

17
A-CHANGIN'
Advertise with us
+853 287 160 81
NEWS

CTM 5.5G
is the first to launch 5.5G in Macau
Speed Power Up
Experience hassle-free travel
FREE upgrade automatically to all 5G customers
www.ctm.net.mo

RECENT SURVEY INDICATED NEARLY 77% OF HENGQIN RESIDENTS ARE SATISFIED WITH THEIR LIVING ENVIRONMENT

P5

VICKERS: POLITICAL RISKS IN CHINA MAY AFFECT FOREIGN GAMING OPERATORS

P3

CHINA: NEW AIR ROUTES SET TO OPEN FOR START OF WINTER-SPRING SEASON

P6



CHINA DAILY



China The Guangdong 2024 Global Investment Promotion Conference on Nov. 8 will release the list of top 100 foreign-invested firms in the province, the China Daily reported yesterday. Over 430 international business leaders are set to attend, and new industry matchmaking efforts will focus on cross-regional cooperation with Hong Kong and Macau.

China condemns U.S. approval of a \$1.99 billion arms sale to Taiwan earlier this week, calling it a threat to peace and a violation of the "one-China" principle. Taiwan's defense capabilities are set to increase, but China warns it will take resolute measures to maintain sovereignty.

AP PHOTO



Japan The ruling coalition led by Prime Minister Shigeru Ishiba lost its majority in the lower house after voter backlash against corruption scandals. Ishiba's Liberal Democratic Party faces political uncertainty and may need a third coalition partner to secure parliamentary control.

AP PHOTO



Philippines Landslides in Talisay, a town near Lake Taal, claimed multiple lives following Tropical Storm Trami. According to scientists, this disaster highlights risks in landslide-prone areas as climate change intensifies. The Philippines is increasingly vulnerable due to a mix of natural disasters and economic necessity.

TESTING 1, 2, 3...

The Cultural Affairs Bureau has announced plans for trial concerts at the new outdoor performance area in Cotai as the venue's anticipated completion next month

P3



IMAGE RENDERING. IC

TALENT ACQUISITION SCHEME
ALMOST 500 TALENTS APPROVED SINCE JULY 2023, 80% FROM THE MAINLAND

P4

GOVERNANCE
LAWMAKERS SHARE ASPIRATIONS FOR THE UPCOMING GOV'T

P2

RENATO MARQUES

LAWMAKERS SHARE ASPIRATIONS ON GOV'T PRIORITIES

SEVERAL lawmakers in the Legislative Assembly have shared their aspirations and ambitions regarding what they believe should be the priority areas for the new government, led by Sam Hou Fai.

Lawmaker Ella Lei said, "I hope that the government continues to follow the governing principle of 'strengthening guarantees and improving quality of life for the population,' to boost the happiness and well-being of Macau residents."

She highlighted three specific areas of concern for Sam, relating to the need to solve structural unemployment, hire non-resident workers, and improve employment opportunities for young and middle-aged job seekers.

On the matter of structural unemployment, Lei believes that while the unemployment rate is currently relatively low, there are still issues of underemployment and residents on very low wages who are close to being unable to sustain themselves and their families.

Another of Lei's priorities is the hiring of non-resident workers (TNR). She highlighted her hope for better rules that will ensure job exclusivity for local residents in roles such as crou-

piers, supervisor and drivers.

She also called for better oversight of contracts with TNR to avoid wage or rights reductions when compared to local workers.

The lawmaker also urged the development of specific plans for the employment and professional development of young people and middle-aged people to help those facing limited job opportunities. She noted that job seekers looking for their first job, as well as those who are advanced in their careers or who are older, often have fewer job opportunities and find it difficult to find a new job after being laid off or terminated.

On a different note, lawmaker Lei Chan U said the new government should be guided by public opinion in policy-making, urging the government to engage with different sectors and listen to suggestions made by members of society who often propose actionable strategies to solve the problems they face.

Another priority raised was traffic improvement. Lawmaker



Chui Sai Peng



Ella Lei

Chui Sai Peng called for greater attention to regional and inter-regional traffic, highlighting the need for the new government to create a detailed plan that takes into account the impact of new

developments such as the Zone A of the new landfills and other areas expected to see population growth. Chui also called for better traffic management and signage during construction de-

tours. Lawmaker Ngan Iek Hang advocated for improved sports and recreational facilities, noting the policy of transforming Macau into a "Sports City" has caught the attention of many. He said residents have been more interested in participating in sports, which has put pressure on existing facilities, some of which need urgent attention and upgrades.

Ngan highlighted the need to commence concrete plans for land of the former Jockey Club in Taipa, which the lawmaker believes should be used for sports and recreational facilities.

José Maria Pereira Coutinho noted that "Many citizens place a new hope in the future CE and team. But ahead of him lies an enormous challenge to revitalize the local economy. This will call for skills and talents to solve the major problems that affect citizens' lives: from unemployment to road traffic, to the quality of public health services, and the need to improve the quality, efficiency, effectiveness and transparency of public spending."

Pereira Coutinho added, "The Macau SAR needs to interna-

tionalize by implementing economic policies to attract direct foreign investment by launching a global investment promotion campaign under the motto 'Investing in Macau'."

"It could also lead commercial delegations abroad to promote investments, and participate in the major global industry, tourism, and technology fairs," he said.

"It could offer consultancy services in strategic locations on important issues such as low taxes, flexible rules of origin, trade liberalization of goods, simplicity of customs procedures, and freedom in movement of capital and human resources."

Lawmaker Song Pek Kei said "the new government team must deepen reform, innovate and adapt on development needs, unite the forces of 'Love for the country and Macau,' and respond to the expectations of citizens." She said this is the only way to "open a new chapter for Macau's development and promote stable and lasting implementation of the 'one country, two systems' principle."

According to Song, to achieve these ambitions, the new administration must prioritize recruitment of talent and engage in communication and collaboration with all sectors to understand and fulfil the needs of Macau society.



Ngan Iek Hang



Lei Chan U



Song Pek Kei



José Maria Pereira Coutinho

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

SEND NEWSWORTHY INFORMATION AND PRESS RELEASES TO: NEWSROOM@MACAUDAILYTIMES.COM WEBSITE: WWW.MACAUDAILYTIMES.COM.MO

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

Cotai's outdoor concert venue prepares for trial concerts

NADIA SHAW

DELAND Leong, President of the Cultural Affairs Bureau (IC), has announced plans for trial concerts at the new outdoor performance area in Cotai, which will accommodate approximately 50,000 spectators. Speaking yesterday on the sidelines of a cultural fashion show, Leong expressed enthusiasm about the venue's anticipated completion next month.

The trial operation aims to engage the public and familiarize them with the venue's logistics.

"We want to share joy with the public," Leong stated, emphasizing that details regarding venue rental and usage regulations would soon be announced. Initial activities feature a limited number of spectators, with plans to increase attendance over time to ensure a



smooth experience for all.

