



THE PJ DETECTED FOUR CASES LINKED TO A NEW SYNTHETIC DRUG, WHICH IS BELIEVED TO HAVE CAUSED THREE DEATHS IN HONG KONG

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XINHUA



China Longmen Bridge, the longest cross-sea bridge in Guangxi Zhuang autonomous region, opened to traffic on Sunday, slashing the time needed to travel between the Qinzhou Port and Fangchenggang Port from 1.5 hours to 25 minutes. According to the local government, the Longmen Bridge in Qinzhou stretches approximately 7.6 kilometers.

AP PHOTO



Thailand A fire broke out at a hotel near Bangkok's Khao San Road, a popular tourist destination, killing three foreigners and injuring several other people. Thai police said yesterday. The three who died in the fire on Sunday night were all foreign tourists. One was found dead at the scene and the other two died after being transported to the hospital. Police later identified the dead as a Brazilian woman, a Ukrainian man and an American man.

AP PHOTO



Georgia Former soccer player Mikheil Kavelashvili (pictured) was formally inaugurated as president of Georgia on Sunday, cementing the ruling party's grip in what the opposition calls a blow to the country's EU aspirations and a victory for former imperial ruler Russia.

AP PHOTO



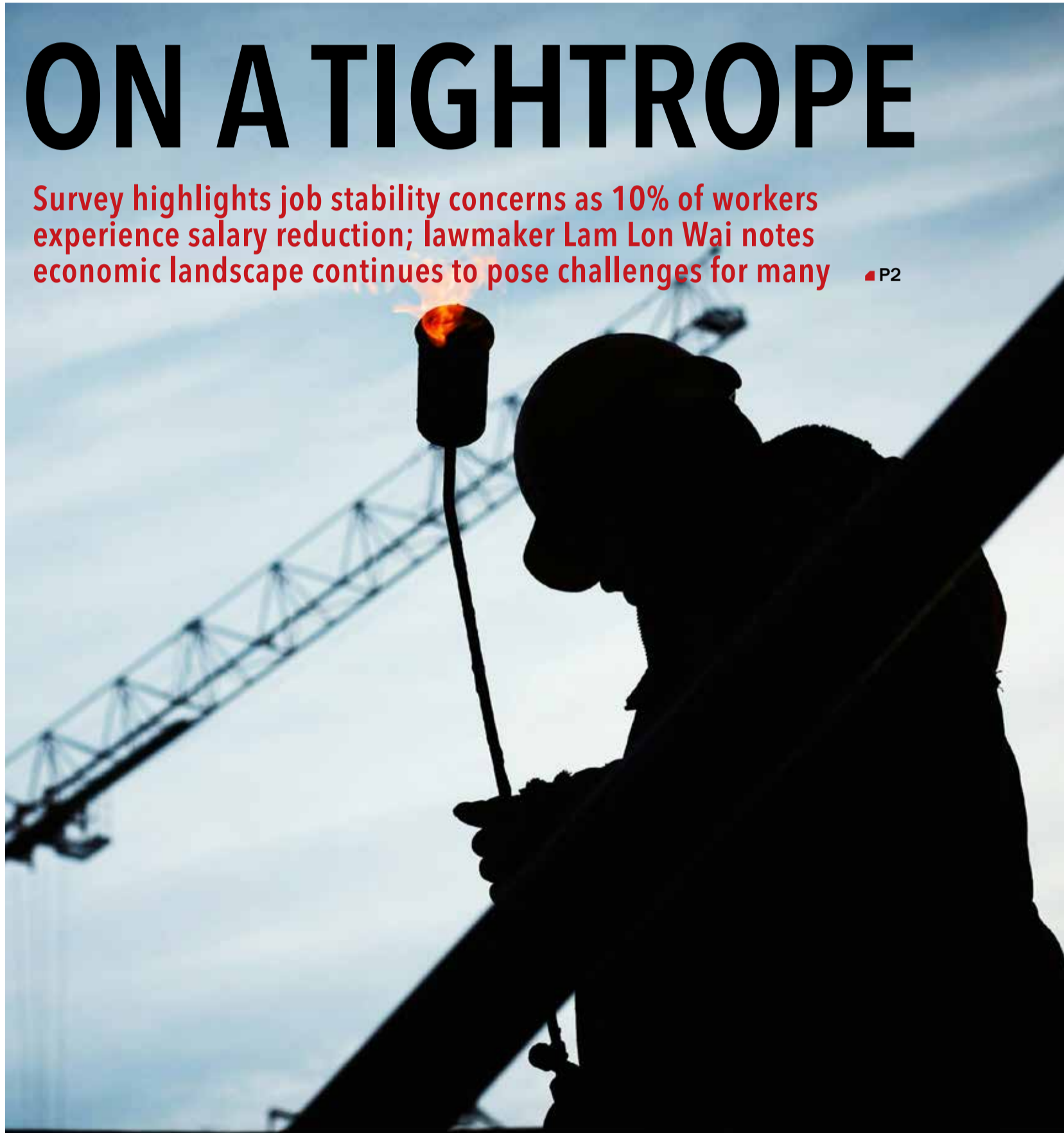
Serbia's public prosecutor yesterday indicted 13 people, including a former minister, over the collapse of a concrete canopy that killed 15 people last month and triggered weeks of massive anti-government protests. The suspects were charged in the northern city of Novi Sad, where the collapse happened on Nov. 1.

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ON A TIGHTROPE

Survey highlights job stability concerns as 10% of workers experience salary reduction; lawmaker Lam Lon Wai notes economic landscape continues to pose challenges for many

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FAOM

SURVEY REVEALS 10% OF WORKERS FACED PAY CUTS IN 2024

NADIA SHAW

A recent survey by the Macau Federation of Trade Unions (FAOM) and the Macau Economic Association has unveiled mixed results regarding employee work status across various industries. Conducted from January to December 2024, the survey gathered over 2,000 valid responses, indicating that while many workers have retained their salaries, significant challenges persist.

Nearly 70% of respondents reported no changes to their salaries this year.

However, about 10% experienced pay cuts, reflecting ongoing economic pressures.

Lawmaker Lam Lon Wai noted that "the economic landscape continues to pose challenges for many workers," stressing the need for stronger labor protections.

The survey also assessed job satisfaction, yielding an average score of 6.19 out of 10. Although this represents a slight improvement from previous years, over 52% of respondents expressed concerns about their work environment.

"Despite a decrease in anxiety levels, many employees remain worried about job security and industry stability," Lam stated at a press conference.



In terms of turnover recovery post-pandemic, the survey found that 40% of companies have regained between 70% and 90% of their pre-pandemic revenue.

Conversely, nearly 10% reported recovering less than half of their previous turnover, highlighting the uneven recovery across different sectors in Macau's economy.

The survey also identified ongoing issues related to illegal labor practices. Lam pointed out that "the problem of

illegal non-resident workers remains serious," with 630 illegal workers apprehended between 2023 and early 2024. He called for a comprehensive review of the Labour Relations Law to enhance employee rights and improve law enforcement efficiency.

Regarding career development, more than 40% of respondents expressed a desire for increased on-the-job training opportunities. Lam emphasized the importance of vocational skills training and

suggested establishing scholarships for middle-aged employees to encourage further education. He advocated for incorporating certifications into promotion and salary considerations to foster continuous learning.

The survey explored employees' intentions regarding job changes as well. Only 11% indicated they were considering a career switch, a decrease from previous surveys. This suggests that while anxiety persists, workers may feel

lightly more secure in their current positions.

