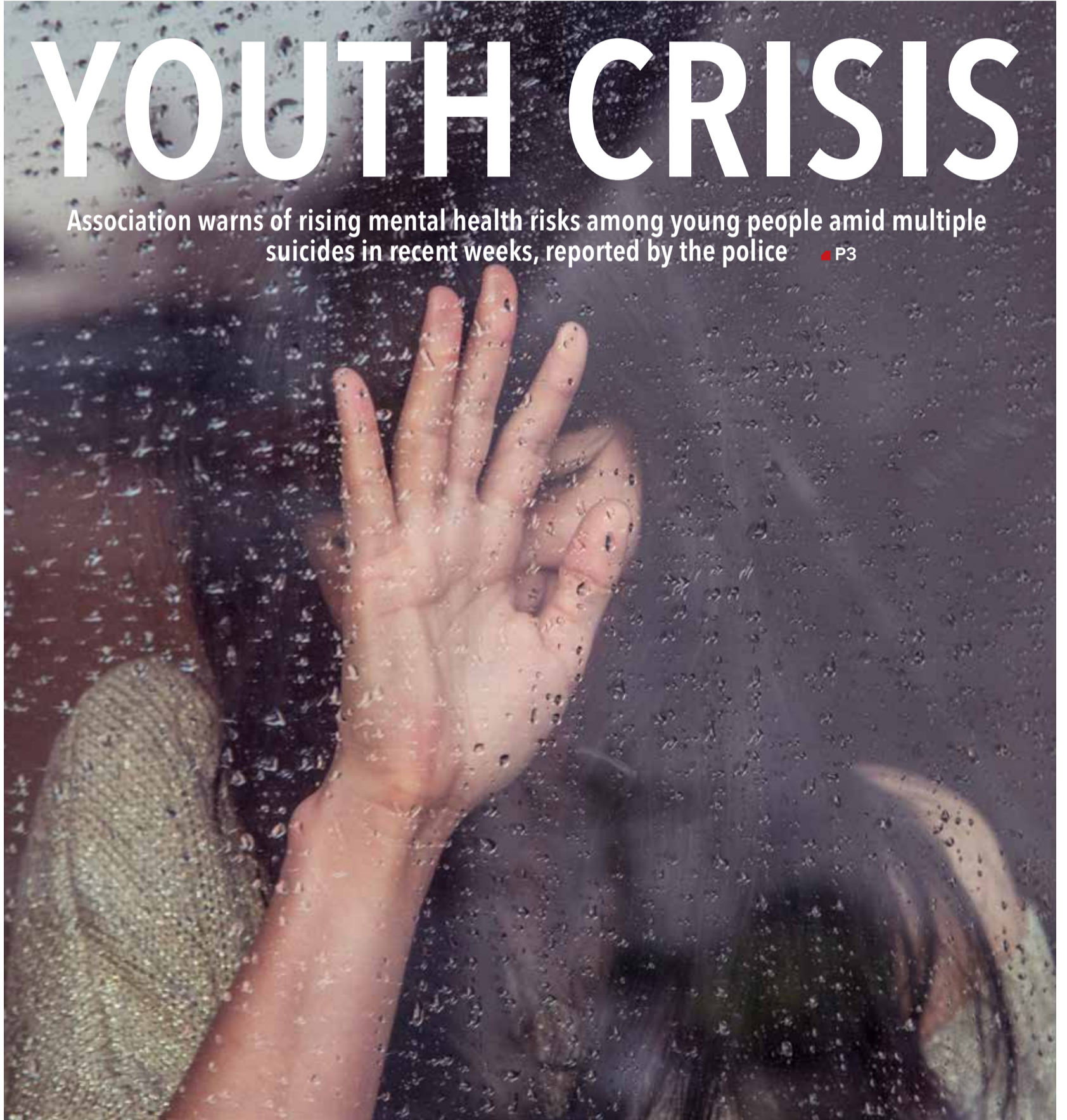


South Korea A South Korean woman yesterday sued the government and an adoption agency for sending her kidnapped daughter abroad in 1976. Her lawsuit, the first of its kind, raises questions about South Korea's adoption practices and decades of falsified paperwork in international adoptions.

More on backpage

YOUTH CRISIS

Association warns of rising mental health risks among young people amid multiple suicides in recent weeks, reported by the police P3



THE BRIDGE RECORD TRAFFIC AT HZMB DURING NATIONAL DAY P5

RENATO MARQUES



POLITICS RITA SANTOS TRADES PORTUGUESE COMMUNITIES FOR AL-RUN P6



Some online conspiracy-spreaders don't even believe the lies they're spewing

H. COLLEEN SINCLAIR
LOUISIANA STATE UNIVERSITY

THERE has been a lot of research on the types of people who believe conspiracy theories, and their reasons for doing so. But there's a wrinkle: My colleagues and I have found that there are a number of people sharing conspiracies online who don't believe their own content.

They are opportunists. These people share conspiracy theories to promote conflict, cause chaos, recruit and radicalize potential followers, make money, harass, or even just to get attention.

There are several types of this sort of conspiracy-spreader trying to influence you.

COAXING CONSPIRACISTS – THE EXTREMISTS

In our chapter of a new book on extremism and conspiracies, my colleagues and I discuss evidence that certain extremist groups intentionally use conspiracy theories to entice adherents. They are looking for a so-called "gateway conspiracy" that will lure someone into talking to them, and then be vulnerable to radicalization. They try out multiple conspiracies to see what

sticks.

Research shows that people with positive feelings for extremist groups are significantly more likely to knowingly share false content online. For instance, the disinformation-monitoring company Blackbird.AI tracked over 119 million COVID-19 conspiracy posts from May 2020, when activists were protesting pandemic restrictions and lockdowns in the United States. Of these, over 32 million tweets were identified as high on their manipulation index. Those posted by various extremist groups were particularly likely to carry markers of insincerity. For instance, one group, the Boogaloo Bois, generated over 610,000 tweets, of which 58% were intent on incitement and radicalization.

You can also just take the word of the extremists themselves. When the Boogaloo Bois militia group showed up at the Jan. 6, 2021, insurrection, for example, members stated they didn't actually endorse the stolen election conspiracy, but were there to "mess with the federal government." Aron McKillips, a Boogaloo member arrested in 2022 as part of an FBI sting, is another example of an opportunistic conspiracist. In his own words: "I don't believe in anything. I'm only here for the violence."

COMBATIVE CONSPIRACISTS – THE DISINFORMANTS

Governments love conspiracy theories. The classic example of this is the 1903 document known as the "Protocols of the Elders of Zion," in which Russia constructed an enduring myth

about Jewish plans for world domination.

Often the behavior of the conspiracists gives them away. Years later, Russia eventually confessed to lying about AIDS in the 1980s. But even before admitting to the campaign, its agents had forged documents to support the conspiracy. Forgeries aren't created by accident. They knew they were lying.

As for other conspiracies it hawks, Russia is famous for taking both sides in any contentious issue, spreading lies online to foment conflict and polarization. People who actually believe in a conspiracy tend to stick to a side. Meanwhile, Russians knowingly deploy what one analyst has called a "fire hose of falsehoods."

Likewise, while Chinese officials were spreading conspiracies about American roots of the coronavirus in 2020, China's National Health Commission was circulating internal reports tracing the source to a pangolin.

CHAOS CONSPIRACISTS – THE TROLLS

In general, research has found that individuals with what scholars call a high "need for chaos" are more likely to indiscriminately share conspiracies, regardless of belief. These are the everyday trolls who share false content for a variety of reasons, none of which are benevolent. Dark personalities and dark motives are prevalent.

For instance, in the wake of the first assassination attempt on Donald Trump, a false accusation arose online about the identity of the shooter and his

motivations. The person who first posted this claim knew he was making up a name and stealing a photo. The intent was apparently to harass the Italian sports blogger whose photo was stolen. This fake conspiracy was seen over 300,000 times on the social platform X and picked up by multiple other conspiracists eager to fill the information gap about the assassination attempt.

COMMERCIAL CONSPIRACISTS – THE PROFITEERS

Often when I encounter a conspiracy theory I ask: "What does the sharer have to gain? Are they telling me this because they have an evidence-backed concern, or are they trying to sell me something?"

When researchers tracked down the 12 people primarily responsible for the vast majority of anti-vaccine conspiracies online, most of them had a financial investment in perpetuating these misleading narratives.

Some people who fall into this category might truly believe their conspiracy, but their first priority is finding a way to make money from it. For instance, conspiracist Alex Jones bragged that his fans would "buy anything." Fox News and its on-air personality Tucker Carlson publicized lies about voter fraud in the 2020 election to keep viewers engaged, while behind-the-scenes communications revealed they did not endorse what they espoused.

Profit doesn't just mean money. People can also profit from spreading conspiracies if it garners them influence or followers,

or protects their reputation. Even social media companies are reluctant to combat conspiracies because they know they attract more clicks.

COMMON CONSPIRACISTS – THE ATTENTION-GETTERS

You don't have to be a profiteer to like some attention. Plenty of regular people share content where they doubt the veracity, or know it is false.

These posts are common: Friends, family and acquaintances share the latest conspiracy theory with "could this be true?" queries or "seems close enough to the truth" taglines. Their accompanying comments show that sharers are, at minimum, unsure about the truthfulness of the content, but they share nonetheless. Many share without even reading past a headline. Still others, approximately 7% to 20% of social media users, share despite knowing the content is false. Why?

Some claim to be sharing to inform people "just in case" it is true. But this sort of "sound the alarm" reason actually isn't that common.

Often, folks are just looking for attention or other personal benefit. They don't want to miss out on a hot-topic conversation. They want the likes and shares. They want to "stir the pot." Or they just like the message and want to signal to others that they share a common belief system.

For frequent sharers, it just becomes a habit.

THE DANGERS OF SPREADING LIES

Over time, the opportunists may end up convincing themselves. After all, they will eventually have to come to terms with why they are engaging in unethical and deceptive, if not destructive, behavior. They may have a rationale for why lying is good. Or they may convince themselves that they aren't lying by claiming they thought the conspiracy was true all along.