Previously, Chief Executive Ho Iat Seng said the advancement of Macau's performing arts and conventions industries are vital to the city's bid to diversify from the gaming sector. Over the past two years, the performing arts scene has thrived, attracting numerous international artists; however,

current indoor venues are limited, with the largest accommodating only 16,000 patrons. In response, the new outdoor venue is being developed to host up to 80,000 patrons, ensuring minimal disruption to local residents.

In addition to the concert announcement, Leong provided updates on the Lai Chi Wan

Shipyards revitalization project. The project remains on track for a December opening, with further phases planned for early 2025. It includes restoring structures for various leisure functions while preserving some shipyards in their original state.

Leong also addressed a recent incident involving a private vehicle that crashed into a Portuguese-style building, stating that authorities were awaiting a report from the police before proceeding with repair efforts and legal measures.

At the new Cotai venue, basic facilities and complementary equipment for large-scale performances will be established. These enhancements will enable international-level performing arts programs to be introduced, attracting institutions from both Macau and abroad that plan and organize outdoor cultural festivals and performances.

MATERNITY LEAVE ALLOWANCE FOR EMPLOYERS OPENS

The Labour Affairs Bureau (DSAL) has introduced Administrative Regulation No. 34/2024, providing a temporary allowance for employers who offer paid maternity leave to employees, as part of the new "Supplementary Allowance Plan for Maternity Leave Remuneration". Employers offering 70 days of paid maternity leave to resident employees who give birth between May 26, 2023, and Dec. 31, 2025, can apply for an allowance equal to 14 days' worth of the employee's base pay. Applications must be submitted within 150 days of the employee's delivery, with a deadline of Jan. 27, 2025, for those whose childbirth occurs before Oct. 29, 2024.

TEMPORARY BLOOD DONATIONS AT LAGO BUILDING

Starting today from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m., a blood donation vehicle will be temporarily parked in front of the Lago Building, offering blood donation services. The Blood Transfusion Centre's mobile vehicle will operate in the parking space reserved for loading and unloading vehicles, located on Rua dos Açores, next to Edifício do Lago (Block Six), Taipa, to facilitate blood donations from residents and increase blood collection. The Blood Transfusion Centre provides this service monthly in select areas around Macau every Tuesday except for public holidays.

TAIPA CENTRAL PARK SWIMMING POOL REOPENS

Taipa Central Park Swimming Pool has reopened to the public, the Sports Bureau (ID) announced in a press statement. In the statement, the bureau stated that requirements for reopening for public use have been met, citing disinfection, cleaning, and water replacement works. The swimming pool was temporarily closed down last week after tests revealed an Escherichia coli (E. coli) contamination, with the bureau offering refunds to those who purchased tickets through the online booking system. Online booking service is also available again, allowing residents to purchase swimming tickets for the next two days or walk-in tickets for swimming activities.

SVA REPORT

Political risks in China may affect foreign gaming operators

STAFF REPORTER

POLITICAL risks in China are increasingly impacting Macau, raising concerns for foreign investors, Steve Vickers and Associates (SVA) said in a report yesterday.

The election of Sam Hou Fai as Macau's Chief Executive in October 2024 reflects "a growing emphasis on tighter state control and reduced flexibility for business in China as a whole," SVA added.

Sam, a former judge and member of the trusted "Thirteen Taibao," is the first mainland-born individual to govern Macau. His leadership is expected to bring heightened oversight, with a mandate to reduce the city's reliance on gaming—a move aligned with Beijing's "common prosperity" agenda and its push for "dual circulation."

This policy shift in-



tensifies "rising political risks for business in Macau," as new regulatory measures will likely target foreign-owned casinos and restrict capital movement. Macau's casino industry, which has traditionally facilitated the flow of money out of mainland China, now faces mounting pressure,

the report says.

Recent crackdowns on junket operators, illegal foreign exchange, and underground banks underscore Beijing's efforts to curb capital outflows. In 2023 alone, Macau saw around 11,000 arrests tied to these activities.

Under Sam's administration, significant

investments are expected in non-gaming sectors such as tourism, entertainment, and conferences, with casino operators mandated to support this diversification.

According to Vickers, this shift "presents both challenges and opportunities, impacting growth prospects for

foreign investors while aligning Macau more closely with China's broader economic policies."

As these developments unfold, investors in China, Hong Kong, and Macau must re-evaluate strategies to mitigate risks and adapt to regulatory shifts, SVA advises.

TALENT COMMITTEE'S NEW STRATEGIES TO ATTRACT TOP TALENT

VICTORIA CHAN

THE Talent Development Committee held its second plenary meeting of the year Monday, with Chairman and Chief Executive Ho Iat Seng presiding over the proceedings. During the session, officials reported on the status of the talent introduction plan and outlined the optimization strategy for the initiative's upcoming third phase.

Launched in July 2023, the initiative aims to attract skilled professionals, particularly in the financial sector and scientific/technological research and development fields. Incentives include tax benefits, with the program even targeting Nobel Prize winners. Committee secretary-general Chao Chong Hang revealed Friday that the lion's share – around 80% – of these successful applicants are originally from the mainland, with 47% having prior work or study experience abroad.

Chao expressed enthusiasm for the growing interest in the new talent recruitment program, which she said is helping build a more diverse and globally connected candidate pool. However, Chao said the department remains committed to improving conditions for recruiting internationally qualified candidates, including



from Portuguese-speaking countries. While mainland applicants have dominated the initial intake, committee leaders have pledged to further diversify the talent pipeline in the months ahead.

Specific details of the revamped talent plan have not been obtained during this report, but committee members emphasized a focus on key growth sectors, enhanced support services for new arrivals, and collaborative efforts with the private sector to identify and address skills gaps. The changes are expected to be unveiled in the coming months, as Macau continues its pursuit of becoming a hub for innovation and professional excellence.

In his speech, Ho Iat Seng empha-

sized the territory's commitment to fostering innovation and entrepreneurship by attracting international talent. Leveraging the "one country, two systems" framework, Macau aims to enhance its appeal to high-end talent through global cooperation. Officials highlighted the importance of cultivating local talent alongside external expertise, including initiatives like expanding university operations in Hengqin. Macau plans to create a supportive environment, simplifying business and educational arrangements to make the city an attractive destination for professionals and their families. These efforts underscore Macau's drive to transform into an innovation and talent hub for the Greater Bay Area.

Lawmaker calls for revamp of continuing education scheme

LAWMAKER Chan Hou Seng has called for a complete revamp of the Continuing Education subsidy scheme. At the Legislative Assembly and speaking during the period before the agenda, Chan said that the program has proven inefficient and requires serious reevaluation.

"The Continuous Education Program provides a subsidy of 6,000 patacas every three years to residents over the age of 15. Despite being in place for several years, many beneficiaries seldom utilize this subsidy due to the course content, a lack of time to participate, and personal interest," he said. He added, "Some have never used even a single pataca from the program. This issue needs to be addressed."