In response to global challenges such as extreme weather conditions, Lam proposed improvements to workplace guidelines to ensure employee safety during adverse events. He urged companies to adopt scientific assessment tools like the heat index to better protect workers.

Additionally, the survey stated that "it is crucial for employers to respect employees' private time," recommending businesses grant workers the "right to disconnect" to maintain a healthier work-life balance.

Local underemployment has worsened, with the number of underemployed individuals rising by 1,100 to a total of 5,800 for the rolling three-month period ending in November 2024. This marks a significant increase of 23.4% compared to previous figures from the Statistics and Census Service (DSEC), published on December 30, 2024.

Most underemployed individuals are concentrated in the real estate and business sectors as well as transport and storage. Underemployment reflects a troubling trend where individuals are forced to accept part-time roles or positions that do not match their skills or wage expectations due to a lack of better job opportunities.

The overall underemployment rate in Macau has now reached 1.5%, an increase of 0.3 percentage points from earlier periods.

Govt denies restricting press freedom

VICTORIA CHAN

THE Macau government has refuted accusations of hindering the work of certain media outlets, insisting that it has "always safeguarded freedom of the press in accordance with the law."

In response to a written question from lawmaker Ron Lam, the Government Information Bureau (GCS) stated that the exclusion of some media outlets from official events is due to

the "greater demand from overseas media outlets."

Both the lawmaker and the Macau Journalists Association had previously accused the government of restricting the work of certain media outlets by excluding them from official events.

GCS, however, denied these accusations, reiterating that it has "always safeguarded press freedom in accordance with the law, strictly following legal provisions, and protecting



the right to information" of media professionals.

GCS explained that the government's invitations to official events have been

limited to journalists from daily and weekly newspapers, television, radio, and news agencies due to "limited space at the venue."

This has resulted in publications such as the monthly publication All About Macau, as well as some international publications and agencies, being prevented from attending these events.

In response to Lam's questions, GCS reiterated the argument that there has been a greater demand from overseas media outlets for news coverage of official events. The organizing entities, GCS said, prioritize television and radio stations, publications with greater frequency, and news agencies, which is a "common international practice."

The Macau Journalists Association, however, has refuted this argument, stating that the rooms used for press conferences have the capacity to accommodate many more journalists than those who are present.

GCS also stated that most press conferences are broadcast live, allowing local and overseas media outlets to access the information released, even if they are not present at the location. Additionally, the government disseminates various reporting materials, such as texts, images, videos, and infographics, through different platforms to the media outlets.

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VICTORIA CHAN



DSEDJ

Kindergarten registration to open Jan. 6

VICTORIA CHAN

THE central registration for children entering kindergarten for the first time in the 2025/2026 school year will take place from January 6 to 16, 2025, officials announced yesterday.

According to Choi Man Chi, director of the Youth Department's School Sports and Youth Activities Division in DSEDJ,

despite the fact that the declining birth rate is a global issue, Macau has sufficient places to ensure that all children have access to education.

Under the registration measures, parents of children born between 2020 and 2022 who will be enrolling in early childhood education for the first time in Sept. 2025 must register centrally from Jan. 6 to 16, 2025. They can then check online for

their child's interview time from February 19-21 and attend the interview from March 1 to 25.

"Our target is Dec. 31, 2025" said Ka Si In, director of Primary and Early Childhood Education. "To put it simply, they are Macau residents who were born between 2020 and 2022 and are enrolling in early childhood education in Macau for the first time."

After the admission list is an-

nounced from Apr. 7 to 9, parents must confirm their child's enrollment online. From Apr. 11 to 14, they can then go to the school and use a QR code to complete the registration procedures.

"The entire measure will involve two codes. One is called the interview QR code, and the other is the day school QR code," Ka explained. "The two codes will be slightly different in color, allowing parents to easily distinguish between the interview and enrollment processes."

"If parents want to apply for a school in Hengqin, they can register through our central registration website or register on the MacaoOne app," Choi said.

The new system aims to simplify the enrollment process for parents. "The school has been actively cooperating with the new schedule and relevant guidelines to ensure that the enrollment process is smooth and orderly each year, making it easier for parents to prepare, attend interviews, and confirm their children's registration," Choi said.

In the 2025-26 school year, an estimated 4,000 to 6,000 children will be eligible to enroll in the first grade of early childhood education across 65 schools in Macau. "There are sufficient places to ensure that all children in Macau have access to education," Choi concluded.

COLLECTION OF ROAD TAX FROM JAN. 1

The Traffic Affairs Bureau (DSAT) announces that the collection period for the 2025 road tax will run from Jan. 1 to March 31, 2025. Vehicle owners can conveniently make payments through various platforms, including the "Macao One Account" app and designated kiosks. DSAT encourages online payments, which allow users to manage multiple vehicles simultaneously. To avoid late fees, owners must settle any outstanding traffic fines before paying the tax. Those wishing to cancel vehicle registrations should do so promptly to prevent issues. Further details can be found on DSAT's official website.

APPROVAL OF NEW COMPREHENSIVE TAX CODE

The government published Law No. 24/2024 yesterday, approving the new "Tax Code" and relevant regulations that will take full effect from Jan. 1, 2026. This legislation aims to unify existing tax laws, clarifying taxpayer rights and obligations while enhancing administrative procedures. Key provisions include a 15-year limit on tax claims, the promotion of electronic tax platforms, and compliance with international standards. Some measures will be phased in earlier, with new definitions for tax residents effective Jan. 1, 2025.

MPU TO HOST OPEN DAY JAN. 4

The Macao Polytechnic University (MPU) will host its Open Day 2025 on January 4. The event will feature degree programme presentations, thematic exhibitions, workshops, experiential activities, sharing sessions, admissions consultations, and campus tours. These activities aim to provide an understanding of MPU's academic offerings and campus life. As a public university, MPU said in a statement that it aligns its programmes with Macau's "1+4" strategy, cultivating talent that meets societal needs.

Seng Ioi Man leads Electoral Affairs Committee

NADIA SHAW

THE inauguration ceremony for the president and members of the Electoral Affairs Committee (EAC) of the Legislative Assembly (AL) took place yesterday at the government headquarters, with Chief Executive Sam Hou Fai administering the oath.

Seng Ioi Man, appointed chairman of the AL's EAC, expressed gratitude for his new role. After the ceremony, he told local media, "First of all, I would like to thank the Chief Executive for his trust in appointing us as members of the Electoral Affairs Committee." He announced that the commission has scheduled its first meeting to begin preliminary work for the upcoming election.

In outlining the commission's objectives, Seng highlighted the importance of reviewing

past elections. "The preliminary work includes evaluating the previous election to identify areas needing attention and optimization this term," he said.

Seng also noted that changes in election law, revised in April, necessitate adjustments in election procedures. He further explained the significance of adhering to new regulations, saying, "The decisions made by the EAC based on relevant judgments cannot be appealed." He added that these changes aim to enhance fairness and integrity in elections, stating, "The election law strengthens provisions to curb irregularities and optimize the election process."

Regarding voter registration, Seng reported a positive trend. "As of today, the number of registered voters exceeds 330,000, com-



red to over 320,000 in the last election." He urged residents to register promptly, stating, "The EAC once again calls on residents who have not yet registered to seize this opportunity and fulfill their civic responsibilities."