It's important to be cautious and not believe everything you read. These opportunists don't even believe everything they write – and share. But they want you to. So be aware that the next time you share an unfounded conspiracy theory, online or offline, you could be helping an opportunist. They don't buy it, so neither should you. Be aware before you share. Don't be what these opportunists derogatorily refer to as "a useful idiot." MDT/AP

www.macaudailytimes.com.mo
REACHING OUT!
+25,000
Like us on facebook.com/mdtimes

MacauDaily 澳門每日時報
Times
DIRECTOR & EDITOR-IN-CHIEF_Paulo Coutinho paulocoutinho@macaudailytimes.com
ASSISTANT EDITOR_Lynzy Valles
CONTRIBUTING EDITORS_Leanda Lee, Severo Portela, Sheyla Zandonai
NEWSROOM AND CONTRIBUTORS_Alex Torrão, Albano Martins, Annabel Jackson, Emilie Tran, Grace Yu, Irene Sam, Ivo Carneiro de Sousa, Jacky I.F. Cheong, Jenny Lao-Phillips, João Palla Martins, Jorge Costa Oliveira, Joseph Cheung, Juliet Risdon, Linda Kennedy, Paulo Cordeiro de Sousa, Renato Marques, Richard Whitfield, Sérgio de Almeida Correia, Viviana Seguí
DESIGNER_Rebeca Almeida | ASSOCIATE CONTRIBUTORS_JML Property, MdME Lawyers, PokerStars, Ruan Du Toit Bester | NEWS AGENCIES_Associated Press, MacauHub, MacaoNews, Xinhua SECRETARY_Yang Dongxiao amy@macaudailytimes.com

A MACAU TIMES PUBLICATIONS LTD PUBLICATION
ADMINISTRATOR & CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER
Kowie Geldenhuys kowie@macaudailytimes.com
OFFICE MANAGER_Juliana Cheang juliana@macaudailytimes.com
ADDRESS_Av. da Praia Grande, 599, Edif. Comercial Rodrigues, 12 Floor C, MACAU SAR
Telephones: +853 287 160 81/2 Fax: +853 287 160 84
Advertisement_advertising@macaudailytimes.com
For subscription and general issues:
general@macaudailytimes.com | Printed at Welfare Printing Ltd

Young people face rising mental health risks

NADIA SHAW

NEARLY 36% of residents aged 18 to 34 are at risk of moderate to severe depression, a recent study from the Mental Health Association of Hong Kong and Macau (MHAHKM) in collaboration with the Macau University of Science and Technology (MUST) found.

This statistic comes just days before World Mental Health Day, observed on Oct. 10 annually, aimed at raising awareness about mental health issues globally.

The research study findings noted the risk of anxiety disorders for the same age group (18 to 34) is 25.2%.

The survey, which gathered responses from about 1,500 individuals between April and July, indicates younger participants are significantly more vulnerable than their older counterparts, who show a 19.4% risk for depression and a 14.9% risk for anxiety disorders.

At a press conference organized to reveal the findings, researchers identified work-related stress, family issues, and financial concerns as primary contributors to mental health challenges.

Notably, over half of those surveyed reported not seeking professional help for their emotional struggles.

On the matter, Ching Chi



Kong, executive director of MHAHKM, emphasized the need for public education on mental health.

"Participating in mental health first aid training can empower individuals to manage their emotional difficulties and support others in distress," he said. This initiative aims to create a more informed community capable of addressing mental health issues effectively.

In response to these findings, the local education bureau has initiated new programs promoting mental well-being among students.

Choi Man Chi, head of the Department of Non-Tertiary Education of the Education

and Youth Development Bureau, said teachers now have guidelines to identify students exhibiting signs of psychological distress, facilitating early intervention.

As Macau prepares for World Mental Health Day, the urgency of addressing these mental health concerns is underscored by recent events.

Reports indicate there were at least three suspected suicides during the Golden Week holiday, including one involving an underage girl who allegedly took her own life after leaving a note.

The local girl was suspected of committing suicide at her home on National Day, as

a suicide note was found in the deceased's room. The victim was reportedly last seen by her mother around midnight. She is suspected to have taken poison.

A forensic examination is underway to determine the exact cause of death, with the Judiciary Police leading the investigation.

The Social Welfare Bureau (IAS) encourages residents to remain conscious of their psychological and emotional well-being, as well as the health of relatives and friends. If in need, residents can call Caritas' Life Hope hotline (28525222) or IAS' counseling hotline (28261126).

IAS BRIEFS ELDERLY RESIDENCE APPLICANTS

The Social Welfare Bureau (IAS) has begun briefing elderly residence applicants before they move into their new residence, IAS has said. The briefing sessions provide residents with a first insight into the facilities. The sessions discuss the overall environment of government apartment buildings and accommodation units, how to use various home appliances, gerontechnology, and related equipment, as well as signing usage agreements and precautions when moving in. About 60 briefing sessions will be held from October to November, with an average of 4 sessions per day, with about 20 participants.

CE MEETS CCAC INTERNAL DISCIPLINE COMMITTEE MEMBERS

The Chief Executive (CE), Ho Iat Seng, yesterday met members of the specialized committee for monitoring problems related to complaints against the discipline of staff at the Commission Against Corruption (CCAC) at government headquarters. In the meeting, the CE received the latest monitoring committee report on CCAC's internal and discipline matters and its work over the past year, being also briefed on the main aspects of this annual report. On the table were also matters related with the improvement of functions and duties from the committee with suggestions to increase their capacity for promoting and optimizing the construction of a clean government in Macau. Ho emphasized the need for CCAC personnel to attach great importance to compliance of all laws and regulations when performing their duties to ensure personal integrity and disciplinary conduct. The CE hoped the Committee for the Discipline, Inspection, and Supervision of CCAC would continue to act impartially, give full play to its supervisory functions, and continue to make suggestions for strengthening integrity work.

MATHEMATICS EDUCATION COMPETITION INSPIRES YOUNG MINDS

Approximately 400 students from Macau and mainland China's primary schools have participated in a mathematics education initiative. The event, organized by local educational groups, aimed to enhance the popularity and innovation of mathematics education in the region. The three-day program featured various activities, including competitions and educational visits. At the award ceremony that took place yesterday at the Macau Fisherman's Wharf Convention and Exhibition Center, a student from Pui Wa School told local media the competition challenged his understanding of mathematics, while a Beijing student appreciated the opportunity to explore Macau through visits to local attractions like the Giant Panda Pavilion. Chan Ka Hou, director of the Youth Committee of the International (Macau) Academic Academy, emphasized the importance of such competitions in fostering interest in mathematics among youth. He said these initiatives are crucial for promoting innovative educational practices and developing talent essential for Macau's diversified growth.

Social Security Fund records income after losses in 2022

VICTORIA CHAN

AFTER recording losses in the previous year, the Social Security Fund (FSS) booked a total income of MOP12.8 billion in 2023, the fund's annual report noted.

The report attributes the improved financial performance to favorable global market conditions, with investment income soaring to MOP7.4 billion, a stark contrast to the MOP7.7 billion loss reported in 2022.



According to the report, the global financial market performed favorably overall, with stock markets boosted by the moderate growth

of the economy, along with rising interest rates on term deposits.

As of the end of 2023, the FSS had

512,956 beneficiaries enrolled in the social security system, with 158,519 receiving old age and disability pensions.

The number of employers joining the non-compulsory central pension scheme increased to 303, with 27,840 workers participating in the joint pension plan.

Additionally, 84,233 people took part in the individual pension scheme, bringing the total participants to 106,251.

The fund also saw a surge in new beneficiaries, with 10,176 people enrolled in 2023, an increase of 54.8% compared to the previous year.

In 2023, the fund received MOP381.4 million in contributions, of which MOP311.9 million came from the mandatory scheme, corresponding to 81.8%, and MOP69.56 million from the non-mandatory scheme, corresponding to 18.2%.

Compared to 2022, total contributions increased by MOP3.12 million in 2023.

Applications associated with pensions reached 15,322, up 2,263 cases.

Expenditure on pensions and allowances granted in 2023 totaled MOP6.02 billion, representing an increase of MOP344.1 million compared to 2022.

Duo arrested over RMB11,000 mobile phone theft

VICTORIA CHAN

POLICE authorities have arrested two men concerning the theft of a mobile phone worth RMB11,000 from a store in a hotel along the Cotai strip.

Both suspects in their fifties, were identified as mainland residents holding travel permits for Hong Kong and Macau.

The incident occurred on Oct. 1, when a female tourist in her thirties, who also held a travel permit for Hong Kong and Macau, reported the mobile phone theft.

According to the victim, she had placed the phone in a shopping basket while shopping, but when she checked the basket later, the phone had vanished, and she immediately notified the police.

Upon verification of the hotel surveillance cameras footage, the police observed two men, both in their fifties, loitering in the area where the theft occurred.

The footage showed one of the men keeping watch from a distan-

ce while the other approached the victim from behind and discreetly placed the mobile phone into his trousers pocket before the two men quickly left the scene.

Following this lead, the police received another report from the hotel's security guard regarding the two suspects on Oct. 3. That led to the locating and arresting of the two men.

During questioning, the men denied any involvement in the theft, but the police discovered suspicious tools on each suspect, including a long pair of tongs and some foil, tools often associated with pickpocketing and theft of products protected with alarms.

The police believe the two men are responsible for the theft, and they have referred the case to the Public Prosecutions Office for further investigation and accusation.

Both men are suspected of violating Article 197 of the Macau Penal Code whose penal framework establishes a penalty of up to three years of imprisonment or an equivalent in a fine.

CASINO DEALER ARRESTED OVER HKD600,000 GAMING CHIP THEFT

VICTORIA CHAN

A casino dealer has been arrested following an extensive chip theft operation that spanned over eight months.

The 49-year-old suspect, who had been working at the casino since 2019, is accused of stealing HKD600,000 worth of chips during this period.

The alleged theft came to light Oct. 4, when the casino notified the authorities about the suspect's criminal activities.

An investigation revealed the dealer had stolen chips from the gaming table during two separate instances both on the previous day (Oct. 3).

On these occasions, the suspect had hidden a HKD10,000 chip between her thighs and tucked chips into the waistband of her clothing.

In the morning of the following day, the suspect attempted to steal again, but



this time she was caught by the gaming table manager, who immediately alerted the authorities.

In total, the casino reported, at that time, the loss of HKD30,000 in chips, stolen between Oct. 3 and 4.

Further investigation by the authorities indicated the suspect had been stealing chips since February 2024, with each theft involving one to two chips, each valued at HKD10,000.

After calculations were made, the casino reached a

total sum of HKD600,000 in stolen chips over eight months.

A search to the suspect residence by the Judiciary Police has found and seized HKD170,000 worth of chips.

Given the strong evidence of aggravated theft, the authorities have referred the suspect for further investigation and accusation by the Public Prosecutions Office on Oct. 5 while continuing to investigate the whereabouts of the remaining stolen chips, as many are still unaccounted for.

AD

ACCURATE, TIMELY & COMPETITIVE TRANSLATIONS

Languages:
ENGLISH, CHINESE,
PORTUGUESE, JAPANESE,
KOREAN, SPANISH,
FRENCH, ARABIC,
RUSSIAN

Services
TRANSLATIONS,
PROOFREADING, COPYWRITING,
DATA INPUT, NEWS MONITORING

We translate +10,000 words a day

K **KTRANZ**
TRANSLATIONS LIMITED

Email: sales@ktranz.com.mo
Tel: +853 2871 6081/2 Fax: +853 2871 6084

Av. da Praia Grande, 599, Edf. Comercial Rodrigues, 12 Floor C, MACAU SAR

Sam Hou Fai addresses the city's challenges and shortcomings

NADIA SHAW

SAM Hou Fai, sole candidate for the next Chief Executive, has expressed concerns over the city's stagnation compared to its counterparts in Guangdong province and Hong Kong.

"Our unique advantages have not yet been fully utilized," he said in a weekend meeting, emphasizing the need to better leverage Macau's connections with Portuguese-speaking nations to enhance competitiveness and economic growth.