Chan proposed a review of the program, suggesting the government study the possibilities of expanding its scope and conditions of use.

"For example, expenses for purchasing tickets to

shows and arts and culture workshops can serve as valuable training and enhance knowledge for the general public," he suggested. He added, "We can also consider the health vouchers that can be transferred between family members," advocating for a system that would allow older individuals who may not be interested in using the training subsidy to transfer it to younger generations who have more time and interest in pursuing these opportunities.

"Of course, this will present more challenges for inspections, but I believe that the relevant authorities can manage it effectively," the lawmaker remarked.

According to Chan, "Metaphorically speaking, the economy is flesh and blood, while culture is the soul; together, they complement each other, creating a healthy body. A vibrant culture and market development are indicators of economic prosperity." **RM**

AD

律師事務所



C&C
LAWYERS
& NOTARIES
SINCE 1996



合夥人 PARTNERS:

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

大律師 ASSOCIATES:

高文軒 Adelino Correia °
羅善齡 Zelina Rodrigues
馬潔冰 Maria João Marques
陶義德 António Isóo de Azeredo
白穎怡 Iclíia Berenguel
冼玲鳳 Mariana Afonso Esteves
馬秀文 Sofia Mendes Martins
飛嘉華 Carlos dos Santos Ferreira °
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
吳靈鋒 Ng Teng Fong

實習律師 TRAINEE LAWYERS:

陳健雄 Eurico Chan
蔡博晴 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)





Hengqin residents satisfied with living environment

NADIA SHAW

A recent survey by the Guangdong-Macau In-depth Cooperation Zone Statistics

Bureau indicated nearly 77% of Hengqin residents are satisfied with their living environment. This positive sentiment is largely linked to the area's public services, with

34% of respondents citing high-quality elderly care, healthcare, and education as key factors for their residency.

The survey, which collected 21,000 valid responses –

20,000 from residents actively living and working in the cooperation zone and 1,269 from local Macau residents – focused on transportation, living conditions, and employment

opportunities. Notably, over 60% of participants reported that transportation within the cooperation zone is convenient.

The findings also revealed that 53% of respondents attributed improved livability to an increase in public cultural facilities. Moreover, satisfaction with the employment and entrepreneurial environment surged by approximately 25% compared to last year, reaching nearly 70%. This reflects a growing confidence in the area's economic prospects

Additionally, 56% of Macau residents surveyed acknowledged environmental similarities between Hengqin and Macau, which may further enhance cross-border collaboration and integration. The cooperation zone has been pivotal since its establishment in September 2021, aiming to promote economic diversification and integrated development between Guangdong and Macau.

Local officials said improvements in public services and infrastructure will continue to attract more residents from Macau. According to multiple media sources, the Macau New Neighborhood project promises over 4,000 housing units designed specifically for Macau residents, enhancing the appeal of Hengqin as a viable living option for locals.

Record meth bust at the airport

VICTORIA CHAN

THE Judiciary Police (PJ) has busted the largest methamphetamine smuggling ring in the region's history, seizing approximately 11.1 kilograms of the drug, estimated at a street value of around MOP36.3 million.

The bust occurred Sunday evening when a 27-year-old Taiwanese man, surnamed Wang, was intercepted at Macau International Airport after arriving on a flight from Thailand. PJ officers acting on intelligence reports had been monitoring the suspect, whom they believed was part of a broader drug trafficking network. The suspect, carrying a large suitcase, was described as "very



shaky and panicky" upon arrival.

The police chief said that this was the largest methamphetamine seizure ever made in Macau. He suspects the drugs were meant to be transhipped to Hong Kong, with Macau serving as a transit point for the operation.

During the search, police discovered 10 packages of

methamphetamine disguised as tea and concealed in three large gift boxes in the suspect's luggage. Wang, who is unemployed, reportedly confessed to smuggling the drugs from Thailand to Macau on the instructions of an online drug cartel. He was promised a MOP12,000 reward if the delivery was successful.

Probing the wider

criminal syndicate linked to the drug trafficking scheme, the PJ expressed concern over Macau's potential rise as a key transit point for the trafficking of narcotics between Southeast Asia regions and Hong Kong. The suspect has been handed over to the Public Prosecutions Office for further investigation and accusation.

MACAU SHOWCASES CHARM AT HUELVA'S APAVT CONGRESS

NADIA SHAW

THE Macao Government Tourism Office (MGTO) hosted a vibrant "Macau Night" in Huelva, Spain, on Oct. 25, coinciding with the 49th Portuguese Association of Travel and Tourism Agencies (APAVT) Congress. This event aimed to highlight Macau's appeal as a premier destination for tourism, conventions, and exhibitions.

The evening featured a unique blend of east-meets-west gastronomy and cultural entertainment, showcasing Macau's rich heritage. Approximately 640 delegates from the Portuguese travel industry attended the dinner, where MGTO extended an invitation to the upcoming 50th APAVT Congress, scheduled for Dec. 2 to 4, 2025, in Macau.

Maria Helena de Senna Fernandes, MGTO director, attended the conference alongside Buddy Lam from Galaxy Entertainment Group. During the event, APAVT symbolically handed over the congress flag to the Macau hosts,

marking a significant milestone for the destination.

In her remarks, Senna Fernandes emphasized the readiness of Macau to host a memorable congress that would allow Portuguese travel professionals to explore the city's evolving tourism landscape post-pandemic.

"This event is the culmination of our collaborative efforts with APAVT to rejuvenate visitor flows between Portugal, Spain, Europe and Macau," she said.

Pedro Costa Ferreira, president of APAVT, echoed this sentiment, describing the relationship between Macau and APAVT as one of friendship and collaboration. He promised that next year's congress would be an unparalleled experience in a destination renowned for its cultural diversity.

The dinner showcased Macanese cuisine prepared by renowned chef Graça Pacheco Jorge and featured performances including traditional Chinese dance and other musical performances.

AVIATION

New air routes set to open for start of winter-spring season

LUO WANGSHU, CHINA DAILY

CHINA'S civil aviation industry is preparing for a busy winter-spring season — running from Oct 29 to March 29 — with increased international flights expected.

According to the Civil Aviation Administration of China, around 118,000 weekly passenger and cargo flights will be operated by 194 Chinese and international airlines during this period, reflecting a 1.2 percent growth from the previous winter-spring season.

Internationally, the CAAC has approved 178 airlines' applications to operate 19,327 weekly flights connecting China to 79 countries. Approximately 53.48 percent of these flights will serve 57 countries participating in the Belt and Road Initiative, with new expansions in Latin America, Africa and North America.

The passenger flight network to Latin America and Africa is set to expand, with more flights also planned for North America. Steady progress is anticipated in traditional markets, including Central Asia, Southeast Asia, Japan, South Korea and Europe. Meanwhile, the cargo sector has shown robust growth, with marked increases in flights to the United Arab Emirates, Germany, the United Kingdom, Belgium, the United States and Canada.