Seng addressed key questions about electoral processes and polling station arrangements. In response to inquiries about polling stations, he explained that voter turnout and suitable venues are primary considerations. "According to election

law, voters have several major principles guiding polling station arrangements. The first is determining how many voters will go to a polling station in that area. The second factor is whether there is a suitable venue to ensure a convenient and safe voting environment."

He also discussed upcoming promotional activities planned for the second half of the year, including mobile registration stations aimed at facilitating public participation. Ms. Ng Wai Han emphasized that these

initiatives are designed to encourage residents to register with necessary qualifications.

Additionally, Seng highlighted recent amendments to the Election Law aimed at strengthening national security. This includes stipulations barring candidates identified as not supporting or pledging allegiance from running for election for five years. He reiterated that national regulations are in place to address these matters.

Macau permanent residents who are eligible but have not registered as voters must register as voters before Tuesday (31 December), today.

Seng further acknowledged the need for further analysis before providing definitive answers, with an assurance of ongoing evaluations, noting, "We still need to study regional figures before providing suitable answers."

COUNTDOWN TO 2025

MACAU GEARS UP FOR NYE CELEBRATIONS

STAFF REPORTER

AS the clock counts down to midnight, Macau is gearing up for one of its most anticipated nights of the year: New Year's Eve.

From extravagant parties in iconic locations to intimate gatherings in cozy venues, organizers are promising celebrations more vibrant and diverse than ever for all those looking to ring in 2025 with style.

The Cultural Affairs Bureau (IC) has organized two countdown events in Macau Peninsula and Taipa.

Revelers can head to the "Macau Countdown Concert" at Sai Van Lake Square or the "Taipa Countdown Show" at Taipa Houses Museum, which will start at 10 p.m. and 9 p.m. Dec. 31 respectively.

The two events will feature famed Hong Kong singers George Lam, Sally Yeh, and Johnny Yip, among other artists and local acts. Additionally, the "Taipa Countdown Show" will feature cultural booths from the Indonesian, Indian, Myanmar, Philippine, and Vietnamese communities.

The Macao Orchestra will also collaborate with Grammy-winning Japanese jazz pianist Hiromi Uehara on the same day, offering a rare musical experience titled "Melco Resorts & Entertainment Presents: Jazz Carnival - Macao Orchestra New Year Concert 2025."

Adrenaline seekers can look



forward to the "CEM New Year's Eve Run," which will be held Dec. 31 at 7:30 p.m.

The event marks the first large-scale opening of the Coloane Power Station to the public, providing a unique experience for runners.

Those seeking a livelier atmosphere can look forward to countdown parties held Dec. 31 at Macau's multiple resorts.

Artyzen Grand Lapa Macau is also hosting its annual "Countdown to Joy New Year's Eve Party" in the hotel lobby, from 9 p.m. onwards.

Sister-property Grand Coloane Resort has its own share of ce-

lebrations, with the "Countdown Bash: The Finale Party" in the Panorama Lounge at 10 p.m., the "New Year's Eve Countdown Party" in Café Panorama at 7 p.m., and the "New Year's Day Brunch and Bubbles" for those who want to indulge in more celebrations on New Year's Day.

Starting at 8 p.m., Altira Macau's 38 Lounge is hosting New Year's Eve celebrations, offering unrivalled views of the peninsula.

MGM Macau's ABA Bar has live band performances and themed cocktails for New Year's Eve, while MGM Cotai's Bar 58 is filled with live band music to kick off

the countdown.

Sands China is bringing back its long-awaited countdown event, which promises to be on a grander scale this year.

Starting at 9:30 p.m., Le Jardin will feature live entertainment from Tess Collins & The Party Animals and DJ Ryan.

The Parisian Macao's Eiffel Tower is set to be the canvas for a sound and light show at 11:55 p.m., after which on the stroke of midnight, a 360-degree pyrotechnics display will light up the night sky, accompanied by a specially composed soundtrack.

Fireworks will be launched from various locations including

The Venetian Macao, The Parisian Macao, and The Londoner Macao.

More countdown celebrations can also be found at Galaxy Macau.

Andaz Macau is promoting a wide range of entertainment at its countdown event, ranging from DJ sets and live music to beer pong, fortune tellers, tabletop curling, and unicycle entertainers.

China Rouge will embrace an 80s theme with live music and performances, with prizes for "Best Costume" and "Best Group Costume."

Meanwhile, the Macellan Whisky Bar & Lounge is promoting a luxurious experience of unlimited selected whiskies, Mumm Cordon Rouge NV Champagne, wines, and cocktails, plus a lucky draw to win prizes.

Available 8 p.m. onwards, The Ritz-Carlton Bar & Lounge invites guests to the Roaring-Twenties-themed "Putting on the Ritz Countdown Party," where premium champagne and gourmet dishes will be served.

The St. Regis Bar is also inviting guests to the "Glitzy and Glamorous New Year's Eve Celebration," which will start at 9 p.m.

With a gold and silver theme, attendees are invited to dance along with decadent cocktails, delicious dishes, and live jazz performances as the countdown to 2025 begins.

EVENTS

IC predicts New Year's Eve concert to draw 10,000 attendees

VICTORIA CHAN

AS final preparations are made for the upcoming New Year's Eve concert, Deland Leong Wai Man, director of the Cultural Affairs Bureau (IC), shared insights on crowd management, budget considerations, and lessons learned from recent events. Leong anticipates that this year's concert will attract approximately 10,000 attendees, in line with the numbers from previous years.

At the sidelines of the traditional blessing ceremony of the New Year's Eve concert yesterday, Leong confirmed that the budget for this year's concert is

set at 6.5 million patacas, which includes expenses for performances and logistics. Leong emphasized the focus on local talent, stating, "We mainly invite singers from Macau, including both well-known and emerging artists." In addition to local acts, the concert will feature popular Hong Kong singers.

Reflecting on a recent outdoor concert that drew 11,000 attendees - down from an expected 15,000 - Leong noted the importance of assessing audience experiences. "We aimed for a 90% occupancy rate, and we achieved that, which is generally acceptable for us," she explained. She acknowledged that the



concert served as a test for various operational considerations, including ticket sales and crowd management.

According to Leong, the bureau is anticipating around 10,000 attendees

for the coming concert, similar to previous years. "In terms of traffic facilities and passenger flow, we are expecting around 10,000 people. We have been communicating with the public security police on site, and

there will be traffic control as usual," Leong said.

She added that if the number of attendees exceeds these estimates, further crowd control measures will be implemented.

In response to feedback about transportation disruptions due to concert traffic, Leong assured citizens that the bureau is committed to continuous improvement.

"We will listen to feedback and gradually refine our approach to operations," she said. She also addressed registration issues faced by some attendees, clarifying that some problems previously experienced stemmed from incorrect information provided by users during sign-up.

Leong stated that the main purpose of the concert was not to sell tickets but to test the venue's readiness, including its supporting facilities, transportation capacity, and the guidance provided by IC

staff. "We wanted everyone to feel comfortable and clear throughout the entire process, from admission and security checks to finding their seats and leaving the venue," she said.

Leong said the bureau would review any issues and make adjustments for future events. "We may call on our audience to take precautions against the cold, such as wearing hats," she said. "As for the food area, we can explore options like adding more mobile booths inside the venue."

While the bureau has not yet finalized plans for the next concert or event, Leong said they would review the feedback from this event and adjust accordingly.

"We will also conduct some analysis on the information we have received, such as the best times for events and expected attendance, to help us plan the next event," she said.