During the meeting, attended by members of the Macau Food Industry Association (Associação dos Comerciantes da Boa Cozinha de Macau), Sam discussed the future of Macau's catering industry.



The association raised issues about the development of the Macau "Creative City of

Gastronomy" strategy, advocating for improved business conditions and policies to sti-

mulate the local economy.

It highlighted the importance of promoting Macau's rich

food culture to both residents and tourists.

In his remarks, Sam acknowledged that while Macau has potential, it must overcome significant challenges.

"We are falling behind Shenzhen's technology developments and Hong Kong's financial capabilities," he said. He called for a strategic approach to integrate more effectively within the Greater Bay Area framework.

Additionally, Sam visited various districts to gauge public sentiment and gather insights on local issues.

He expressed a commitment to listening to citizens' concerns and promised to strengthen ties across different sectors if elected.

In preparation for the Oct. 13 CE election, Sam's campaign is focused on addressing public demands for economic diversification and improved living conditions.

His vision includes fostering a more vibrant cultural scene and enhancing infrastructure resilience against climate challenges.

MIF expands to boost economic opportunities

NADIA SHAW

THE 29th Macao International Trade and Investment Fair (MIF) is set to enhance its offerings with the addition of two new exhibition areas, aiming to leverage the unique advantages of the China-Portuguese platform.

Scheduled for Oct 16-19 at the Venetian Macao, this year's fair will feature six dedicated exhibition areas, including a newly established "Portuguese-speaking Countries Market Exhibition Area."

In celebration of the 75th anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic of China and the 25th anniversary of Macau's return to China, the MIF will promote its "1+4" economic diversification strategy.

This initiative seeks to foster collaboration between various industries and enhance Macau's position as a hub for international trade.

The six exhibition areas include the "Partner City Theme Exhibi-



tion Area," "Macao-Qin Economic and Trade Exhibition Area," and a special "Multi-Industry Exhibition Area."

This new area will showcase innovations in sectors such as technology, health, and fashion, providing local small- and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) with opportunities to expand globally.

A highlight of this year's MIF is the introduction of a beauty and health section within

the "Big Health Exhibition Area."

This addition aims to showcase the diversity of beauty brands in the Greater Bay Area (GBA) while exploring synergies between traditional Chinese medicine and modern beauty technologies.

Moreover, the fair will host thematic matching discussions and various online and offline promotional activities designed to facilitate business connec-

tions.

Exhibitors from Portuguese-speaking countries are particularly encouraged to participate, with many expressing their optimism about expanding their reach into Macau and mainland China.

As an event certified by the Global Association of the Exhibition Industry, MIF continues to play a pivotal role in promoting economic cooperation in the GBA.

RECORD TRAFFIC AT HZMB DURING NATIONAL DAY HOLIDAY

NADIA SHAW

THE Zhuhai port of the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macau Bridge (HZMB) experienced a surge in traffic over the weekend, marking a new daily record since its opening in 2018.

On Saturday alone, over 20,000 vehicles crossed the bridge in both directions, according to official figures.

This spike in activity coincided with the week-long National Day holiday (Golden Week), during which there were more than 500,000 passenger entries, according to official statistics.

From Tuesday to Saturday, 93,000 vehicles used the Zhuhai port, Chinese authorities noted.

These numbers reflect increases of over 34% for passengers and more than 56% for vehicles compared to the same period last year.

Notably, vehicles registered in Macau and Hong Kong surpassed 56,000, indicating a 73% rise year-on-year, according to a China Daily re-

port.

Border inspection officials attribute this trend to a growing preference among families from Hong Kong and Macau for weekend trips to mainland cities.

This surge not only highlights a renewed interest in cross-border travel but also poses challenges for local retailers and restaurateurs who are grappling with increased demand.

Spanning 55 kilometers, the HZMB is the world's longest bridge-and-tunnel sea crossing, connecting Hong Kong, Macau, and Zhuhai in Guangdong province.

Since its inauguration in 2018, it has facilitated significant cross-border movement.

This year alone, more than 20 million passengers have traversed the Zhuhai port, exceeding the total number for all last year.

As travel returns to pre-pandemic levels, officials are closely monitoring traffic flows at various checkpoints to ensure smooth operations.

RITA SANTOS TRADES PORTUGUESE COMMUNITIES FOR AL-RUN

RENATO MARQUES

THE president of the Regional Council of the Portuguese Communities for Asia and Oceania, Rita Santos, has suspended her mandate.

In a statement to the media, the Council noted Santos' decision to "fully dedicate herself to supporting the election process for the new Chief Executive of the Macau Special Administrative Region and to her participation in the elections for the Legislative Assembly (AL) of Macau in 2025."

Santos confirmed she will run for a seat at the AL next year together with lawmaker José Pereira Coutinho in an interview with public broadcaster TDM.

The suspension of the mandate is in line with the recently approved rules for AL elections, which



provide that those members of any parliament or legislative assembly of a foreign State, members of the government, or public administration workers of a foreign State cannot be lawmakers.

Santos noted that by running for an AL seat, she hopes to have a more influential voice representing the interests of Macau's Portuguese communities.

The same statement said Santos sees in these tasks a stage for new opportunities to contribute to the progress and representation of Portuguese citizens in the region, adding that during the transition period, Councillors Rui Marcelo and Marília Coutinho will continue to represent the China Circle, with the third post to be taken by Luís Nunes.

RENATO MARQUES



Chief executive grants CTM rights to install data centers

THE Chief Executive has officially granted Macau Telecommunications Company Limited (CTM) the right to install and operate data centers, according to an order published Monday in the Official Gazette.

This authorization, valid for one year, from Oct. 1, 2024 to Sept. 30, 2025, allows CTM to develop, execute, and make available applications and services for storing and processing customer data.

Macau's largest telecom provider, CTM will be establishing these data centers on the 1st, 2nd, and 5th floors of its Telecentro Building headquarters on Taipa's Rua de Lagos.

The company, with a registered ca-

pital of 150 million patacas, is well-positioned to undertake this significant project.

The order defines data centers as areas where cloud services can be provided, stipulating that operators must ensure data confidentiality and comply with personal data protection and cybersecurity regulations.

Specifically, the data center operations are subject to Administrative Regulation No. 13/2024, which outlines requirements such as "ensuring the confidentiality of data, as well as complying with the provisions of the law on personal data" and "complying with the provisions of the legislation on cybersecurity". VC

律師事務所



C&C
LAWYERS
& NOTARIES
SINCE 1996



合夥人 PARTNERS:

官樂怡 Rui José da Cunha^o 山度士 Álvaro Rodrigues^o 馬天龍 Nuno Sardinha da Mata^o 趙魯 Zhao Lu^{o*} 馬傑安 João Nogueira Marques

大律師 ASSOCIATES:

高文軒 Adelino Correia^o
羅善齡 Zelina Rodrigues
馬潔冰 Maria João Marques
陶義德 António Isóo de Azeredo
白穎怡 Icília Berenguel
冼玲鳳 Mariana Afonso Esteves
馬秀文 Sofia Mendes Martins
飛嘉華 Carlos dos Santos Ferreira^o
莫永誠 Rui Velez de Moura
安東尼 António Manuel dos Santos
巴慧雅 Vera Bastos
歐文傑 Miguel Evaristo
陳芷喬 Joana Chan

大律師 ASSOCIATES:

顏曉蓉 Teresa Xiaorong Yan
諾瑪莉 Maria Noras
康靜雅 Viviana Hong
梁淑嵐 Ana Leon
黃瀚賢 Frederico Vong
斐彥德 Gonçalo Figueiredo
吳霆鋒 Ng Teng Fong

實習律師 TRAINEE LAWYERS:

陳健雄 Eurico Chan
戴博晴 Tai Pok Cheng
吳佩愉 Ng Pui U
陳子健 Kimi Chan

法律專家及外地註冊律師

JURISTS AND LAWYERS
QUALIFIED IN OTHER JURISDICTIONS:
林思潔 Jessie Lin
羅成軒 José J. Rodrigues
楊詩婷 Si Teng leong

法律專家 JURISTS:

張偉鴻 Cheong Wai Hong
伍福賢 Domingos Ng
許栢桓 Rui Fernandes Brás

WWW.CCADVOG.COM
TEL (853) 2837 2642/ 2837 2623

◦ 私人公證員 Notary Public * 中國委託公證人 China Appointed Attesting Officer



C&C RECEIVED THE 1ST SILVER
"DEIGNAN AWARD"
FOR RESPONSIBLE ENTREPRENEURSHIP
IN MACAU (2023)



SPORTS | EXPLAINER

Will global soccer be reshaped after EU's top court issued a major ruling in Diarra case?

THE global soccer transfer market, worth more than \$10 billion each season, is facing a revolutionary overhaul or a nuanced evolution following last week's ruling by the European Court of Justice in the Lassana Diarra case.

By ruling that some FIFA regulations on player transfers are contrary to EU legislation relating to competition and freedom of movement, the bloc's top court has paved the way for deep changes in the sport's economy.

Here is a look at the key elements of the case and the possible impact of the landmark ruling.



Paris-Saint-Germain player Lassana Diarra

WHO IS LASSANA DIARRA?

Lassana Diarra is a former much-traveled footballer whose career saw him play for prestigious clubs such as Chelsea, Paris Saint-Germain and Real Madrid. He represented France 34 times. At one point in his career, Diarra moved to the Russian league. It's a dispute with Lokomotiv Moscow that triggered the legal case examined by the European Court of Justice (ECJ).

HOW DID WE GET THERE?

Diarra signed a four-year contract with Lokomotiv in 2013. The deal was terminated a year later after he was unhappy with alleged pay cuts. Lokomotiv applied to the FIFA dispute resolution chamber for com-

penensation and the player submitted a counterclaim seeking compensation for unpaid wages. The Court of Arbitration for Sport found the Russian club terminated the contract "with just cause" and the player had to pay 10.5 million euros (\$11.2 million). Diarra said his search for a new team was hampered by FIFA rules stipulating that any new club would be jointly responsible with him for paying compensation to Lokomotiv.

WHY FIFA RULES MAY BE IN BREACH OF EU LAW?

Free movement is a fundamental right of workers in the European Union within the single market. On that basis, the EU's top court said that the FIFA

rules, including the one that resulted in the refusal to provide Diarra with an international transfer certificate (ITC) for a move to Charleroi, restricted his freedom of movement.

The court also found that FIFA regulations breached the bloc's competition law because they aim at restricting and preventing "cross-border competition which could be pursued by all clubs established in the European Union."

WHAT IS THE NEXT LEGAL STEP?

The ECJ ruling will now be referred back to the appeal court in Mons, Belgium, which will rule on the Diarra case. This could take years rather than

months. Although FIFA said it was satisfied "that the legality of key principles of the transfer system have been reconfirmed," Diarra's lawyers claimed "total victory."

The judges in Luxembourg acknowledged having stability in player rosters and regularity in competitions are legitimate objectives for FIFA, but that rules must be applied proportionally.