To meet rising demand, airlines are adjusting routes by adding or resuming flights.

For instance, United Airlines is set to expand its Los Angeles



Beijing Daxing International Airport

to Shanghai Pudong route from four to seven flights weekly. Air Serbia will debut a new route from Belgrade to Shanghai Pudong, offering two flights per week.

Air China is launching routes from Urumqi to Tbilisi; from Beijing to Almaty, Cairo and Tashkent; and from Chengdu to Brussels and Almaty.

China Eastern Airlines is planning a Shanghai to Cairo route, and China Southern Airlines will resume its route from Guangzhou to Perth, Australia.

In total, Air China aims to operate 105 international routes covering 44 countries and regions across 187 cities, with more than 230 international and regional flights per day, including new connections such as Shanghai to Hanoi and Urumqi

to Tbilisi.

Airports across China are also scaling up their international flight offerings. Beijing Capital International Airport is expecting an average of 176 daily international flights to 82 overseas destinations, a slight increase from last year.

New destinations for the winter-spring season include Basra, Iraq, and Vladivostok, Russia, bringing the airport's total international routes to 82, two more than in the previous summer season.

Beijing Daxing International Airport is also seeing growth, with airline Saudia launching a Beijing-Dammam route on Oct 28 and Singapore Airlines introducing daily flights to Singapore from Nov 11.

December will bring new

routes from China Southern Airlines to Sydney and Melbourne, while Royal Air Maroc plans to resume its Beijing Daxing-Casablanca route with three weekly flights from January next year.

Despite the growth, several European airlines have announced route suspensions to the Chinese mainland due to operational and economic constraints.

Virgin Atlantic plans to end its London-Shanghai service in late October due to high costs, while British Airways has suspended its London-Beijing route, and LOT Polish Airlines has paused Warsaw-Beijing flights. Lufthansa also canceled its Frankfurt-Beijing Capital route as of Oct 27, citing intense competition, although the CAAC has approved its operation, leaving

room for future adjustments if market conditions improve.

Wang Changshun, chairman of the China Air Transport Association, noted that air travel demand typically declines in the winter-spring season compared to summer and autumn.

"As the Northern Hemisphere transitions into the winter-spring period, airlines adjust capacity to match seasonal demand fluctuations," he said.

Other challenges, such as Russian airspace restrictions and heightened market competition, have also impacted the industry. Despite these factors, China's civil aviation market has shown resilience, with international air passenger traffic rebounding to over 90 percent of pre-pandemic levels from 2019 since July, according to CAAC data.

The sector recorded a 78 percent year-over-year surge in international passenger volume in the third quarter, reaching 18.2 million, which contributed to a 15.2 percent increase in overall passenger volume compared to the same period in 2019.

Wang noted that geopolitical issues are also influencing the global aviation landscape.

"China's airlines are committed to fostering open and cooperative relationships with foreign counterparts to help mitigate disruptions due to political factors," he said. "By enhancing international collaboration, Chinese airlines aim to tackle emerging challenges in the aviation sector and support the steady recovery of the global market." **MDT/CHINA DAILY**

CRIME

Knife attack near a school in Beijing injures five people, including three children

A knife attack near a school in China's capital yesterday injured five people, including three children, police said.

The attack occurred at midafternoon in Beijing's northwestern Haidian district. None of the injuries was life threatening, police said in a statement. A 50-year-old suspect surnamed Tang was detained at the scene and is under

investigation, it said.

The location of the attack given by the statement is near a famous primary school.

Video circulating on social media showed two school-aged children on the ground. Another image showed a man with blood on his face being held to the ground.

Multiple knife attacks have occurred in China

this year, including several involving school children.

Last month, a 10-year-old Japanese student died after being attacked with a knife near his school in the southern city of Shenzhen. Another attack in June at a school bus stop for a Japanese school in Suzhou injured a woman and her child. A Chinese woman who tried

to intervene was killed.

In early October, three people were killed and 15 others were wounded in a knife attack in a Shanghai supermarket.

China tightly restricts private gun ownership, "making knives and homemade explosives among the most common weapons," according to an Associated Press investigation. **MDT/AP**



Plainclothes police officers pass by a primary school following a knife attack that occurred on an intersection road near a school in the northwestern Haidian district in Beijing

PHILIPPINES

Former President Duterte says he kept a 'death squad' as mayor to kill criminals

JIM GOMEZ, MANILA

FORMER Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte told a Senate inquiry yesterday that he had maintained a "death squad" of gangsters to kill other criminals when he was mayor of a southern Philippine city.

Duterte, however, denied authorizing police to gun down thousands of suspects in a bloody crackdown on illegal drugs he had ordered as president and which is the subject of an investigation by the International Criminal Court as a possible crime against humanity.

Duterte, 79, attended the televised inquiry in his first public appearance since his term ended in 2022. The Senate is looking into the drug killings under Duterte, which were unprecedented in their scale in recent Philippine history.

Duterte acknowledged without elaborating that he once maintained a death squad of seven "gangsters" to deal with criminals when he was the long-time Davao city mayor, before he became president.

"I can make the confession now if you want," Duterte said. "I had a death squad of seven, but they were not policemen, they were also gangsters."

"I'll ask a gangster to kill somebody," Duterte said. "If you will not kill (that person), I will



Rodrigo Duterte speaks during a senate inquiry on the so-called war on drugs during his administration at the Philippine Senate in Manila, yesterday

kill you now."

Sen. Aquilino Pimentel III, who was overseeing the inquiry, and Sen. Risa Hontiveros, pressed Duterte to provide more details but the former president responded in unclear terms and said he would explain further in the next hearing.

Often cursing during the hearing, Duterte said he would take full responsibility for the killings that happened while he was president from 2016 to 2022. But he said he never ordered his national police chiefs, who also attended the inquiry, to undertake extrajudicial killings.

"Did I ever tell you to kill any criminal?" Duterte asked his

former police chiefs. They included Ronald Dela Rosa, the current senator who first enforced Duterte's campaign against illegal drugs as his national police chief.

"No, Mr. president," dela Rosa responded.

Aside from the International Criminal Court's ongoing investigation, there have been no known criminal complaints filed against Duterte in Philippine courts over the killings.

"I'm puzzled why the Justice Department hasn't filed any case," Duterte said. "I've been killing people for a long time and they haven't filed any case up to now?"

Former Sen. Leila de Lima, one of the most vocal critics of Duterte who once investigated the drug killings in Davao, said there was adequate evidence and witnesses of the extrajudicial killings but they were scared of testifying against Duterte when he was in power.

De Lima was arrested early on in Duterte's presidency on drug charges she said were fabricated to stop her from proceeding with her Senate investigation. She was cleared of the charges and released from more than six years of detention last year.

"This man, the former mayor of Davao city and the former president of the Republic of the Philippines, for so long has evaded justice and accountability," said de Lima, sitting near the former president.