TOURISM

International visitors surge in November

STAFF REPORTER

INBOUND package tour visitors to Macau reached 213,000 in November, marking a 5.2% increase year-on-year, according to the Statistics and Census Service (DSEC). Notably, visitors from mainland China rose by 2.1% to 189,000, while international arrivals surged by 36.3% to 20,000, with significant increases from the Republic of Korea and India

The average occupancy rate for hotel guest rooms also saw a positive trend, climbing 6.6 percentage points year-on-year to 89.7%. Despite this, the total number of

guests in hotel establishments fell by 2.5% to 1,174,000, although their average length of stay increased slightly to 1.7 nights.

In the first eleven months of 2024, inbound package tour visitors totaled 1,908,000, up 70.9% from the previous year. This growth was driven by a 63.4% increase in visitors from mainland China and a remarkable 179.4% rise in international tourists

Additionally, Macau residents purchasing outbound services through travel agencies rose by 27.7%, with those traveling on package tours increasing by an impressive 113.9%

E-CIGARETTE

Deadly 'space oil' drug linked to Hong Kong deaths

VICTORIA CHAN

JUDICIARY Police (PJ) has detected four cases linked to a new synthetic drug, known as "space oil", which is believed to have caused three deaths in neighboring Hong Kong.

According to the Social Welfare Institute (IAS), the four cases involved e-cigarette capsules purchased in mainland China or sent to Macau via international mail, PJ said in a response to questions raised by lawmaker Ella Lei.

Lei had expressed concern about the first case of space oil found in a local school in October 2023.

Space oil is a narcotic that contains etomidate, an anesthetic that can only be prescribed by health professionals. IAS stated that it will "continue to pay attention to the risk of abuse of new types of substances," including etomidate, and that the government would "proceed with the review of the law in a timely



manner, allowing the list of substances subject to control to be in line with neighboring regions and at an international level."

In Hong Kong, authorities confirmed that they suspected at least three deaths were linked to space oil by early November. The drug is known in the region as the "zombie drug" because it can cause serious physical and mental harm, including addiction, memory loss, convulsions, loss of consciousness, and even death.

Hong Kong police have arrested 98 people in 60 cases related

to space oil by the end of September, 16 of whom were under the age of 21. The number of arrests in the whole of 2023 was only nine.

Authorities in Hong Kong are working to include etomidate on the list of dangerous goods subject to restrictions as early as 2025, with illegal possession or use punishable by up to seven years in prison and a fine of HKD1 million, and a maximum penalty of life imprisonment and a fine of HKD5 million for illegal trafficking or importation of such substances.

AD



Dual Celebration New Year's Eve Countdown

Ring in the New Year with Sands China Ltd.!
Join us for a dazzling fireworks display
and live entertainment at Le Jardin
with free admission.

9:30pm

Celebrate with a band and DJ

11:55pm

Experience a world-class fireworks show over
The Venetian Macao, The Parisian Macao and
The Londoner Macao

Special traffic arrangements will be in place on
sections of the Cotai Strip **from 11:00pm until 1:00am**
Scan for details on traffic arrangements.



TOURISM

CHINA EXPECTS NEW YEAR HOLIDAY TOURISM BOOM WITH RELAXED IMMIGRATION POLICIES

WITH the latest relaxation and extension of its immigration policies, China is expected to become a popular destination for foreign tourists this upcoming New Year holiday.

The number of inbound and outbound passengers will reach 2.05 million per day during the New Year holiday in China, up 18.8% year on year, as the National Immigration Administration has forecast. Peak hours are expected to occur mainly on the evening of Dec. 31, 2024 and Jan. 1, 2025.

During the holiday, four major airports in Beijing, Shanghai, Guangzhou and Chengdu are expected to handle nearly 200,000 international passengers per day.

Earlier this month, China announced a significant relaxation of its visa-free transit policy, extending the permitted stay for eligible foreign travelers from the initial 72 hours and subsequent 144 hours to 240 hours, or 10 days.

Under the updated policy, eligible citizens from 54 countries can enter China visa-free when transiting to a third country or region.

These travelers may enter through any of the 60 ports across 24 provinces, autonomous regions and municipalities and stay within the de-



signed areas for up to 240 hours.

Besides, China has implemented a complete mutual visa exemption for 26 countries and issued a unilateral visa-free policy for 38 countries. "This is my second visit to China. In the past, I had to go through visa and other formalities before I could come here.

With this new policy, it is becoming more and more convenient to come to China," said Beschetnov Stanislav from Russia. Upon landing at

the Shanghai Pudong International Airport, he planned to use the visa-free transit policy to take his family to the Bund, Nanjing Road, and other scenic spots in the city.

According to the statistics of Shanghai General Station of Immigration Inspection, from Dec. 17 to 24, the station issued 240-hour temporary entry permits to nearly 1,000 foreigners. The top five countries are Russia, the United States, Britain, Sweden and Canada.

"We are on a five-day vaca-

tion in Shanghai this time. It is more convenient to come to China now, taking just over an hour to fly here, without complicated procedures or costs of a visa application," said Lim Seung-hwan from the Republic of Korea (ROK).

Since China extended its visa-free policy to ROK and Japan last month, 11,000 passenger flights between Shanghai and the two countries and 363,000 ROK and Japanese tourists have been logged at Shanghai General Station of

Immigration Inspection.

The passenger number increased by more than 20% compared with the same period from September to October.

In the meantime, the southern Chinese island province of Hainan has always enjoyed the best visa-free entry policy in China.

Since the beginning of this year, more than 350,000 foreign tourists have entered Hainan visa-free, a year-on-year increase of more than three times, accounting for 85% of the foreign tourists visiting the tropical island.

Visa-free entry has become the main way for foreigners to enter Hainan.

The Mohan railway port in southwest China's Yunnan Province, an important gateway on the China-Laos Railway that entered operation in April of 2023, has welcomed over 33,000 foreign tourists this year, a year-on-year increase of 99.5%, including over 9,500 visa-free entries, an increase of ten times from last year.

China recorded nearly 29.22 million inbound foreign visits between January and November 2024, up 86.2% year on year. Of these, 17.45 million entered the country visa-free, marking a significant 123.3% year-on-year growth. MDT/XINHUA

CRIME

Court sentences teenager to life imprisonment for murdering classmate

A teenager, the mastermind in the killing of his classmate early this year, has been sentenced to life in prison for intentional homicide, according to a court in Handan, Hebei province yesterday.

The Handan Intermediate People's Court has deprived the defendant surnamed Zhang of political rights for life.

The killing also involved two other minor defendants. One identified surnamed Li, who committed the crime together with Zhang, has been given a 12-year imprisonment sentence for the same charge, while the other surnamed Ma has been ordered to re-

ceive special rehabilitation instead of criminal punishment because he did not directly commit the crime.

All three criminals and the victim were 13 years old when the killing took place and are all from Feixiang district in Handan.

Since the case happened in March, it has aroused widespread public attention, putting the issue of juvenile crime in the national spotlight once again.

In a statement posted by the court on Monday, Zhang and Li had conflicts with their classmate surnamed Wang and planned to kill him multiple times and split his money.

In the lead up to the



crime, Zhang chose an abandoned vegetable greenhouse in the district as the crime site where he took shovels ahead of time to dig a pit for the offense.

On the afternoon of March 10, Zhang asked Wang to accompany them, and the duo rode on Zhang's bike while Li

and Ma went together. The four went to the designated greenhouse and while on the way, under Zhang's instructions, Li shared the idea of the killing with Ma.