IS THE DIARRA RULING COMPARABLE TO BOSMAN?

Some analysts have compared it to the ECJ's 1995 decision on Belgian Jean-Marc Bosman. That ruling removed restrictions placed on foreign EU footballers within national leagues and allowed players in the bloc to move to another club for free when their contracts ended. Those principles had an obviously wider focus than the narrower scope of Diarra, about terminating a contract for cause.

For now, the decision on Diarra does not change how the transfer market functions. But many legal experts believe that the ruling will ultimately have major effects on the sport's economy.

"The decision essentially says the current system is too restrictive and so will have to change," said Ian Giles, a partner at Norton Rose Fulbright law firm. "It's entirely possible this means players will feel they can now break contracts

and sign on with new clubs, without the selling club being able to hold them or demand significant transfer fees. This will likely result in reduced transfer fees and more economic power for players — but over time things will have to stabilize to allow clubs to remain economically viable."

It took more than five years after the Bosman ruling for updated FIFA transfer rules to be published in 2001. Some of those debates then will now be revisited.

EFFECT ON THE EUROPEAN FOOTBALL INDUSTRY

A major reset of transfer fee values can seriously affect many smaller market clubs. Bosman already accelerated gaps in wealth and competitive balance across European soccer, which is increasingly dominated by a small group of clubs. They can lure free-agent players with higher signing bonuses and salaries — money that previously would be more widely distributed via transfer fees.

Spending by super-wealthy clubs can still reward smaller ones who excel at investing time and expertise in scouting and developing local and global talent: Ajax, Brighton, Genk in Belgium, which nurtured Kevin De Bruyne, Thibaut Courtois and Leandro Trossard.

The influential European Club Association, which represents more than 700 teams, sees potential threats to the industry's health in the fallout from Diarra.

Within hours of the Diarra ruling Friday, the group of domestic leagues and player unions announced a news conference in Brussels for Oct. 14 to explain their filing to the European Commission. The complaint on competition law grounds argues FIFA adds new and bigger tournaments to the congested calendar without proper consultation. **MDT/AP**

CORPORATE BITS

SJM Business Travel Summit in Korea



SJM partnered with Trip.Biz, a business travel management brand under the Trip.com group, to participate in their business travel summit in Seoul to gain deeper insights into this high-potential market, the company said in a statement

yesterday.

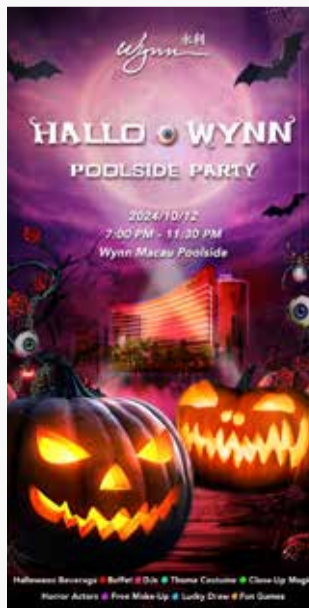
The conference showcased a range of Macau's tourism assets, hotel facilities, and upcoming key, focusing on MICHELIN-starred dining, and related festive cultural activities.

Terence Eng, the product

director at Trip.Biz, highlighted Macau as a "premier travel destination to showcase its one-stop digital business travel solution." He outlined how the company's "people-centric technology," the extensive network of flights, hotels, trains, airport transfers, and customer service — all integrated into one platform — optimize corporate travel management and enhance the overall client experience.

According to the Global Business Travel Association (GBTA), South Korea currently ranks as the world's seventh-largest business travel market, with its annual growth rate in business travel spending ranking first globally.

Wynn Macau presents its 'Hallo Wynn' poolside party



On October 12, Wynn Macau will once again present a Halloween extravaganza, transforming the hotel poolside into a mystical Halloween garden for the celebration, the company says in a press release.

Guests can savor "delectable snacks in the buffet while sipping specially crafted Halloween-themed cocktails and mocktails." For the occasion, the pool area will be transformed into a 'Mystic Garden' adorned with flowers, vines, and "spooky decorations, creating an immersive and chilling atmosphere."

In addition to DJ performances "to feast guests' ears, a captivating close-up magic show awaits to surprise all participants," accompanied by a fire dance performance and eerily dressed characters to provide an unforgettable experience at the party.

Party attendees can also take part in the 'Best Costume Competition' at the make-up and dress-up area with assorted costume selections to win "spooktacular prizes!" Stage games and booths will also be set up to ensure ample opportunities to win "fabulous prizes," Wynn announced.



Celebrating 25 Years: Sands China presents a

AS Macau marks the 25th anniversary of its return to the motherland, a vibrant exhibition at Sands Gallery serves as a heartfelt tribute to the region's artistic evolution.

Through a diverse array of artworks, visitors can glimpse the rich tapestry of life in Macau across different eras. This showcase is not just a celebration of art, but a reflection on how far the region has come since 1999.

Sands China Ltd. recently launched its latest art exhibition, *Echoes of a Golden Age: Macro Events through the Micro Visions of Macao's Legendary Contemporary Artists*. As part of the company's celebration of the 75th anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic of China and the 25th anniversary of Macau's return to the motherland, the exhibition showcases a remarkable collection of works spanning a quarter century from nine local contemporary art masters.

The exhibition highlights the high standards achieved by local

artists, with pieces from renowned figures Lai Ieng, Lok Hei, Ng Wai Kin, Ung Vai Meng, Lio Man Cheong, Lei Tak Seng, Chan Hin Io, Ao Kuan Kin, and Lam Chi Ian—each bringing extensive expertise in their respective disciplines. The artists have not only established themselves in the local art scene with their resounding achievements, but have designed stamps for the city. They reflect historical changes in the macro environment through their micro visions, with unique designs that record the changing of the times within the tiny canvas of a stamp frame.

The exhibition presents pieces from various art forms—ranging from watercolor and drawing to photography and stamps. Together, they bring to life themes

of Macau's development and its cultural characteristics and public sentiments before and after its reunification, in celebration of Macau's prosperity and patriotism since reunification and the uniting power of the Macau people to move forward.

Sands China is committed to nurturing the local art scene, providing a permanent platform for both local and int'l artists

"This will bring back a lot of memories of how far we have come. And actually, we've come very far," said Dr. Wilfred Wong, executive vice chairman of Sands China Ltd.

Sands China is committed to nurturing the local art scene, providing a permanent platform for both local and international artists. This initiative aligns with Macau's designation as a Culture City of East Asia 2025, further emphasizing the importance of cultural exchange and collaboration.

"We will not only promote visual

arts. We are also committed to promoting performing arts and other art forms. And so you will see Sands China playing a very active role in promoting the culture of Macau because we are now designated as a Culture City of East Asia 2025," said Dr. Wong.

"We hope to raise the level of appreciation among Macau's residents through these exhibitions," he added, underscoring the long-term vision for the arts in the region.

The exhibition not only aims to showcase talent, but also to encourage dialogue about the future of art in Macau.

One of the artists featured in the exhibition is Ung Vai Meng.

The local artist reflects on a lifelong passion for art that has evolved alongside the city itself. Born and raised in Macau, he has a unique perspective on the rich tapestry of his environment, which is characterized by a blend of heritage buildings—temples, churches, and colonial structures that coexist in harmony.

From a young age, Ung was drawn

to the city's architectural beauty.

"Growing up, I was fascinated by the mixed styles," he recalls.

At just 14, he began studying under a master of watercolor painting and sketching, capturing the vibrant life around him.

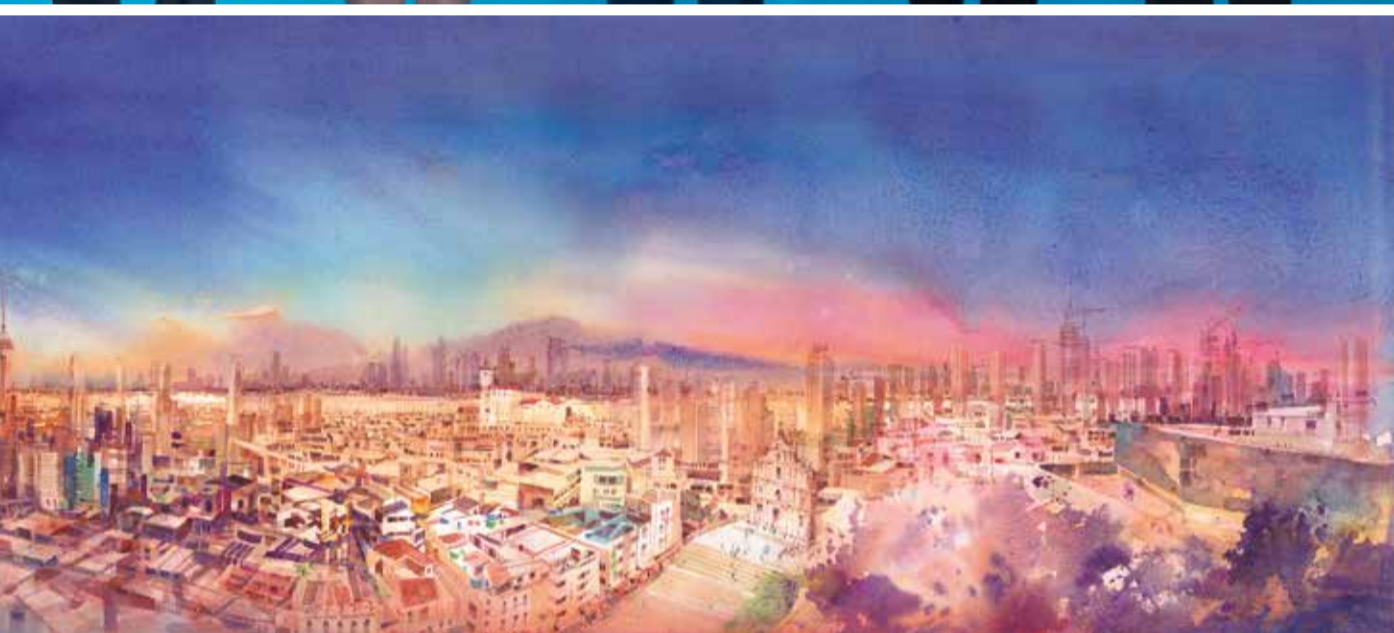
"I would use my pencil to sketch what I saw in the streets, developing my eye for detail and composition."

As Macau underwent significant transformation, so too did Ung's artistic style.

For the current exhibition, Ung presents eight sketches and a series of watercolor pieces, including designs for stamps that celebrate Macau's cultural icons, such as the Grand Prix and the Chinese Orchestra. "These works are not just for fun; they represent my growth and connection to my city," he says.

Meanwhile, the exhibition's curator Lam Chi Ian, his artistic vision is to bridge the past and present.

Lam's exhibit features four captivating paintings, each created spontaneously during his outdoor excursions.



Artistic journey through time

"I didn't plan to exhibit them; I just painted what I loved," he explains. Upon selecting these pieces for the exhibition, he noticed a common thread: each painting beautifully captures the horizon of Macau, connecting them in unexpected ways. "I realized they all share a horizon, despite their different color themes and vistas," he adds.