"We have not made him to account after all these years," she said, and added that witnesses could now surface and help prosecute Duterte and his associates.

Arturo Lascanas, a retired police officer who served under Duterte for many years in a unit fighting heinous crime in Davao, told The Associated Press in an interview in 2022 that as many as 10,000 suspects may have been killed in Davao city on orders of Duterte and the former mayor's key aides, including him.

Lascanas, who has gone into

hiding abroad, said he had provided his testimony and other evidence to the International Criminal Court.

Duterte's associates may have removed the remains of the large number of victims buried in a quarry site in Davao city but Lascanas said the remains of some victims who were buried elsewhere by his group of policemen could still be retrieved and used as key evidence against the former leader and others.

Duterte sounded defiant through the hearing.

"If I'm given another chance, I'll wipe all of you," Duterte said of drug dealers and criminals, who he added had resumed their criminal actions after he stepped down from the presidency.

One of Asia's most unorthodox contemporary leaders, Duterte ended his turbulent six-year term in June 2022, closing out more than three decades in the country's often-rowdy politics, where he built a political name for his expletives-laced outbursts and disdain for human rights and the West.

Activists regarded him as "a human rights calamity" not only for the widespread deaths under his so-called war on drugs but also for his brazen attacks on critical media, the dominant Catholic church and political opposition. **MDT/AP**

AUSTRALIA

Woman charged with assaulting senator who shouted at the king

ROD MCGUIRK, MELBOURNE

Awoman appeared in an Australian court yesterday charged with a May assault on the Indigenous senator who shouted at King Charles III during a royal reception last week.

The assault allegedly occurred on May 25, when independent Sen. Lidia Thorpe attended an Australian Rules Football match in her hometown of Melbourne.

Ebony Bell, 28, appeared by a video link in Melbourne Magistrates' Court. She has been charged with two counts of recklessly causing



Australian Indigenous Senator Lidia Thorpe

injury and three counts of unlawful assault at a stadium.

A police statement described the 51-year-old se-

nor's injuries from the alleged assault as "minor."

But she said in a statement to the AP yesterday she had "sustained serious

nerve and spinal injuries in my neck, which required spinal surgery and a plate to be inserted."

The assault was reported

to police the next day and Bell was arrested on July 25. The women knew each other, but the motive for the alleged attack was not explained in court.

Bell's lawyer Manny Nicolosi told Magistrate Belinda Franjic the prosecution case had "real deficiencies." He said the prosecution had on Friday made an "offer," an apparent reference to a plea deal.

"I haven't had enough time to really consider it," Nicolosi told the court.

Nicolosi explained that his Indigenous client hadn't appeared in court in person because of "recent threats." The lawyer did not elaborate on those threats.

Bell remains free on bail until she appears in court next on Nov. 22. The magistrate agreed to allow her to appear again by video.

Thorpe made her first public statement about the alleged assault after she launched an expletive-laden rant at Charles during a reception in Australian Parliament House in Canberra last week.

"You are not our king. You are not sovereign," Thorpe yelled at Charles as she was led by security guards from the reception.

"You committed genocide against our people. Give us our land back. Give us what you stole from us: our bones, our skulls, our babies, our people," she added.

The main opposition party has called for Thorpe to resign from the Senate due to her attitude toward Charles, who is Australia's head of state, and have requested legal advice. **MDT/AP**

USA | EXPLAINER

The dramatic final full week of the presidential campaign: watch this

UNCERTAINTY reigns entering the final full week of the 2024 campaign with Democrat Kamala Harris and Republican Donald Trump locked in a fiercely competitive presidential contest. What happens in the coming days will be pivotal in deciding the winner.

CAN TRUMP STAY ON MESSAGE (RELATIVELY SPEAKING)?

Even before the week began, Trump's campaign risked being knocked off course by controversy. A rally at New York City's Madison Square Garden late Sunday that was meant to serve as a closing message was instead overshadowed by racist insults, including a comedian who called Puerto Rico a "floating island of garbage."

And with eight days to go until Election Day, history suggests Trump is virtually guaranteed to say or do something else controversial in the final stretch. The only question is whether it will break through.

If there's one thing we know, it's that Trump cannot help himself. He's been using authoritarian-style rhetoric in recent days to suggest that his Democratic opponents, whom he calls "the enemy within," are more dangerous to the nation than the threat posed by Russia and China.

Democrats will be combing through every Trump interview and public appearance for something similar to exploit. There are also multiple ongoing criminal investigations into Trump, who has already been convicted of 34 felony charges, that could reveal new information.

Yet Democrats are the first to admit that voter opinions of Trump is so hardened that it would take something truly stunning to change the course of the election.

There is precedent for a final-week stunner, however. Remember, it was Oct. 28, 2016, when former FBI Director James Comey sent a letter to Congress indicating that federal investigators learned of new emails pertinent to the investigation into Hillary Clinton's use



of a private email server.

WILL HARRIS' CLOSING MESSAGE HARNESS ANXIETY?

It would be an understatement to describe Democrats as anxious as Election Day looms. But there was a deliberate effort by Harris' senior team over the weekend to project optimism to help temper the fear.

Harris senior adviser Jen O'Malley Dillon predicted victory on MSNBC on Sunday: "We are confident we're going to win this thing," she said. "We're seeing extraordinary enthusiasm. This is going to be a close race, and our campaign is exactly where we want to be."

Harris will try to alleviate Democratic anxiety further on Tuesday when she delivers her "closing argument" at the Ellipse, the same spot near the White House where Trump spoke on Jan. 6, 2021 shortly before his supporters attacked the Capitol.

Harris is expected to focus her remarks on the danger Trump poses to U.S. democracy. She has called her Republican rival "a fascist" in recent days. And she's been joined by an unlikely ally, Trump's former chief of staff John Kelly, who has also described Trump as a fascist recently.

But she's expected to hit broader themes as well, encouraging voters to look behind her at the White House and imagine who will be sit-

ting at the Resolute Desk at a moment of great consequence. She's aiming to drive home the stakes of the Nov. 5 election for undecided voters — especially moderate Republicans who may be uncomfortable with Trump's divisive leadership and extreme rhetoric. And while Harris' team is betting that there is a significant number of moderates who can still be persuaded, progressive Democrats are worried she's not focused enough on economic issues in the campaign's closing days.

Democratic anxiety, we have learned, may be a fact of life.

WHERE WILL THEY GO?

The candidates' evolving travel schedules will tell us much about the battlegrounds that will matter most on Election Day.

Here's what we know for sure: Harris and Trump are aggressively competing in just seven swing states that will ultimately decide the election. They are the three so-called "Blue Wall" states — Michigan, Pennsylvania and Wisconsin — in addition to Arizona, Georgia, Nevada and North Carolina.

For a political perspective, however, not every one of the seven is created equal.