After the four boys arrived at the destination, Zhang began attacking Wang with the shovels, while Li was responsible

for helping control Wang. In the midst of the attack, Ma left the greenhouse and Zhang and Li continued with the act by beating Wang to death. They buried Wang's body in the greenhouse and subsequently fled the scene by bikes.

Later, Zhang divided the money in Wang's mobile phone with Li, and asked Ma and Li to smash the phone and throw it away.

Upon realizing that Wang was missing, his family reported the matter to the police. During the investigation, Ma first confessed to the offense and guided the police to the crime scene.

"The behaviors of Zhang and Li have constituted the crime of intentional homicide, with extremely serious circumstances and particularly cruel criminal means," the court said. "The two were aged

between 12 and 14 while committing the crime, meaning that they could be held criminally liable in line with Criminal Law."

"Zhang should be identified as the main culprit in the case because he not only proposed and prepared for the killing but also asked others to join in and committed the crime," it said. "Li also played an important role, as he actively participated in the killing and carried it out with Zhang, and he also shared the victim's money after the offense."

"Considering Ma did not take part in the planning of the crime and did not directly harm the victim, we did not criminally punish him in accordance with the law but decided to order him to receive special education and rehabilitation from public security and educational departments." CHINADAILY

SOUTH KOREA

Authorities seek warrant to detain impeached President Yoon in martial law probe

KIM TONG-HYUNG, SEOUL

SOUTH Korean law enforcement officials requested a court warrant yesterday to detain impeached President Yoon Suk Yeol as they investigate whether his short-lived martial law decree on Dec. 3 amounted to rebellion.

The Corruption Investigation Office for High-Ranking Officials, which leads a joint investigation with police and military authorities into the power grab that lasted only a few hours, confirmed it requested the warrant from the Seoul Western District Court. They plan to question Yoon on charges of abuse of authority and orchestrating a rebellion.

Yoon Kap-keun, the president's lawyer, denounced the detention attempt and filed a challenge with the same court, arguing that the warrant request was invalid. He also claimed the anti-corruption agency lacked the legal authority to investigate rebellion charges. Still, he evaded answering how the legal team would respond if the court approved the warrant for the president's detainment.

"An incumbent president cannot be prosecuted for abuse of power," the lawyer said. "Of course, there are differing academic opinions on whether a president can be investigated for abuse of power and some assert that investigations are possible. But even when investigations are allowed, the prevailing opinion is that they should be exercised with the utmost restraint."

The anti-corruption agency didn't immediately respond to the lawyer's comments.

Han Min-soo, spokesperson of the liberal opposition Democratic Party, called for the court to issue the warrant, saying Yoon Suk Yeol's detainment would be the first step toward "ending the rebellion and restoring normalcy."

The warrant request came after Yoon dodged several requests by the joint investigation team and public prosecutors to appear for questioning and also blocked searches of his offices.

While Yoon has the presidential privilege of immunity from criminal prosecution, such protections don't extend to allegations of rebellion or treason.

It's not clear whether the court will grant the warrant or whether Yoon



can be compelled to appear for questioning.

Under the country's laws, locations potentially linked to military secrets cannot be seized or searched without the consent of the person in charge, and it's unlikely that Yoon will voluntarily leave his residence if he faces detention. There are also concerns about possible clashes with Yoon's presidential security service if authorities attempt to forcibly detain him.

Yoon's presidential powers were suspended after the National Assembly voted to impeach him on Dec. 14 over his imposition of martial law, which lasted only hours but has triggered weeks of political turmoil, halted high-level diplomacy and rattled financial markets.

Yoon's fate now lies with the Constitutional Court, which has begun deliberations on whether to uphold the impeachment and formally remove Yoon from office or reinstate him.

The National Assembly voted last week to also impeach Prime Minister Han Duck-soo, who had assumed the role of acting president after Yoon's powers were suspended, over his reluctance to fill three Constitutional Court vacancies ahead of the court's review of Yoon's case. The country's new interim leader is Deputy Prime Minister Choi Sang-mok, who is also finance minister.

To formally end Yoon's presidency, at least six justices on the nine-member Constitutional Court must vote in favor. Three seats are currently vacant following retirements and a full bench could make conviction more likely.

Choi, who has been handling the government's response to a plane crash on Sunday that killed 179 peo-

ple, has yet to say whether he intends to appoint the Constitutional Court justices.

In a separate criminal investigation of Yoon, authorities have already arrested his defense minister, police chief and several other military commanders involved in the attempt to enforce the martial law decree, which harkened back to the days of authoritarian leaders the country hasn't seen since the 1980s.

In theory, the authority to investigate rebellion charges lies solely with the police, following a 2021 reform that redistributed investigative powers among law enforcement agencies and removed rebellion from the list of crimes prosecutors and the anti-corruption office could pursue. But those agencies have still been investigating rebellion accusations against Yoon, allegedly linked to charges related to abuse of power, a type of crime they are authorized to investigate.

Yoon and his military leadership have been accused of attempting to block the National Assembly from voting to end martial law by sending hundreds of heavily armed troops to encircle the building. Lawmakers who managed to get in voted unanimously 190-0 to lift martial law, hours after Yoon declared it in a late-night television address.

Yoon has also been accused of ordering defense counterintelligence officials to detain key politicians, including opposition leader Lee Jae-myung, National Assembly Speaker Woo Won Shik and the ex-leader of his own conservative party, Han Dong-hun, a reformist who supported investigations into corruption allegations against first lady Kim Keon Hee. MDT/AP

ADVERTORIAL

GREAT TIMES

Delving Deeper into POLY MGM MUSEUM's Inaugural Exhibition

Prepare to be enthralled by the rare and captivating artifacts and art masterpieces at the POLY MGM MUSEUM's talk-of-the-town inaugural exhibition, a must-see cultural spectacle in Macau. Titled "The Maritime Silk Road — Discover the Mystical Seas and Encounter the Treasures of the Ancient Trade Route," the exhibition beckons visitors to delve into the history, present, and future of the ancient sea lanes through immersive experiences empowered by movable LED screens, flexible display panels, directional audio systems and more cutting-edge technologies.



Centered around the marine archaeology along the Maritime Silk Road and curated with team of national and international curators, scholars and renowned artists, the inaugural exhibition boasts a remarkable collection of 228 artifacts and artworks in 184 sets. From underwater discoveries to exquisite silk fabrics, spices, and other rare treasures, it is a compelling mix of scholarly insights, artistic excellence and interactive technologies, weaving a tapestry of ancient artisans and modern artists that illuminate the splendor of the mystical seas. This harmonious integration of artifacts with contemporary artworks delivers a profound exhibition experience.



The "Maritime Silk Road" inaugural exhibition runs until September 2025. Admission is free. Seize the opportunity to explore the wonders of the oceanic trade route at MGM MACAU. For more information, please visit museum.mgm.mo.



OBITUARY

Jimmy Carter, the 39th US president, has died at 100

BILL BARROW & ALEX SANZ, ATLANTA

AP PHOTO

JIMMY Carter, the peanut farmer who won the presidency in the wake of the Watergate scandal and Vietnam War, endured humbling defeat after one tumultuous term and then redefined life after the White House as a global humanitarian, has died. He was 100 years old.

The longest-lived American president died on Sunday, roughly 22 months after entering hospice care, at his home in the small town of Plains, Georgia, where he and his wife, Rosalynn, who died at 96 in November 2023, spent most of their lives, The Carter Center said.

"Our founder, former U.S. President Jimmy Carter, passed away this afternoon in Plains, Georgia," the center said on the social media platform X. It added in a statement that he died peacefully, surrounded by his family.