Reflecting on his creative process, Lam reveals that these works were crafted recently, in 2023, during a lecture where he demonstrated watercolor techniques. "While I have some reference photos, I primarily rely on my memory to recreate the beauty of the scenes," he notes. This method allows him to capture the essence of the moment, making each piece a personal memory.

Meanwhile, Chan Hin Io focuses on significant developments like large-scale construction projects and the emergence of cultural facilities, including the iconic Iec Long Firecracker Factory.

For this exhibition, Chan has displayed nine pieces that reflect not

just architectural growth, but also the spirit of Macau.

His art serves as a visual narrative, illustrating how the city has evolved into a vibrant hub of culture and creativity.

For artist Ng Wai Kin, he delves into the memories and experiences that define life in Macau.

Ng's work prominently features scenes of traditional lion dances and street vendors, iconic elements that have shaped the local landscape. "These are integral parts of Macau's identity," he explains, highlighting how they bring the community together during festivals and everyday life.

With an impressive portfolio, Ng has designed a staggering 54 sets of stamps since he began his career in 1983, totaling over 258 unique stamps. "I can proudly say I've designed the most stamps in Macau," he shares, noting that two original works are displayed alongside his stamp designs in the exhibition.

"I wanted to highlight the beauty of my city for this event," he states. Among his pieces are depictions

of beloved local spots, including a once-popular beef congee stall that has since closed. "I hope viewers will reminisce about the past and the places that shaped their memories," he adds.

AN ENVIRONMENT CONDUCTIVE TO ARTISTIC GROWTH

As the art scene in Macau continues to evolve, Lam observes a noticeable shift. "Since the handover, there has been a surge in activity—business, casinos, and urban development," he notes.

While he appreciates the growth and vibrancy, he also cherishes the quieter, simpler days of his youth.

"Macau used to feel like a unique village, and now it has transformed into a bustling city," he reflects.

Meanwhile, as Chan observes the growing talent in Macau, the artist commented, "The environment here is conducive to artistic growth, and naturally, we're seeing more artists emerge."

Echoing similar sentiments, Ung observes a promising trend among

young artists in Macau. "More are studying abroad and returning with fresh perspectives, enriching our artistic community," he explains.

For aspiring artists, Ung offers a piece of advice: "Stay observant. The world around you is full of inspiration waiting to be transformed into art. Learning skills is vital, but so is broadening your perspective."

AVITAL PLATFORM FOR HIGH-LEVEL ARTISTIC EXCHANGE

Through this exhibition, Sands China aims to establish Sands Gallery as a vital platform for high-level artistic exchange, providing both local and international artists with opportunities to share ideas and draw inspiration.

By gathering feedback from both residents and tourists, Sands Gallery plans to adapt its offerings, potentially leading to more joint exhibitions that celebrate various art forms.

"I think there will be a lot of opportunities for us to showcase the art of Macau through this Culture City name card," said Dr. Wong.

"With the top artists from Macau, this exhibition, hopefully, would arouse people who've got an interest in the history of Macau, the culture of Macau. And hopefully, this will be the beginning of yet another jour-

ney," he concluded.

The free-admission Echoes of a Golden Age: Macro Events through the Micro Visions of Macao's Legendary Contemporary Artists is open for public viewing 11 a.m.-7 p.m. daily until Jan. 5 at Sands Gallery on the 6th floor of the Grand Suites at Four Seasons.

During the exhibition period, Sands China will host a sketching masterclass led by exhibition artists at the former Iec Long Firecracker Factory and the Taipa Houses.

Since its launch in 2022, Sands Gallery has been dedicated to introducing a greater diversity of art exhibitions to Macau and promoting the sustainable development of the local arts and culture industry.

This permanent art space was born out of Sands China's increased investment in arts and cultural development and its commitment to supporting the SAR government's strategy for non-gaming development. Sands Gallery regularly invites both local and internationally renowned artists to host a variety of art exhibitions in Macau to enrich the art experiences of local residents and tourists. To date, the gallery has hosted 10 art exhibitions that feature Chinese and international artists. ♦



A vehicle is seen on fire at the site of an explosion that caused injuries and destroyed vehicles at outside the Karachi airport, on Sunday night (yesterday, Macau time)

TERRORISM

A Pakistani separatist group claims bombing that killed two Chinese near Karachi airport

ADIL JAWAD & MUNIR AHMED, KARACHI

A Pakistani separatist group claimed responsibility for a late night bombing that targeted a convoy with Chinese nationals outside the country's largest airport, killing two workers from China and wounding eight people, officials and the insurgent group said yesterday.

The attack by the Baloch Liberation Army outside the airport in the southern port city of Karachi was the latest deadly assault on Chinese here and came a week before Pakistan is to host a summit of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, a security grouping founded by China and Russia to counter Western alliances.

The explosion, which the BLA said was the work of a suicide bomber, also raised questions about the ability of Pakistani forces to secure high-profile events or foreigners in the country. Among the wounded were also police officers who were escorting the Chinese convoy when the attack happened.

Initially, Pakistani authorities gave conflicting details and said the explosion may have been from an oil tanker but police later confirmed it

was a bomb attack.

Pakistani news channels broadcast videos of flames engulfing cars and a thick column of smoke rising from the scene. Troops and police cordoned off the area. On Monday, counter-terrorism officials were investigating how the attacker reached Karachi, Pakistan's largest city.

The spokesman for the separatist group, Junaid Baloch, said Monday that one of their suicide bombers targeted the convoy of Chinese engineers and investors as they left the airport. The Baloch Liberation Army is mainly based in the restive southwestern Balochistan province but it has also attacked foreigners and security forces in other parts of Pakistan in recent years.

The Chinese Embassy in Islamabad said Chinese staffers working at the Port Qasim Electric Power Company — a coal-powered power plant that's a joint China-Pakistan venture — were in the convoy when it came under attack around 11 p.m. on Sunday. Two Chinese nationals were killed and one was wounded, the embassy said and added, without elaborating, that there were also Pakistani casualties.

Pakistani security officials say a police bomb disposal unit in Sindh province, whe-

Among the wounded were police officers who were escorting the Chinese convoy when the attack happened

re Karachi is the capital, had cleared the road outside the airport ahead of the movement of the Chinese convoy, which was being escorted by police and security officials in several vehicles.

However, the road had not been blocked to avoid inconvenience for residents and travelers going to or from the airport, the officials said, speaking to The Associated Press on condition of anonymity to discuss security details.

Pakistan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs denounced the bombing, saying it was a "heinous terrorist attack near Karachi airport." It said another Chinese was injured in the attack.

"We extend our deepest condolences and sympathies to the families of the victims, both Chinese and Pakistani, and offer prayers for the swift recovery of the injured," said the ministry in a statement. "We remain resolute in bringing to justice those responsible for this cowardly attack."

Pakistan's Prime Minister

Shehbaz Sharif said he was shocked and saddened, describing the attackers as "enemies of Pakistan" and promising the perpetrators would be punished.

"I strongly condemn this heinous act and offer my heartfelt condolences to the Chinese leadership & the people of China, particularly the families of the victims," he wrote on the social media platform X.

"Pakistan stands committed to safeguarding our Chinese friends," he added. "We will leave no stone unturned to ensure their security & well-being."

Authorities estimate that the BLA, which Pakistan and the United States have designated a terrorist organization, has around 3,000 fighters. It regularly targets Pakistani security forces but has also in the past attacked Chinese nationals.

According to Abdullah Khan, a senior defense analyst and managing director of the Islamabad-based Pakistan Institute for Conflict and Security Studies, BLA has preferred at-

tacks on "moving targets" but its ability to launch high-profile attacks has increased in recent years.

More BLA attacks around the Shanghai Cooperation Organization summit next week cannot be ruled out, Khan told The Associated Press.

Port Qasim Electric Power Company is owned by Power-China Resource Ltd, a subsidiary of Power Construction Corporation of China whose spokesperson, Geng Xing-qiang, said the company "is in the middle of making arrangements to actively deal with the incident."

Pakistan hosts thousands of Chinese workers as part of Beijing's multibillion-dollar Belt and Road Initiative, which is building major infrastructure projects.

The outlawed BLA has long waged an insurgency seeking independence and has repeatedly warned against any Chinese working in Balochistan.

The Sunday night attack followed deadly attacks in August that killed more than 50 people in Balochistan. Sharif at the time said the attackers sought to harm Chinese-funded development projects.

The oil- and mineral-rich Balochistan is Pakistan's largest but also least populated province. It is also a hub for the country's ethnic Baloch minority whose members say they face discrimination and exploitation by the central government. Along with separatist groups, Islamic militants also operate in the province.

In 2018, the BLA stormed the Chinese Consulate in Karachi, triggering an intense hourlong shootout that killed two Pakistani civilians and two police officers. All three assailants were also killed.

In March, in northwestern Pakistan, a suicide bombing killed five Chinese engineers and their Pakistani driver as they headed to the Dasu Dam, the country's biggest hydro-power project. In April, five Japanese workers were unharmed when a suicide bomber targeted their van as they were on their way to a factory in Karachi. One bystander was killed.

In July 2021, at least nine Chinese nationals working on a dam and four Pakistanis were killed when a suicide bomber targeted their bus in northwestern Pakistan. Local authorities first said it was a road accident but Beijing insisted it was a bombing, which Islamabad later confirmed.

In 2022, three Chinese teachers and their Pakistani driver were killed when an explosion ripped through their van at the University of Karachi campus. **MDT/AP**

SOUTH ASIA

India offers financial support to Maldives after talks to repair ties

ASHOK SHARMA & SHEIKH SAALIQ, NEW DELHI

INDIA stepped up its development assistance to the Maldives after the two leaders held talks in New Delhi yesterday in a bid to repair strained ties that saw the president of the Indian Ocean archipelago forging closer relations with China.

After the talks, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said India will offer financial support to the cash-strapped Maldives in form of a \$100-million treasury bills rollover. The countries also signed a \$400-million currency swap agreement.

The two leaders virtually inaugurated a new runway of Hanimaadhoo International Airport in the Maldives, and Modi announced that work will be accelerated on the India-assisted Greater Male Connectivity Project, which aims to link key islands of the Maldives through modern transport networks.

"India is Maldives' nearest neighbor and a close friend," Modi said during a joint news conference. He said the Maldives held an important position in India's "neighborhood first policy."

Tensions between India and the Maldives have grown since President Mohamed Muizzu, who favors closer ties with



Indian PM Narendra Modi (right) and Maldives President Mohamed Muizzu meet before their delegation level meeting in New Delhi, yesterday

China, was elected last year after defeating India-friendly incumbent Ibrahim Mohamed Solih. Leading up to the election, Muizzu had promised to expel Indian soldiers deployed in the Maldives to help with humanitarian assistance. In May, New Delhi replaced dozens of its soldiers with civilian experts.

In January, Maldivian leaders lashed out at Modi for promoting India's Lakshadweep archipelago for Indian travelers. Lakshadweep is off

the southwestern coast of the Indian mainland.