Harris spent Sunday in Pennsylvania, which may be the election's biggest prize. Harris is next scheduled to go to Michigan. And after Tuesday's closing argument in Washington, she plans to visit

North Carolina, Pennsylvania and Wisconsin on Wednesday alone. She heads to Nevada and Arizona on Thursday.

What do we know about Trump's schedule? He's booked to host at least one rally every day next week: Monday in Georgia, Tuesday in Pennsylvania, Wednesday in Wisconsin, Thursday in Nevada, Friday in Wisconsin again and Saturday in Virginia.

But as a reminder, these schedules are likely to change based on the campaigns' intelligence on the ground.

WILL THE EARLY VOTING SURGE CONTINUE?

More than 41 million votes have already been cast in the election nationwide. Democrats generally have an advantage in early voting, but so far, at least, Republicans are participating at a much higher rate than they have in the past.

HOW HARD WILL TRUMP WORK TO UNDERMINE RESULTS?

History may one day decide that the most significant thing Trump said in the closing days of the 2024 election is the thing that many voters barely notice anymore: his persistent warnings that this election is rigged against him.

Indeed, as Election Day approaches, Trump is increasingly warning his supporters that he will lose on Nov. 5 only if his political opponents cheat. Such statements have no basis in fact. MDT/AP

this day in history

1975 FRANCO'S 36-YEAR REIGN ENDS



General Franco's dictatorship has effectively ended with the announcement heir designate Prince Juan Carlos will take over as provisional head of state for Spain.

The move comes as a result of the general's continuing illness. He has suffered a massive series of heart attacks and internal bleeding in the last three weeks.

The 37-year-old prince has been groomed for the role since he was named heir designate in 1969, continuing an agreement between General Franco and the Prince's father.

The urgent need of a leader for the country persuaded the prince to take over on a provisional basis, something which he had been reluctant to repeat.

He had previously been placed in charge last June when Franco was last ill but lasted a mere six weeks.

The prince will have to wait until the general dies, thought to be a matter of days, before he is officially sworn in as King.

The latest report on the health of General Franco said his condition remained grave. The onset of a mouth infection and an increase of liquid in the peritoneal cavity are said to be adding to the problems being faced by the semi-comatose dictator.

The placement of the Prince as King and commander-in-chief was deemed more favourable than other options, including a possible vote of incapacity by the Council of the Realm or getting the general to sign a transfer of power.

The first role for the new provisional leader will be to preside over a Cabinet meeting at Zarzuela Palace.

When sworn in he will become the first King of Spain for 44 years. After municipal elections in 1931 showed an overwhelming republican majority, the Prince's grandfather, King Alfonso XIII suspended the exercise of royal power and went into exile.

Courtesy BBC News

IN CONTEXT

General Franco died on 20 November 1975. The decision was made by doctors who had been keeping him alive through 34 days of critical illness.

In his last message to the nation the dictator said: "I ask pardon of all my enemies, as I pardon with all my heart all those who declared themselves my enemy, although I did not consider them to be so."

Prince Juan Carlos was sworn in as King of Spain on 22 November 1975. His first major role was to attend the funeral of the former dictator where he joined thousands of other mourners.

MACAU'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

YOUR STARS

ARIES Mar. 21-Apr. 19 Take bold action. Push your physical performance to new heights...

TAURUS Apr. 20-May. 20 Romance saunters in the door and lingers seductively. Make a dreamy connection...

GEMINI May. 21-Jun. 21 Creativity flourishes at your house, despite a challenge. Connect with family for spontaneous collaborations...

CANCER Jun. 22-Jul. 22 Unusual suggestions and brilliant ideas incite a creative flurry. Your muses sing to you...

LEO Jul. 23-Aug. 22 Grab a lucky break. Discover new income, extra silver or unexpected treasure. Accept valuable advice...

VIRGO Aug. 23-Sep. 22 Ask for what you want. You can get what's needed. Your greatest strength is love. Somehow things align for a personal dream...

LIBRA Sep. 23-Oct. 22 Listen to your intuition. You're especially sensitive and perceptive. Wondrous insights reveal themselves when least expected...

SCORPIO Oct. 23-Nov. 21 Others believe in you. A community effort produces more than you asked for. An unexpected bonus arises from your contribution to a shared cause...

SAGITTARIUS Nov. 22-Dec. 21 Intuition provides the best timing with a professional project. New income is possible. Visualize perfection. Secure the ground taken. The tide's in your favor...

CAPRICORN Dec. 22-Jan. 19 Educational adventures develop. Work to make a good impression on a respected teacher or mentor. Adapt to changes. Make an incredible discovery upon investigation...

AQUARIUS Jan. 20-Feb. 18 An unexpected financial opportunity presents itself. Actions taken now can have sensational results. Take advantage of a profitable loophole...

PISCES Feb. 19-Mar. 20 Things with your partner could get dreamy. Good fortune reveals a secret benefit. Discover a beautiful coincidence, hidden blessing or unplanned act of serendipity...

The Born Loser by Chip Sansom



SUDOKU

EASY

9x9 grid for EASY Sudoku puzzle.

EASY+

9x9 grid for EASY+ Sudoku puzzle.

MEDIUM

9x9 grid for MEDIUM Sudoku puzzle.

HARD

9x9 grid for HARD Sudoku puzzle.

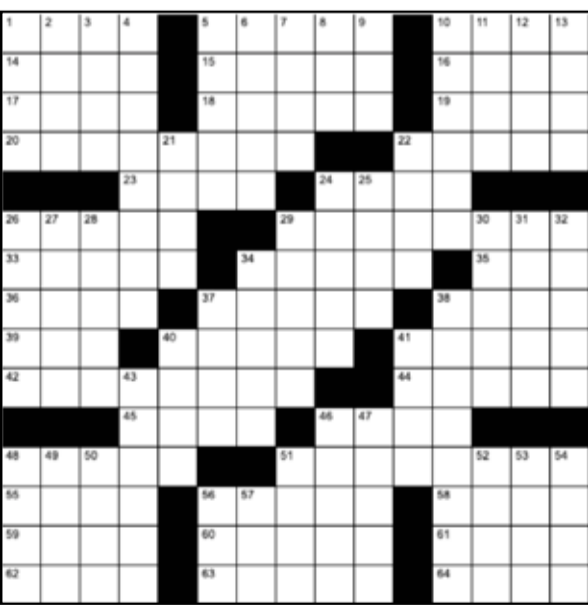
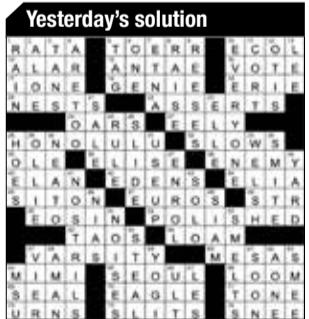
WEATHER

Weather forecast table with columns for MIN, MAX, and CONDITION for various cities in China and the World.

CROSSWORDS

ACROSS 1- Scarf; 5- Course with pluses and minuses; 10- Feathered creature; 14- Third Gospel; 15- Detest; 16- On or towards the Mediterranean...