As reaction poured in from around the world, President Joe Biden mourned Carter's death, saying the world lost an "extraordinary leader, statesman and humanitarian" and he lost a dear friend. Biden cited Carter's work to eradicate disease, forge peace, advance civil and human rights, promote free and fair elections and house the homeless as an example for others.

"To all of the young people in this nation and for anyone in search of what it means to live a life of purpose and meaning — the good life — study Jimmy Carter, a man of principle, faith, and humility," Biden said in a statement.

Biden spoke later Sunday evening about Carter, calling it a "sad day" but one that "brings back an incredible amount of good memories."

"I've been hanging out with Jimmy Carter for over 50 years," Biden said in his remarks.

He recalled the former president being a comfort to him and his wife Jill when their son Beau died in 2015 of cancer. The president remarked how cancer was a common bond between their families, with Carter himself having cancer later in his life.

"Jimmy knew the ravages of the disease too well," said Biden, who scheduled a state funeral in Washington, D.C., for Carter on Jan. 9.



Biden also declared Jan. 9 as a National Day of Mourning across the nation and ordered U.S. flags to fly at half-staff for 30 days from Sunday.

Businessman, Navy officer, evangelist, politician, negotiator, author, woodworker, citizen of the world — Carter forged a path that still challenges political assumptions and stands out among the 45 men who reached the nation's highest office. The 39th president leveraged his ambition with a keen intellect, deep religious faith and prodigious work ethic, conducting diplomatic missions into his 80s and building houses for the poor well into his 90s.

"My faith demands — this is not optional — my faith demands that I do whatever I can, wherever I am, whenever I can, for as long as I can, with whatever I have to try to make a difference," Carter once said.

A PRESIDENT FROM PLAINS

A moderate Democrat, Carter entered the 1976 presidential race as a little-known Georgia governor with a broad smile, outspoken Baptist mores and technocratic plans reflecting his education as an engineer. His no-frills campaign depended on public financing, and his promise not to deceive the American people resonated after Richard Nixon's disgrace and U.S. defeat in southeast Asia.

"If I ever lie to you, if I ever make a misleading statement, don't vote for me. I would not

deserve to be your president," Carter repeated before narrowly beating Republican incumbent Gerald Ford, who had lost popularity pardoning Nixon.

Carter governed amid Cold War pressures, turbulent oil markets and social upheaval over racism, women's rights and America's global role. His most acclaimed achievement in office was a Mideast peace deal that he brokered by keeping Egyptian President Anwar Sadat and Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin at the bargaining table for 13 days in 1978. That Camp David experience inspired the post-presidential center where Carter would establish so much of his legacy.

Yet Carter's electoral coalition splintered under double-digit inflation, gasoline lines and the 444-day hostage crisis in Iran. His bleakest hour came when eight Americans died in a failed hostage rescue in April 1980, helping to ensure his landslide defeat to Republican Ronald Reagan.

Carter acknowledged in his 2020 "White House Diary" that he could be "micromanaging" and "excessively autocratic," complicating dealings with Congress and the federal bureaucracy. He also turned a cold shoulder to Washington's news media and lobbyists, not fully appreciating their influence on his political fortunes.

"It didn't take us long to realize that the underestima-

tion existed, but by that time we were not able to repair the mistake," Carter told historians in 1982, suggesting that he had "an inherent incompatibility" with Washington insiders.

Carter insisted his overall approach was sound and that he achieved his primary objectives — to "protect our nation's security and interests peacefully" and "enhance human rights here and abroad" — even if he fell spectacularly short of a second term.

AND THEN, THE WORLD

Ignominious defeat, though, allowed for renewal. The Carters founded The Carter Center in 1982 as a first-of-its-kind base of operations, asserting themselves as international peacemakers and champions of democracy, public health and human rights.

"I was not interested in just building a museum or storing my White House records and memorabilia," Carter wrote in a memoir published after his 90th birthday. "I wanted a place where we could work."

That work included easing nuclear tensions in North and South Korea, helping to avert a U.S. invasion of Haiti and negotiating cease-fires in Bosnia and Sudan. By 2022, The Carter Center had declared at least 113 elections in Latin America, Asia and Africa to be free or fraudulent. Recently, the center began monitoring U.S. elections as well. **MDT/AP**

this day in history

1999: PUTIN TAKES OVER AS YELTSIN RESIGNS



Boris Yeltsin has resigned as Russian president, taking the country and the rest of the world completely by surprise.

Mr Yeltsin made the shock announcement live on Russian television and said Prime Minister Vladimir Putin will take over as acting president, with elections now due to take place on 26 March 2000.

"I am going. I am going earlier than my established time," he said.

The 68-year-old had repeatedly said he would serve out his second and final term in office, which was meant to continue until June 2000.

Mr Yeltsin asked for forgiveness for what he called the errors of his administration, and said Russia needed to enter the new century with new political leaders.

He said: "I want to beg forgiveness for your dreams that never came true. And also I would like to beg forgiveness not to have justified your hopes."

It was an unusual admission from a man who, during his eight years as president, rarely said he was wrong.

Mr Yeltsin's time in office has been a traumatic one for Russia which, since the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, has had to transform itself from a state-run economy into a free-market one.

He spearheaded economic reforms that have favoured some but seen the living standards of many worsen.

In 1998 the rouble lost 70% of its value against the dollar and 29% of the population (42 million people) were living below the poverty line.

But US President Bill Clinton praised Mr Yeltsin for bringing democracy to Russia, and UK Prime Minister Tony Blair said the world was "more stable and secure" as a result of the former president's leadership.

Courtesy BBC News

IN CONTEXT

Boris Yeltsin's presidency had become increasingly unpopular as well as unpredictable.

The country suffered from widespread corruption and enormous political and social problems.





Mr Yeltsin played a key role in bringing down the Soviet Union in 1991 but this euphoria was short lived.

By the time he left office his radical economic reforms had led to the irreversible destruction of the Soviet economic system. One third of the country was living below the poverty line, free healthcare was for most a distant memory, and the country's population was rapidly shrinking.





He later described his decision to send the Russian army into the breakaway republic of Chechnya, at the end of 1994, as his greatest mistake.

An estimated 100,000 people lost their lives and in 1996 the Russian army was forced into a humiliating withdrawal - before it was sent back again in 1999.

YOUR STARS

 ARIES Mar. 21-Apr. 19 This New Moon illuminates career opportunities. Develop interesting projects over the next two weeks. Pursue exciting possibilities.	 TAURUS Apr. 20-May. 20 Educational opportunities arise after tonight's New Moon. The next two-week phase favors study, investigation and exploration. Consider new perspectives.
 GEMINI May. 21-Jun. 21 Find creative ways to grow your family nest egg. A lucrative two-week phase dawns with tonight's New Moon. Launch valuable initiatives with your partner.	 CANCER Jun. 22-Jul. 22 Collaboration comes naturally, especially over two weeks following tonight's Capricorn New Moon. Take your partnership to the next level.