Maldivians saw the move as a way to lure Indian tourists away from their country. It sparked angry protests from Indian celebrities who called for a tourism boycott to the Maldives. Tourism is the mainstay of the Maldives' economy.

The dispute deepened when Muizzu visited China ahead of India in January, a move seen by New Delhi as a snub. On his return, Muizzu spelled out

plans to rid his tiny nation of dependence on India for health facilities, medicines and import of staples.

A thaw ensued after Muizzu attended Modi's June swearing-in ceremony in New Delhi for a third five-year term. Since then, Muizzu has toned down his anti-Indian rhetoric, and official-level contacts have intensified with New Delhi as concerns rose that the Maldives could be staring at an economic crisis.

"India is a key partner in the

socio-economic and infrastructure development of the Maldives and has stood by the Maldives during our times of need," Muizzu said after the meeting. He said the currency swap agreement "will be instrumental in addressing the foreign exchange issues we are facing right now."

Muizzu will also hold meetings with senior Indian officials during his five-day visit.

Regional powers India and China compete for influence in the archipelago nation, which is strategically located in the Indian Ocean.

For decades, India has been a critical provider of development assistance to the Maldives. Meanwhile, the Maldives joined China's Belt and Road Initiative to build ports and highways and expand trade as well as China's influence across Asia, Africa, and Europe.

Muizzu's visit is essential for Modi, who is facing a challenging time in neighborhood diplomacy with Marxist politician Anura Kumara Disasanayake taking over as Sri Lanka's president and India-friendly Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina fleeing to India in August after being forced to resign by student-led protests. Nepal also elected pro-China K.P. Sharma Oli as its prime minister. **MDT/AP**

EAST ASIA

Philippines, South Korea deepen security cooperation, elevating ties to a strategic partnership

SOUTH Korea and the Philippines, each faced by increasingly hostile rival nations, elevated their ties to a strategic partnership on Monday, including broader defense and security cooperation between the two U.S. treaty allies.

South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol, who is on a state visit to the Philippines, and Philippine President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. announced the upgrade in overall relations after talks in Manila.

Under the strategic partnership, the two countries agreed to strengthen coo-



Philippine President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. (left) meets with South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol at the Malacanang Palace in Manila, yesterday

operation between their coast guards. Yoon also pledged to help modernize the Philippine military.

The two leaders discussed regional issues such as territorial disputes in the South China Sea and ten-

sions on the Korean Peninsula, they said.

Marcos said in an opening statement that "as the

geopolitical environment is only becoming more complex, we must work together to achieve prosperity for our peoples and to promote a rules-based order governed by international law."

Philippine and Chinese coast guard vessels have clashed repeatedly in disputed waters in the South China Sea.

Yoon stressed the importance of peace and stability in the South China Sea, and added that the two leaders "reaffirmed that the international community will never condone North Ko-

rea's nuclear programs and its reckless provocations, as well as its illegitimate military cooperation with Russia."

Yoon said North Korea's recent disclosure of a nuclear facility was likely an attempt to grab U.S. attention ahead of next month's American presidential election.

The Philippines is the first stop on a six-day Southeast Asia tour for Yoon which will also take him to Singapore and Laos, where he will attend a summit of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations. **MDT/AP**

AP PHOTO



MIDDLE EAST

US spends a record \$17.9b on military aid to Israel since last Oct. 7

ELLEN KNICKMEYER,
WASHINGTON

THE United States has spent a record of at least \$17.9 billion on military aid to Israel since the war in Gaza began and led to escalating conflict around the Middle East, according to a report for Brown University's Costs of War project, released Monday on the anniversary of Hamas' attacks on Israel.

An additional \$4.86 billion has gone into stepped-up U.S. military operations in the region since the Oct. 7, 2023, attacks, researchers said in findings first provided to The Associated Press. That includes the costs of a Navy-led campaign to quell strikes on commercial shipping by Yemen's Houthis, who are carrying them out in solidarity with the fellow Iranian-backed group Hamas.

The report — completed before Israel opened a second front, this one against Iranian-backed Hezbollah militants in Lebanon, in late September — is one of the first tallies of estimated U.S. costs as the Biden administration backs Israel in its conflicts in Gaza and Lebanon and seeks to contain hostilities by Iran-allied armed groups in the region.

The financial toll is on top of the cost in human lives: Hamas militants killed more than 1,200 people in Israel a year ago

and took others hostage. Israel's retaliatory offensive has killed nearly 42,000 people in Gaza, according to the territory's Health Ministry, which does not distinguish between civilians and combatants in its count.

At least 1,400 people in Lebanon, including Hezbollah fighters and civilians, have been killed since Israel greatly expanded its strikes in that country in late September.

The financial costs were calculated by Linda J. Bilmes, a professor at Harvard's John F. Kennedy School of Government, who has assessed the full costs of U.S. wars since the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks, and fellow researchers William D. Hartung and Stephen Semler.

Here's a look at where some of the U.S. taxpayer money went:

RECORD MILITARY AID TO ISRAEL

Israel — a protégé of the United States since its 1948 founding — is the biggest recipient of U.S. military aid in history, getting \$251.2 billion in inflation-adjusted dollars since 1959, the report says.

Even so, the \$17.9 billion spent since Oct. 7, 2023, in inflation-adjusted dollars, is by far the most military aid sent to Israel in one year. The U.S. committed to providing billions in military assistance to Israel and Egypt each year when they

signed their 1979 U.S.-brokered peace treaty, and an agreement since the Obama administration set the annual amount for Israel at \$3.8 billion through 2028.

The U.S. aid since the Gaza war started includes military financing, arms sales, at least \$4.4 billion in drawdowns from U.S. stockpiles and hand-me-downs of used equipment.

Much of the U.S. weapons delivered in the year were munitions, from artillery shells to 2,000-pound bunker-busters and precision-guided bombs.

Expenditures range from \$4 billion to replenish Israel's Iron Dome and David's Sling missile defense systems to cash for rifles and jet fuel, the study says.

Unlike the United States' publicly documented military aid to Ukraine, it was impossible to get the full details of what the U.S. has shipped Israel since last Oct. 7, so the \$17.9 billion for the year is a partial figure, the researchers said.

They cited Biden administration "efforts to hide the full amounts of aid and types of systems through bureaucratic maneuvering."

Funding for the key U.S. ally during a war that has exacted a heavy toll on civilians has divided Americans during the presidential campaign. But support for Israel has long carried weight in U.S. politics, and Biden said Friday that "no ad-

ministration has helped Israel more than I have."

US MILITARY OPERATIONS IN THE MIDDLE EAST

The Biden administration has bolstered its military strength in the region since the war in Gaza started, aiming to deter and respond to any attacks on Israeli and American forces.

Those additional operations cost at least \$4.86 billion, the report said, not including beefed-up U.S. military aid to Egypt and other partners in the region.

The U.S. had 34,000 forces in the Middle East the day that Hamas broke through Israeli barricades around Gaza to attack. That number rose to about 50,000 in August when two aircraft carriers were in the region, aiming to discourage retaliation after a strike attributed to Israel killed Hamas political leader Ismail Haniyeh in Iran. The total is now around 43,000.

The number of U.S. vessels and aircraft deployed — aircraft carrier strike groups, an amphibious ready group, fighter squadrons, and air defense batteries — in the Mediterranean, Red Sea and Gulf of Aden has varied during the year.

The Pentagon has said another aircraft carrier strike group is headed to Europe very soon and that could increase the troop total again if two carriers are again in the region at the same time. **MDT/AP**

this day in history

2003 THE TERMINATOR TAKES ON CALIFORNIA

The film star Arnold Schwarzenegger has been elected governor of California, ousting the incumbent, Gray Davis, three years before his term was due to end.



It is the first time in the state's history that a governor has been sacked mid-term.

With most of the ballots counted, Mr Schwarzenegger has won almost 48% of the vote.

In a victory speech before jubilant supporters, Mr Schwarzenegger thanked the people of California for giving him their trust.

"I want to be the governor of the people," he said. "I know that together we can make this the greatest state in the greatest country in the world."

He pledged to restore trust in California's government and to re-impose discipline on the state's out-of-control budget.

Gray Davis has already accepted defeat, telling supporters voters had decided "it was time for someone else to serve and I have accepted their judgement."

The vote was triggered by Republican activists, frustrated at high levels of unemployment, struggling schools, and the state's budget deficit, which now runs into tens of billions of dollars.

In a two-part ballot, voters were first asked if they wanted to recall - or sack - Governor Davis.

The only other governor in US history to be recalled was North Dakota's Lynn Frazier, in 1921.

Then - regardless of their answer to the first question - they had to indicate who they preferred as an alternative among the 135 alternative candidates running.

With 96.8% of the results in, 54.4% wanted a recall.

Mr Schwarzenegger was running ahead with 47.9% support. His closest rival, Lieutenant Governor Cruz Bustamante, was on 32.4%.

The Austrian-born film star and former body builder - who made his name in action films such as The Terminator and Total Recall - galvanised the campaign when he announced he would be running on talk show host Jay Leno's television show earlier this year.

Large crowds have gathered to see him at campaign speeches and rallies.

But the political fight has been brutal at times, with Mr Schwarzenegger accused of sexually harassing a number of women, and allegations that he once praised Hitler.

He has denied the allegations, although he made an apology for "rowdy behaviour" on film sets.

Courtesy BBC News

IN CONTEXT

The final result was 55.4% in favour of a recall, with 44.6% opposing it. Arnold Schwarzenegger won a decisive victory with 48.7% support, 16% ahead of his nearest rival. He was sworn in as Governor of California on 17 November 2003. His first act was to abolish an unpopular car tax rise imposed by Governor Davis. He also formally ruled out tax rises - one of the big question marks overhanging his campaign. Later policies, however, have caused controversy. In February 2004 he ordered his top legal official to act against the city of San Francisco for allowing gay marriages in defiance of state law, saying they represented "an imminent risk to civil order". After weeks of wrangling with senators, Governor Schwarzenegger secured a last-ditch agreement on California's \$103bn (£56bn) budget in July 2004. The budget neither raised taxes, nor cut spending too deeply, instead committing the state to borrowing heavily to keep its finances on track. Some economists have warned the policy only postpones - and could exacerbate - the state's economic problems.

MACAU'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

YOUR STARS

ARIES
 Mar. 21-Apr. 19
 Expand your territory. Try new views, flavors and sounds. Keep your word despite distractions or interruptions. Stay in communication while rambling.

TAURUS
 Apr. 20-May. 20
 Work out financial solutions for home and family with your partner. Draw upon hidden resources. Don't rush into anything; slow and easy does it.

GEMINI
 May. 21-Jun. 21
 A collaborative dream may seem distant. Obstacles become apparent. Old assumptions get challenged. Patiently persist. Communicate and coordinate solutions

CANCER
 Jun. 22-Jul. 22
 Stifle rebellious tendencies. Keep your health and fitness routines despite breakdowns or distractions. Gentle, steady pressure works better than force.