DOWN 1- Deli side; 2- Ambience; 3- Pelt; 4- Migraine; 5- New Zealand native; 6- French clerics; 7- God of thunder; 8- Weeding implement...



Crossword puzzles provided by BestCrosswords.com

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



Real estate advertisement for jml property featuring three property listings: Hoi Wan Retail (Taipa) HKD 12,980,000, Tou Un (Taipa) HKD 2,750,000, and Jade Garden (Taipa) HKD 11,880,000. Includes contact information and a QR code.

2024 GEG Lusofonia Festival Rock and Rolls



The "2024 GEG Lusofonia Festival" kicked off last Friday, presenting a combination of Chinese and Portuguese arts and cultures that will last over two weekends (until Nov. 3). This year, Galaxy Entertainment Group (GEG) has taken on a new role as an organizer, collaborating with the Cultural Affairs Bureau (IC) to jointly host the Festival.

Additionally, GEG jointly organized the "GEG Traditional Music and Dance Performance" with IC for the 6th "Encounter in Macao – Arts and Cultural Festival between China and the Portuguese-speaking Countries," showcasing the lively rhythms and colorful dances of the different Portuguese-speaking cultures at numerous spots across the city, including the Diamond Lobby and Crystal Lobby of Galaxy Macau integrated resort.

To foster community engagement in culture and arts, GEG also partnered with the Youth Volunteers Association of Macao to invite family members from the Iao Hon Community Center of the Federation of Neighborhood Associations of Macau to partake in these celebrations, where they enjoyed traditional dance performances and cultural games with members from the GEG Volunteer Team.



FOOTBALL

Man U fires Ten Hag after woeful start to the season

MANCHESTER United finally ran out of patience and fired manager Erik ten Hag yesterday after a troubled start to the season which has left the 20-time English champions languishing in the Premier League amid a period of major upheaval at the club.

The Dutch coach won two domestic cups in his 2 1/2 years in charge but has paid the price for leading United to its worst start to a season, with the team having lost four of its opening nine league games and in 14th place.

Heavy home losses to fierce rival Liverpool and Tottenham left Ten Hag under severe pressure and seemingly changed the mood among United fans

who have been prepared to give him more time. A 2-1 loss at West Ham on Sunday proved to be his last game in charge.

United has won just one of its last eight games in all competitions.

"Erik ten Hag has left his role as Manchester United men's first-team manager," United said, adding that Ruud van Nistelrooy would be taking over as interim head coach while a permanent head coach is recruited.

Among those linked with taking over at United are former England coach Gareth Southgate, former Chelsea manager Graham Potter, former Barcelona coach Xavi Hernandez and FC Porto's former coach Sérgio Conceição. **MDT/AP**

BOXING

Topuria makes good on his promise, first man to stop Holloway

FEATHERWEIGHT champion Ilia Topuria vowed to become the first man to knock out Max Holloway.

He made good on his promise at UFC 308 in Abu Dhabi last weekend.

Using a huge right hand to daze Holloway, Topuria (16-0) followed up moments later with a powerful left hook that dropped the 32-year-old. Topuria pounced on Holloway immediately for a ground-and-pound finish before referee Mark Goddard stopped the bout at the 1:34 mark of the third round.

"To beat a legend like Max Holloway, I don't know what to say," Topuria said. "He's been a great example for the generation. ... I hope I'm gonna be a small example he has been for me for the new generation."

Topuria said he knew immediately with his initial power punch that the victory was within his grasp.

"I catch him with ... the right hand, I felt it," Topuria said. "I saw it in his face. You don't see that often in Max Holloway."

Topuria opened the match with Holloway's traditional gesture of pointing



Champion Ilia Topuria (right) battles Max Holloway during a mixed martial arts featherweight title bout at UFC Fight Night in Abu Dhabi

to the center of the ring, indicating he wanted to throw down with immediacy. Holloway, instead, pointed to where he was standing.

The two mixed it up in the first round, Topuria doing early damage with leg kicks to Holloway's lead leg. Both fighters' boxing skills were on display in the second round, with Holloway landing several big shots. But it was Topuria's leg kicks that seemingly continued to weaken Holloway.

Then came his two big punches in

the third.

"He just landed a shot and I guess it hurt much more than I thought it did," said Holloway, who fell to 26-8. "I felt great until he did it. No excuses. I felt great, I had a great camp, no injuries. I went out there, did my thing. He was just a better man tonight."

It was Topuria's first title defense since capturing the belt with a second-round technical knockout of Alexander Volkanovski at UFC 298 on Feb. 17. **MDT/AP**

Enjoy the **Good Life**
Boa Vida Starts Here

Discover Now

T +853 2856 7888
Terms & conditions apply

ARTYZEN
GRAND LAPA MACAU
澳門雅辰酒店

FRANCE MACAU
Chamber of Commerce
法國澳門商會

Connect • Share • Grow

Directors' Roundtable Dinner - Strategy Map
Speaker: **Dr. Mark Lee**, Research Director at APIFS

FMCC Training
Wednesday, 6 November 2024

Dr. Mark Lee
Research Director at APIFS

Introduction:
Join us for the Directors' Roundtable Dinner - Strategy Map with Dr. Mark Lee, a leading expert in business strategy with over 25 years of experience. Learn how Strategy Maps integrate financial and non-financial metrics for a holistic view of your organization's strategy, enhancing decision-making and fostering alignment across departments. Don't miss this opportunity to engage with one of the top strategists in the Asia Pacific region!

Date: Wednesday 6 Nov, 2024
Time: 18:30 p.m. - 21:00 p.m.
Venue: W Macau - Studio City ACADEMY, 2F

- 2024 FMCC members @ MOP680*
- Non-members @ MOP880*

*The price includes a 3-course dinner and selected drinks.

RSVP before 2 p.m. on 3 Nov
info@francemacau.com or Tel: (853) 6803 0673
www.francemacau.com

• Organiser • **FRANCE MACAU** Chamber of Commerce 法國澳門商會

• Patron Member • **suez**

• Supporting Units • **W MACAU** STUDIO CITY **APIFS** **Times**

OPINION

China Daily
 Editorial, China Daily

CHINA REMAINS STABILIZING ECONOMIC FORCE

With global geopolitical rivalries intensifying and more economies resorting to protectionism, the world economy faces gloomy prospects of low growth and high debt which could leave countries with shrinking resources to improve their peoples' well-being and work together to tackle common global challenges such as climate change, the International Monetary Fund has said.

The IMF released its new economic forecast last week, saying the global economy will grow by an "anemic" 3.2 percent this year after the 3.3 percent growth in 2023. The growth rate is expected to remain 3.2 percent next year, too, well below its 2000-19 average of 3.8 percent.