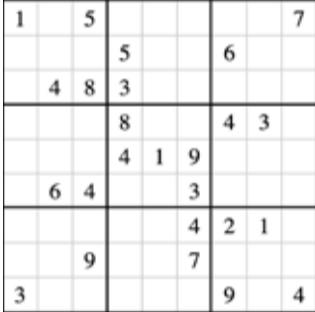

 LEO Jul. 23-Aug. 22 Energize your physical moves. This New Moon initiates two weeks of strengthening work and health. Put your heart into your actions. Practice makes perfect.	 VIRGO Aug. 23-Sep. 22 Enjoy yourself. Stir up some romance. The New Moon begins a two-week family, fun and passion phase. Get creative. It's all for love.
 LIBRA Sep. 23-Oct. 22 Realize domestic visions with upgrades over a two-week New Moon phase. Get creative. Improve the beauty and functionality of your home.	 SCORPIO Oct. 23-Nov. 21 Profit through communications. Possibilities spark in conversation over this two-week New Moon phase. Creative projects flower. Express, share and connect.

 SAGITTARIUS Nov. 22-Dec. 21 Begin a lucrative New Moon phase. Discover fresh markets and rising prosperity. Strengthen financial foundations for growth. Rake in and conserve a healthy harvest.	 CAPRICORN Dec. 22-Jan. 19 Pursue personal dreams. Expand talents, capacities and skills over two weeks, with the New Moon in your sign. Grow and develop. Shine your light.
 AQUARIUS Jan. 20-Feb. 18 Dreams seem within reach. Insights, breakthroughs and revelations sparkle under tonight's New Moon. Enjoy a two-week creative, imaginative and organizational phase.	 PISCES Feb. 19-Mar. 20 Connect shared support for big results. This New Moon phase benefits team efforts. Grow through friendships, social networks and community participation. Have fun together.

The Born Loser by Chip Sanson



SUDOKU

EASY 	EASY+ 
MEDIUM 	HARD 

WEATHER

	MIN	MAX	CONDITION
CHINA			
Beijing	-5	5	fine
Changchun	-15	-2	fine
Chengdu	4	16	fine
Chongqing	7	14	cloudy
Fuzhou	11	19	fine
Guangzhou	9	22	fine
Guiyang	2	11	overcast
Haikou	15	21	cloudy
Hangzhou	3	13	fine
Harbin	-17	-8	fine
Hefei	-3	10	fine
Nanjing	-1	10	fine
Shanghai	4	10	fine
Taipei	14	18	cloudy
Wuhan	0	14	fine
Hong Hong	19	22	overcast
WORLD			
Moscow	-5	2	snow
Frankfurt	0	2	cloudy
Paris	4	4	cloudy
London	11	11	cloudy
New York	7	11	rain

CROSSWORDS

ACROSS 1- Son of Isaac; 6- Put the pedal to the metal; 10- Jazzy James; 14- Rice-...; 15- Sported; 16- Insect-repelling chemical; 17- Mob scenes; 18- Ages; 19- Arrow poison; 20- Plant juice; 21- Romanov rulers; 23- Make amends; 24- "Snowy" bird; 26- Smells; 27- Tissue in the cavities of bones; 29- Mexican mister; 31- Golfer Aoki; 32- Spud; 33- Grande; 36- In spite of; 40- Tina's ex; 41- Gallows loop; 42- Super server; 43- Join in wedlock; 44- "Unto the Sons" author; 46- acid; 48- Use a broom; 49- Rib; 50- Pertaining to the moon; 52- Swiss river; 55- Baseball's Hersheiser; 56- Fence opening; 57- "Forbidden" fruit; 59- Plunge head-first; 60- Wings; 61- Rare delight; 62- Feat; 63- Cowardly Lion portrayer; 64- Causing goose bumps;

DOWN 1- Jolts; 2- Diva's song; 3- Collaborate; 4- Thunder Bay's prov.; 5- European-style restaurant; 6- Perspire; 7- Impoverished; 8- Sea birds; 9- Plaines; 10- Newspaper executive; 11- Barbershop quartet member; 12- Mall frequenters; 13- Fit to...; 22- Work with needle and thread; 23- Bedeck; 25- Increase in size; 26- Draft rating; 27- Prefix for small; 28- "Dilbert" intern; 29- Fresh-mouthed; 30- Novel ending; 32- God with a hammer; 33- Thin material for book pages; 34- Supermodel Sastre; 35- Man-eating giant of popular folklore; 37- Absurd; 38- Mower brand; 39- Roy's "singin' pardner"; 43- Deceived; 44- Defunct airline; 45- Add fizz; 46- Eagle's home; 47- "Circle of Friends" author Binchy; 48- Look of disdain; 49- Mary Lincoln; 50- In land; 51- Mormon state of western USA; 53- Jai; 54- Nerve network; 56- Guy's date; 58- Opposite of post-;

Yesterday's solution



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PJ (Open line) 993	Telephone - Report 1000
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PSP 28 573 333	Macau Daily Times 28 716 081
Customs 28 559 944	
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ARTS

S. AFRICAN RETROSPECTIVE EXHIBITION HONORS THE COLORFUL WORK OF ARTIST ESTHER MAHLANGU

MOGOMOTSI MAGOME, JOHANNESBURG

A boldly patterned BMW stands at the entrance of the Wits Arts Museum in the vibrant Johannesburg neighborhood of Braamfontein.

Its bright geometric shapes are part of 89-year-old South African artist Esther Mahlangu's unmistakable style. The car is the centerpiece of an exhibition honoring her and her work.

The BMW, commissioned by the German manufacturer in 1991, is among Mahlangu's most well-known works and has been returned to South Africa this year after more than 30 years abroad.

Exhibition curator Nontobeko Ntombela also has included pieces that document the struggles of Nelson Mandela, who was released after almost three decades in prison and became South Africa's first Black president when the country transitioned from white minority rule to democracy in 1994.



AP PHOTO

These include a letter Mahlangu wrote to Mandela thanking him for the sacrifices he made for the country.

She is respected for persevering with art at a time when Black artists, especially women, were hardly acknowledged.

"Mahlangu dared to travel an uncharted path during a time when Black women artists were systematically overlooked. I hope when people see just how much she has done, they will realize the magnitude of what she has offered to the arts," Ntombela said.

The retrospective also includes a documentary about the artist, where she tells the story of her rural upbringing and her Ndebele culture.

For decades, Mahlangu has used her talent to promote that culture, becoming arguably the southern

African ethnic group's most recognized representative.

Ntombela said much of the publicly available information about Mahlangu tends to repeat the same narratives, including her first international show in Paris in 1989.

"Some tend to overly emphasize the culture without the balance of discussing her work as an art form. The exhibition tries to complicate this and hopefully offers an opportunity of how her art moves across these different fields and disciplines," the curator said.

Some of the artworks showing umgwalo, or traditional Ndebele painting, were borrowed from collections locally and abroad. Ntombela said it took about two years to secure them.

"Numerous works are under the ownership of international collectors, so we needed a lot of funds to bring a lot of her work back to South Africa," she said.

Mahlangu is a recipient of one of South Africa's highest national awards, the Order of Ikhamanga in silver, which is awarded by the head of state.

She briefly attended the launch of the exhibition last month but lives quietly in Mpumalanga province, where her colorfully decorated home remains an attraction for local and international tourists.

The exhibition will run until April 17 before it embarks on an international tour starting in the United States in early 2026. MDT/AP

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



TENNIS

Naomi Osaka wins her first match of new season in a return from injury

FOUR-TIME Grand Slam champion Naomi Osaka made a winning return to the court after an almost three month absence yesterday in the first round of the ASB tennis classic in Auckland, undeterred by protests outside the stadium against her Israeli opponent.

Osaka beat qualifier Lina Glushko 6-4, 6-4 in a tight contest in her first match since October when a back injury at the China Open ended her 2024 season.