LEO
 Jul. 23-Aug. 22
 Romance can wilt in the heat of domestic irritations. Resolve misunderstandings as soon as possible. Listen generously. Communication resolves and recharges.

VIRGO
 Aug. 23-Sep. 22
 Family comes first. Find clever solutions for domestic breakdowns. Make repairs, especially with plumbing and water flow. Upgrade practical household systems.

LIBRA
 Sep. 23-Oct. 22
 Edit your message. Your networks hold the answers you're seeking. Misunderstandings can spark; avoid automatic reactions. Listen carefully and keep an open mind.

SCORPIO
 Oct. 23-Nov. 21
 Your ideas are attracting attention and profits flow in. Costs can vary widely. Avoid a financial scam. Reserve judgment and review options before spending.

SAGITTARIUS
 Nov. 22-Dec. 21
 Creative change is possible with a personal project. Resolve practical details. Handle responsibilities on time. You have the confidence to tackle a structural problem.

CAPRICORN
 Dec. 22-Jan. 19
 Privacy soothes like an invisibility cloak. Unstructured time suits you fine. Adapt plans for unexpected circumstances. Organize and manage things behind the scenes.

AQUARIUS
 Jan. 20-Feb. 18
 Group activities can produce lasting results. Participate for a common goal. Adapt to changes. Friends help you advance for a team win. Together, rise.

PISCES
 Feb. 19-Mar. 20
 A professional challenge has your focus. Keep an open mind as you weigh options and make decisions. Avoid overextending your finances or energy.

The Born Loser by Chip Sansom



SUDOKU

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

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

WEATHER

	MIN	MAX	CONDITION
CHINA			
Beijing	8	22	fine
Changchun	6	18	fine
Chengdu	15	25	rain
Chongqing	16	22	cloudy
Fuzhou	22	24	rain
Guangzhou	22	31	cloudy
Guiyang	13	18	overcast
Haikou	24	30	cloudy
Hangzhou	16	23	cloudy
Harbin	4	17	fine
Hefei	10	23	overcast
Nanjing	14	22	fine
Shanghai	17	23	fine
Taipei	23	24	rain
Wuhan	13	26	fine
Hong Kong	25	30	overcast
WORLD			
Moscow	6	14	rain
Frankfurt	12	17	rain
Paris	14	19	cloudy
London	12	17	rain
New York	12	22	overcast

CROSSWORDS

ACROSS 1- Japanese dish; 6- Workplace stds. enforcer; 10- Contented sighs; 14- Colorado skiing mecca; 15- Arguing; 16- RR stops; 17- Molars, e.g.; 18- Rescue; 19- States; 20- PC panic button; 21- Burning; 23- Dweebs; 24- Man and Wight; 26- Red fluorescent dye; 27- Declared; 29- Shouts; 31- Han ___ was a "Star Wars" character; 32- Physicist Nikola; 33- Briny expanse; 36- In spite of; 40- Shortened version of actor Stallone's first name; 41- Circular; 42- Fit to ___; 43- Sonata movement; 44- Utterly senseless; 46- Teheran native; 48- Wahine's welcome; 49- Long lock of hair; 50- Ringing instruments; 52- Freight weight; 55- Judge's seat; 56- Room in a casa; 57- Strong string; 59- ___ boy; 60- Composer Khachaturian; 61- Woodwind section members; 62- Genuine; 63- First James Bond film; 64- Grannies;

DOWN 1- Fill to surfeit; 2- Employs, consumes; 3- Forte; 4- Worked (up); 5- Breathe in; 6- Watering hole; 7- Celestial body; 8- Shelter for honeybees; 9- Bolted down; 10- Evaluate; 11- Pong maker; 12- "Surprise Symphony" composer; 13- Flat sound; 22- Gave grub; 23- Pitcher Ryan; 25- Put away; 26- Singer Fitzgerald; 27- IRS IDs; 28- Hammer or sickle; 29- Type of question; 30- Cornerstone abbr.; 32- Dull sound; 33- Location; 34- Cabinet dept.; 35- Got on in years; 37- Wrinkle removers; 38- Author Morrison; 39- Pinch; 43- Mischievous person; 44- The lot; 45- Capital of Massachusetts; 46- Angry; 47- Oscar de la ___; 48- Texas shrine; 49- Ski lift; 50- Roseanne, formerly; 51- Joie de vivre; 53- Draft rating; 54- Nitti's nemesis; 56- Down in the dumps; 58- Pugilistic org.;

Yesterday's solution

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

Emergency calls 999	Taxi 28 939 939 / 2828 3283
Fire department 28 572 222	Water Supply - Report 2822 0088
PJ (Open line) 993	Telephone - Report 1000
PJ (Picket) 28 557 775	Electricity - Report 28 339 922
PSP 28 573 333	Macau Daily Times 28 716 081
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	

It's prime time to BUY & RENT!

jml property

CONTACT US & SEIZE THIS OPPORTUNITY!

hello@jmlproperty.com
 www.jmlproperty.com

f jmlmacau @jmlproperty

Hoi Wan Retail (Taipa)
 HKD 12,980,000

Tou Un (Taipa)
 HKD 2,750,000 1 bed 1 bath

Jade Garden (Taipa)
 HKD 11,880,000 4 bed 3 bath

RUGBY

ROIGARD NAMED IN ALL BLACKS SQUAD FOR JAPAN AND EUROPEAN TOUR

SCRUMHALF Cam Roigard has overcome a major injury to win a place in the 36-strong All Blacks squad named yesterday to play Autumn test matches against Japan, England, Ireland, France and Italy.

Roigard played for Counties Manukau in New Zealand's National Provincial Championship on Saturday in his first appearance since March when he suffered a knee injury while playing for the Hurricanes in Super Rugby. He took the field as a replacement and scored two tries.

Head Scott Robertson has hurried Roigard back into his squad for the demanding tour on which the All Blacks will play three of the world's top-five teams in consecutive weekends next month.

New Zealand will play Japan in Yokohama on Oct. 26, then fifth-ranked England at Twickenham on Nov. 3, top-ranked Ireland in Dublin on Nov. 9 and fourth-ranked France in Paris on Nov. 17. The tour finishes with a match against Italy in Turin on Nov. 24.

Roigard is the only addition to the squad Robertson used throughout the recently-completed Rugby Championship. He takes the place of the young Crusaders scrumhalf Noah Hotham who will be named Tuesday in an All Blacks XV which also will play in the Northern Hemisphere next month.

The All Blacks XV, coached by



New Zealand's Will Jordan (center) races past Australia's Nic White (left) and Tom Wright to score a try during their rugby union test match in Sydney, last month

Clayton McMillan, will play Munster at Limerick on Nov. 2 and Georgia at Montpellier on Nov. 10.

"It was fantastic to see Cam (Roigard) in great form for Counties on the weekend and we are excited to have him back in the mix," Robertson said.

"Fellow (scrumhalves) Cortez Ratima and T.J. Perenara showed during the Rugby Championship that they deserve their spots in the squad and this means Noah Ho-

tham will be included in the All Blacks XV squad to be announced tomorrow, where he will be able to gain some valuable playing time."

Robertson has included Perenara and backrower Sam Cane in the squad, though both will end their All Blacks careers at the end of the season when they join clubs overseas.

The presence of the All Blacks XV in Europe gives Robertson a much deeper group of players to call on if

injuries occur.

Robertson said a small group of players from the All Blacks XV would join the All Blacks in Japan to assist their preparation for that match and gain experience of the All Blacks environment. That would free up a group of All Blacks to travel ahead to England to begin preparing for that match.

"This Northern Tour is an exciting challenge, which will allow us to continue evolving our game and

building a style of rugby that creates opportunities against some fierce competition," Robertson said.

"We have selected a squad that will bring consistency and continuity while also achieving the right balance of giving newer talent the chance to develop within a team that has valuable experience against these northern hemisphere sides."

MDT/AP

NEW ZEALAND SQUAD

FORWARDS: Asafo Aumua, Codie Taylor, George Bell, Ethan De Groot, Tyrel Lomax, Fletcher Newell, Pasilio Tosi, Ofa Tu'ungafasi, Tamaiti Williams, Scott Barrett (captain), Tupou Vaa'i, Patrick Tuipulotu, Sam Darry, Ethan Blackadder, Sam Cane, Samipeni Finau, Luke Jacobson, Dalton Papali'i, Ardie Savea, Wallace Sititi.

BACKS: T.J. Perenara, Cortez Ratima, Cam Roigard, Beauden Barrett, Damian McKenzie, Jordie Barrett, David Havili, Rieko Ioane, Anton Lienert-Brown, Billy Proctor, Caleb Clarke, Will Jordan, Ruben Love, Stephen Perofeta, Sevu Reece, Mark Tele'a.

AD

New Rugby Season

Saturdays, 9-11am, Taipa Stadium

BOYS AND GIRLS, AGES 6 – 18

- Team working
- Co-operation
- Fitness and FUN



SIGN UP NOW!!



**MACAU
BATS
RUGBY**

FOOTBALL

Women's CL begins with reinforced Barcelona going for third straight title

TALES AZZONI, MADRID

BARCELONA will go for its third straight Women's Champions League title with a squad boosted by Poland's star striker Ewa Pajor and with Aitana Bonmatí and Alexia Puteillas playing on new contracts.

The group stage of the European club competition begins Tuesday and the Catalans are trying to become only the second team after Lyon to win three titles in a row or reach five straight finals.

Barcelona beat Lyon in last season's final, when Ballon d'Or winners Bonmatí and Putellas scored a goal each. Both had their contracts with the club extended ahead of the new season, and now they will have Pajor as a teammate.

Pajor, who joined from Wolfsburg, was the competition's top scorer in 2022-23 as the German club reached a final that it lost to Barcelona despite a goal by her.

In her nine seasons with Wolfsburg, Pajor won 14 titles and scored 136 goals despite a series of injuries. She was not able to win a Champions League crown even though she played in three finals and was part of a run to another.

Barcelona has also added Kika Nazareth from Portuguese club Benfica.

The team's first game in the competition this season will be on Wednesday against Group D rival Manchester City in a rematch of the 2020-21 quarterfinals, where the Spaniards triumphed after a 4-2 first-leg win and a 2-1 second-leg defeat in what was Barcelona's only loss that campaign.

Barcelona's squad also includes former City players Keira Walsh and Ellie Roebuck.

LYON'S FIREPOWER TAKES ON GALATASARAY

It could prove a busy night today for Galatasaray's defense and goalkeeper Gamze Yaman.

Group A opponent Lyon boasts the all-time



Barcelona's Aitana Bonmatí

top scorer in the Women's Champions League, Ada Hegerberg, who has managed two 50-plus seasons for goals during her 10-year spell at the club.

The Norway striker, who won the first women's Ballon d'Or award, has 64 competition goals, while teammate Eugénie Le Sommer, third on the all-time list, needs two to reach 50.

They form the spine of the team along with veteran captain Wendie Renard, the women's Champions League record holder for appearances with 116.