Another major problem facing the world is that global government debt is set to exceed \$100 trillion for the first time this year and will continue to rise. The 190-nation lending organization said that government debt as a share of GDP, now at 93 percent, is set to reach 100 percent by 2030, exceeding its peak during the COVID-19 pandemic. "These are anxious times," the fund's managing director, Kristalina Georgieva, told reporters last week. "Trade is no more a powerful engine of growth," she said. "We live in a more fragmented global economy."

Rarely has the global economy faced the level of uncertainties it is encountering today, especially because of the presidential election in the world's largest economy, which could usher in a new era of protectionist trade policies and create trillions of dollars in new government debt.

The US currently carries nearly \$35.7 trillion in federal debt, which is only expected to grow regardless of whether Trump or Vice-President Kamala Harris is elected next month.

The two presidential candidates put forward their respective tax and spending plans during the election campaign, and if implemented, they would both likely further increase deficits and debt above levels projected under current law, according to the analysis released recently by the nonpartisan Committee for a Responsible Federal Budget.

The IMF had earlier warned that the increasing level of US government debt risks driving up borrowing costs around the world and undermining global financial stability. In the face of mounting difficulties and challenges, the IMF suggests that countries deepen structural reforms to boost long-term growth and accelerate the green transition because such moves remain as necessary as ever.

These are the exact paths China has taken to maintain a healthy growth momentum. The country has vowed to deepen structural reform in order to develop a modern socialist market economy with Chinese characteristics and pursue high-quality development to advance Chinese modernization.

The Chinese economy grew by 4.8 percent in the first three quarters of this year, greatly contributing to global growth and reflecting the stabilizing role China has been playing in the global economy thanks to the government's favorable policies and the development of new quality productive forces.

The Chinese government is confident that it will be able to achieve this year's growth target of about 5 percent with incremental pro-growth measures such as fiscal adjustments and monetary stimulus aimed at easing local government debt and injecting new vitality into the sluggish property market. In fact, the policy support has already achieved positive results.

As Vitor Gaspar, head of the IMF's department that advises governments on fiscal affairs, said, "Fiscal capacity can help China reach a different plateau in terms of its economic ambition, in terms of its economic prosperity." [Abridged]

Georgia's president yesterday urged the West to support opposition protests after the governing party was declared the winner of a parliamentary election that she alleged was rigged with the help of Russia.

President Salome Zourabichvili, who refused to recognize the official results, told The Associated Press that the South Caucasus nation has fallen victim to Russian pressure aimed at derailing Georgia's plans to join the European Union.

"We've seen that Russian propaganda was directly used," said Zourabichvili, a fierce critic of Georgian Dream, the governing party. She

said the government has been "working hand-in-hand with Russia," and "probably" received help from Moscow's security services.

The U.S. and the European Union urged full investigations of the result of Saturday's election.

"Georgians, like all Europeans, must be masters of their own destiny," said EU Commission President Ursula von der Leyen.

On Sunday, Zourabichvili stood alongside opposition leaders and urged Georgians to join a rally on the main street of the capital, Tbilisi, on Monday night to protest what she called a "total falsification, a total stealing of your votes."



NATO Secretary General Mark Rutte delivers a statement at NATO headquarters in Brussels

NATO CONFIRMS THAT NORTH KOREA HAS SENT TROOPS TO JOIN RUSSIA'S WAR IN UKRAINE

LORNE COOK, BRUSSELS

NATO yesterday confirmed that North Korean troops have been sent to help Russia in its almost three-year war against Ukraine and said some have already been deployed in Russia's Kursk border region, where Russia has been struggling to push back a Ukrainian incursion.

"Today, I can confirm that North Korean troops have been sent to Russia, and that North Korean military units have been deployed to the Kursk region," NATO Secretary-General Mark Rutte told reporters.

Rutte said the move represents "a significant escalation" in North Korea's involvement in the conflict and marks "a dangerous expansion of Russia's war."

Adding thousands of North Korean soldiers to Europe's biggest conflict since World War II will pile more pressure on Ukraine's weary and overstretched army. It will also stoke geopolitical tensions in the Korean Peninsula and the wider Indo-Pacific region, including Japan and Australia, Western officials say.

Russian President Vladimir Putin is keen to reshape global power dynamics. He sought to build a counterbalance to Western influen-

ce with a summit of BRICS countries, including the leaders of China and India, in Russia last week. He has sought direct help for the war from Iran, which has supplied drones, and North Korea, which has shipped large amounts of ammunition, according to Western governments.

Russia's Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov shrugged off Rutte's comments and noted that Pyongyang and Moscow signed a joint security pact last June. He stopped short of confirming North Korean soldiers were in Russia.

Lavrov claimed that Western military instructors already have been covertly deployed to Ukraine to help its military use long-range weapons provided by Western partners.

"Western military personnel long have been working in Ukraine," Lavrov said after a meeting with the Kuwaiti foreign minister in Moscow.

Ukraine, whose defenses are under severe Russian pressure in its eastern Donetsk region, could get more bleak news from next week's U.S. presidential election. A Donald Trump victory could see key U.S. military help dwindle.

In Moscow, the Defense Ministry announced yesterday that Russian troops have captured the Donetsk village

of Tsukuryne — the latest settlement to succumb to the slow-moving Russian onslaught.

Rutte spoke in Brussels after a high-level South Korean delegation, including top intelligence and military officials as well as senior diplomats, briefed the alliance's 32 national ambassadors at NATO headquarters.

Rutte said NATO is "actively consulting within the alliance, with Ukraine, and with our Indo-Pacific partners," on developments. He said he was due to talk soon with South Korea's president and Ukraine's defense minister.

"We continue to monitor the situation closely," he said. He did not take questions after the statement.

The South Koreans showed no evidence of North Korean troops in Kursk, according to European officials who were present for the 90-minute exchange and spoke to The Associated Press about the security briefing on condition of anonymity.

It's unclear how or when NATO allies might respond to the North Korean involvement. They could, for example, lift restrictions that prevent Ukraine from using Western-supplied weapons for long-range strikes on Russian soil. MDT/AP



Myanmar A year after coordinated attacks, Myanmar's resistance forces now control substantial territories, posing challenges for the military government. This expansion raises civilian casualties and displacement as international observers worry the country could descend into prolonged conflict.



India's first private military aircraft plant, a Tata-Airbus collaboration, was inaugurated yesterday by Indian PM Modi and Spain's Sanchez. The plant is part of a \$2.5 billion deal to build C-295 military transport aircraft, boosting India's defense manufacturing and strategic autonomy.



Egypt has proposed yesterday a two-day ceasefire in Gaza, during which four hostages would be released. Talks in Qatar may determine the truce's future, with the U.S. involved. Both Israeli and Hamas responses to the ceasefire offer remain pending as regional tensions escalate.



Germany Volkswagen has proposed closing three German plants and potentially more cuts, citing industry challenges and high costs. Yesterday, hundreds of employees stood at an information event organized by the General Works Council of Volkswagen AG at the VW main plant in Wolfsburg. The employee council vowed to fight the decision, which impacts all VW sites in Germany.