Lyon has been in good scoring touch so far, netting 16 goals in its first three French league games, with American midfielder Lindsey Horan getting five and France striker Kadidiatou Diani scoring two.

French hopes rest on Lyon after Paris Saint-Germain — a semifinalist last season — was eliminated by Juventus in qualifying, losing 5-2 on aggregate.

Lyon is the competition's record eight-time winner but last won the trophy in 2022. It was runner-up last season to Barcelona.

The club hired a new coach in June, with Australian Joseph Montemurro replacing Frenchwoman Sonia Bompastor, who joined Chelsea.

The contrast in experience between the sides is noticeable. Galatasaray's

team was founded in 2011 and the senior team only started in 2021.

As well as European success, Lyon's women's side has won a national record 17 league titles and 10 French Cups.

Galatasaray will be making its competition debut after a qualifying run that included triumphs over former quarterfinalist Slavia Praha.

It is the first Turkish team to get to the group stage. It won its first national title last season in only its third campaign.

WOLFSBURG STARTS AGAINST ROMA

Two-time champion Wolfsburg begins its Group A campaign today at Italian champion Roma, which drew with the German club on its last visit two years ago.

Both teams will want to make a good start with Lyon and Galatasaray the other teams in Group A.

Wolfsburg warmed up with a 5-0 rout of Leipzig in the Bundesliga on Friday, when Alexandra Popp set up three goals. The 33-year-old Popp announced her international retirement last week, meaning her focus is fully on leading Wolfsburg to more honors.

She is just two games away from becoming the second player to reach 100 Champions League appearances, after Wendie Renard.

Wolfsburg is unbeaten in five away meetings against Italian sides, but Roma is unbeaten in 14 home games in all competitions.

CHELSEA WITHOUT HAYES

Life after Emma Hayes has started well for Chelsea.

Hayes left to take over the United States women's team in the offseason and carried on her winning ways by taking gold at the Paris Olympics.

After 14 major titles she left big shoes for her replacement Bompastor to fill, but it has been an impressive start for the former Lyon coach.

Chelsea opened its Super League campaign with a 1-0 win against Aston Villa and followed that by routing Crystal Palace 7-0.

First up for the Blues in Group B is a home game today with Real Madrid, which has made a perfect start in the Spanish league, winning five out of five to trail leader Barcelona on goal difference.

BAYERN'S MOMENTUM

Arsenal, the 2007 winner, faces a tough opening Group C match on Wednesday at two-time defending German champion Bayern, which has made a seven-game winning start to the season, including a 1-0 victory over Wolfsburg in the German Supercup.

A 1-0 win over Cologne on Saturday stretched Bayern's unbeaten run in the Bundesliga to 44 games.

Bayern and Arsenal met two seasons ago, when the Bavarian powerhouse won 1-0 in Munich but lost 2-0 in London.

Arsenal has been boosted by the arrivals of Mariona Caldentey from Barcelona and Rosa Kafaji from BK Häcken, as well as Netherlands goalkeeper Daphne van Domselaar from Aston Villa.

The other teams in Group C are Vålerenga and Juventus. MDT/AP

仁德 CENTRO MEDICO PEDDER
• 仁德醫療中心 •

We bring high quality of medical service to Macau

General Surgery : Dr. Fok Manson, Dr. Lai Cheuck Seen Edward, Dr. Lau Wing Kee Peter, Dr. Kwong Man, Dr. Nie Fu Zhong, Dr. U Chong Sen, Dr. Lei Chin Chong

Breast Surgery : Dr. Leong Iat Lun

Urology : Dr. Lo Kwong Yin Richard, Dr. Zhao Yun Qiao

Paediatric Surgery : Dr. Yeung Chung Kwong

Paediatrics : Dr. Zhang Zhiqin

Obstetrics & Gynaecology : Dr. Fong Kuan Io

Plastic & Aesthetic Surgery : Dr. Lam U Lin

Orthopaedic Surgery & Sports Medicine : Dr. Lam Kun Kuan

ENT : Dr. Cheng Zheng Ang

Cardiology : Dr. Jin Chun, Dr. Leong Man Kin

General Medicine : Dr. Ng Kam Hong, Dr. Lam Weng Chio

Dietitian : Chan Lai U Joey

Avenida da Praia Grande No 599, Edifício Comercial Rodrigues 14 e 15 Andar, em Macau
T. 2832 2298 / 2832 2229 Website: www.peddermacau.com
Opening Hours: Mon - Fri 10:00 - 19:00 Sat 10:00 - 14:00 Sun & PH closed

OPINION

The Conversation

Susan Neely-Barnes, U. Memphis



LOW PAY, HIGH STAFF TURNOVER, BURNOUT TOOK A TOLL ON SOCIAL SERVICE NONPROFITS

Social service nonprofits had high rates of staff turnover and a hard time filling vacant positions in 2022 as the COVID-19 pandemic was ending.

Low salaries, inadequate benefits, staff burnout and a shortage of qualified job applicants were largely to blame. The staffing problems were so severe that some of the people leading these organizations were afraid that they might have to close their doors.

That's what our research team, composed of eight social work scholars, found when we interviewed 27 social service agency managers in a metropolitan area in the Southeast.

These nonprofits provided an array of services, including care for people with substance use disorders and mental health conditions, as well as housing assistance, other kinds of health care and free food distribution.

No matter their specific focus, these nonprofit managers told us that they saw heightened demand for services since the start of the pandemic.

For example, they observed an increase in the number of people who were using opioids and other substances during and after the pandemic. This led to a greater demand for substance use disorder treatment.

More people were also struggling with food insecurity and asking for help getting food. Staffing problems made it harder to meet these needs. Some nonprofits had to keep people on waitlists or turn people away – even if their needs were dire.

One substance use disorder treatment facility said that several potential patients had fatal overdoses while on the waitlist for their services. This agency was in a rural area, and the people seeking its help had nowhere else to go.

Some of the nonprofits could retain their workers if they offered perks such as flexible work schedules and the freedom to work from home. Yet, many social service agencies fill critical needs that cannot be adapted to virtual employment.

Some of the nonprofit leaders told us that they strove to improve their workplace culture to retain employees. But that was not always enough to keep employees when the salaries were very low during a period of historically rapid inflation.

U.S. social service nonprofits provide many critical services, including support for older adults and people with disabilities.

Many of these agencies rely on Medicare and Medicaid funding, which can be challenging because the reimbursement rates for therapy sessions, caregiving and other health service categories are very low.

The nonprofit leaders whom we interviewed said it was hard for their agencies to cover the full cost of salaries and benefits for their employees with the money they get from Medicare and Medicaid. Some of them said their organizations couldn't afford to pay their workers enough money for them to cover basic living expenses.

Shortages of addiction and mental health counselors in the U.S. are dire. Approximately 123 million Americans – more than 1 in 3 people – live in places without enough mental health providers to see every patient seeking care.

Access to treatment is further restricted because some mental health providers are reportedly choosing to stop accepting any insurance payments at all because of the low reimbursement rates and burdensome paperwork required. This means that many people with mental health needs are having trouble getting care without paying high rates – turning therapy into a luxury.

Therapy can cost US\$150 or more per session without any payments from an insurance company, compared with a copay that will probably be in the \$20-\$50 range per session if the care is covered.

No one is likely to be happy with the projected higher deficits laid out in a new analysis of Kamala Harris' and Donald Trump's economic plans.

The analysis released yesterday by the nonpartisan Committee for a Responsible Federal Budget suggests a Harris presidency could increase the national debt over 10 years by \$3.5 trillion.

That's even though the vice president's campaign insists her proposed investments in the middle class and housing would be fully offset by higher taxes on corporations and the wealthy.

Her campaign policy guide states that Harris is "committed to fiscal res-

ponsibility — making investments that will support our economy, while paying for them and reducing the deficit at the same time."

The same analysis says former President Trump's ideas could heap another \$7.5 trillion onto the debt and possibly as much as \$15.2 trillion. That's even though he suggests growth would be so strong under his watch that no one would need to worry about deficits.

The 34-page report released by the fiscal watchdog group puts a spotlight on the issue of government borrowing that will confront the winner of November's election.



Former Transport Minister S. Iswaran (background) and his lawyer Navin Thevar arrive at the High Court in Singapore

THE (IN)CORRUPTIBLES

FORMER SINGAPORE CABINET MINISTER STARTS ONE-YEAR JAIL SENTENCE

A former Singaporean Cabinet minister began a one-year prison term yesterday for receiving illegal gifts after saying he would not appeal his sentence in the rare criminal case involving a government minister in the Asian financial hub.

Former Transport Minister S. Iswaran said it was important to him that prosecutors reduced two corruption charges to charges of receiving illegal gifts at the start of the trial last month. Iswaran had pleaded guilty to one count of obstructing justice and four of accepting gifts from two businessmen with whom he had official business.

His sentence of 12 months in prison exceeded what the defense and prosecution had requested, but the court agreed to let him start serving the sentence

yesterday.

"I will not be appealing the sentence handed down by the Court," Iswaran said in a statement on social media. "I accept that as a minister, what I did was wrong under section 165 (of the Penal Code). I accept full responsibility for my actions and apologise unreservedly to all Singaporeans."

With his prison term, he said he hoped he and his family can put "the pain and anguish behind us, move forward and rebuild our lives together."

Singapore's ministers are among the world's best paid, and the case has embarrassed the ruling People's Action Party, which prides itself on clean governance. The last Cabinet minister charged with graft was Wee Toon Boon, who was found guilty in 1975 and jailed for accepting gifts in exchange for hel-

ping a businessperson. Another Cabinet minister was investigated for graft in 1986, but died before charges were filed.

A day after Iswaran's sentence last week, a Malaysian hotelier who brought Formula One to Singapore was charged Friday for allegedly obstructing justice and abetting Iswaran's wrongdoings. Ong Beng Seng did not indicate how he would plead to the charges, and his case has been adjourned until next month.

The second businessman will not be charged.

Ong, a Malaysian businessman based in Singapore, is the managing director of Hotel Properties Limited, which owns 38 hotels and resorts in 17 countries. He is known for bringing Formula 1 to Singapore in 2008, and holds the rights to the Grand Prix night race in the city-state. MDT/AP



Samoa A New Zealand navy ship sank yesterday off Samoa's coast after grounding on a reef and catching fire. All 75 aboard were safely rescued. Officials warn of a "highly probable" fuel spill, prompting environmental assessments of the potential damage.



United States More Black and Latina women are rising to top labor union leadership, driving changes like increased focus on parental leave, health care, and anti-harassment measures. Their leadership is transforming unions in traditionally male-dominated industries, addressing long-standing workplace inequities.



Russia A Russian court sentenced 72-year-old American Stephen Hubbard to nearly seven years in prison for allegedly fighting as a mercenary in Ukraine. Prosecutors claimed he fought alongside Ukrainian forces after the 2022 invasion. His sentencing marks the first of its kind for an American.



India An American and British climber were rescued after being stranded for three days on India's Chaukhamba-3 peak. A rockfall severed their supplies, including food and gear. The rescue involved the Indian Air Force and was completed after 80 hours of coordination.