All the hallmarks of Osaka's game were present yesterday: the powerful serve, forceful ground-strokes particularly from the forehand side and the aggression. She looked relaxed and comfortable on court with no sign of her recent injury.

Osaka had to deal with a swirling wind on center court and with delays in play caused by the chants of a small group of protesters which were clearly audible within the stadium. There



AP PHOTO

Naomi Osaka

was a longer break as Osaka was poised to serve out the first set when Glushko had to leave the court for treatment to a hip injury.

"I just heard a lot of shouting,

and then people on the sidelines were telling me there was protests," Osaka said.

"I had no idea what the score was most of the time. "I just kept trying to tell myself one point at

a time and trying not to get discouraged.

"Thankfully it came out in my favor in the end."

Osaka was supported at court-side by her new coach Patrick

Mouratoglou who previously had a long-term association with Serena Williams.

She broke Glushko in the third game of the first set and held comfortably to win 6-4.

The second set was tighter. Osaka broke Glushko in the third game but Glushko converted her only break point of the match to level at 2-2.

Glushko held to love in the seventh game to lead 4-3 but Osaka seemed to step up at that point, held with two aces for 4-4, broke for 5-4 and held serve to love to clinch the win.

Her serve was solid throughout. She sent down seven aces and won 74 percent of first serve points. Her first serve averaged around 180kmh (111mph) and her slice around 140kmh (87mph).

"I think she's a really amazing opponent. I've never played her before," Osaka said. "It was good to have to scrap a little for the first round." MDT/AP

CRICKET

Australia claims dramatic final-hour victory against India in fourth test

GREG BUCKLE,
MELBOURNE

AUSTRALIA took seven wickets in the final session of the final day to claim a thrilling 184-run victory in front of a record test crowd yesterday in the fourth test at the Melbourne Cricket Ground.

With less than 40 minutes remaining in the match, Nathan Lyon trapped Mohammed Siraj lbw to bowl India out for 155 in its second innings and complete a remarkable match that had more than 370,000 people attend across the five days.

Australia now takes a 2-1 advantage ahead of the fifth and final test which is scheduled to start on Jan. 3 at the Sydney Cricket Ground, where avoiding a defeat will be enough to regain the Border-Gavaskar Trophy for the first time in 10 years.



AP PHOTO

Australian players celebrate after winning the fourth test cricket match against India at the Melbourne Cricket Ground, Melbourne, Australia, yesterday

"It's probably the best test match I've been involved in," said man-of-the-match Cummins, who took 3-28 off 18 overs Monday for six wickets in the match, plus playing valuable innings of 49 and 41 at No.8. "I don't know what the crowd was today, but it was huge.

"Overall, it was one of those great wins."

Earlier, India had been 25 without loss when Pat Cummins produced a

double-wicket maiden, dismissing Rohit Sharma (9) and K.L. Rahul (0).

India went to lunch at a shaky 33-3, losing the crucial wicket of Virat Kohli in the final over of the session when the star right-hander was caught at first slip for five off Mitchell Starc's bowling.

Rishabh Pant (30 off 104 balls) and opener Yashvi Jaiswal added 88 runs for the fourth wicket.

MDT/AP

AD



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FOOTBALL | **BASKETBALL** | **DAILY TRAININGS**

OPINION

China Daily
 Editorial, China Daily

PROBE INTO INDUSTRY'S BEEF WITH IMPORTS JUSTIFIED

The World Trade Organization rules permit investigatory authorities to initiate a safeguard investigation upon the application of a domestic industry if an increase in the import volume of a product causes or threatens to cause substantial damage to the domestic industry.

The safeguard investigation into imported beef that the Chinese Commerce Ministry launched under the WTO rules on Friday is in response to an application submitted by the China Animal Agriculture Association and nine industry associations from major beef-producing regions of the country on behalf of the domestic beef industry, the ministry said in a statement.

The applicants for the probe claim that the volume of beef imports has risen sharply over the last five years, growing 106.28 percent in the first half of 2024 compared to the same period in 2019, saying that the sharp increase in beef imports in recent years "has had a significant adverse impact on the domestic industry", the ministry said in a statement.

The large amount of imported beef is undoubtedly "adding insult to injury" pushing down the price of beef products in the Chinese market to the lowest in years and leaving about 65 percent of domestic cattle breeders suffering from long-term losses, the China Animal Agriculture Association said in a statement.

The applicants assert that the sharp increase in imports has significantly impacted China's domestic industry, which has experienced substantial damage, and a causal relationship exists between the damage and the rise in imports. The purpose of the investigation is therefore to verify the authenticity of the claim and then decide what measures to take, if necessary.

The probe, which does not target any specific countries or regions or differentiate products based on origin, will examine bovine meat imported from Jan 1, 2019, to June 30, 2024. It is expected to conclude within eight months, although it may be extended under special circumstances.

Relevant countries' beef trade with China will not be affected during the investigation period, and the investigatory authorities will conduct their work in accordance with the law and make an objective and impartial ruling based on the results of their investigation. To that end, China is willing to maintain communication with all parties, engage in friendly consultations, address mutual concerns, and work collaboratively to safeguard the healthy, stable international trade in beef products.

As a senior analyst of the beef industry of the Chinese Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs, Zhu Cong, pointed out, China has always been relatively open to beef imports, as long as they meet relevant standards, except for some epidemic restrictions. However, in the past two years, because some countries have relatively low breeding costs and provide some subsidies to their industry, the gap with domestic prices is relatively large, Zhu told the media in a recent interview on the investigation.

This has had a significant impact on the domestic market, so the current investigation is a "reasonable" trade relief measure, he noted.

According to data released by the WTO, 55 members of the world trade body have launched safeguard investigations since 1995, resulting in 437 cases, covering 18 major categories of products including agricultural and non-agricultural products. China has so far only launched two safeguard investigations, one into steel imports and one into imports of sugar.

Because beef production has a time cycle, the probe will necessarily have the effect of stabilizing expectations for the domestic beef industry in the coming months, while leaving relevant parties enough time to adjust their operation. China's domestic beef supply is in a period of temporary oversupply, and the next one to two years will be an important adjustment period for the domestic beef industry. [Abridged]

What began as a childhood hobby more than six decades ago has led to what might be Africa's largest butterfly collection in a suburb of Kenya's capital.

Steve Collins, 74, was born and raised in western Kenya. By the age of 5, he was fascinated by butterflies and started building a collection that has grown to more than 4.2 million, representing hundreds of species.

"My parents encouraged us to look for butterflies after visiting the Congo and were gifted a trapping net by some friends," Collins said. "By the time I was 15 years old, I was already visiting

other countries like Nigeria to study more about butterflies."

During his 20-year career as an agronomist, Collins dedicated his free time to research. He established the African Butterfly Research Institute in 1997.

Now, running out of space and time, he hopes to hand it over to the next generation.

On his 1.5 acres of land, hundreds of indigenous trees and flowering bushes form a well-knit forest. Hundreds of butterflies dance from one flower to another, at times landing on Collins' hand.



Relatives of passengers on a plane which skidded off a runway and burst into flames, react at Muan International Airport in Muan, South Korea, yesterday

JEJU AIR FLIGHT 2216

S. KOREA STRUGGLES TO DETERMINE CAUSE OF PLANE CRASH THAT KILLED 179 PEOPLE

HYUNG-JIN KIM & KIM TONG-HYUNG, SEOUL

SOUTH Korean officials are struggling to determine what caused a deadly plane crash that killed 179 people, with the nation saddened, shocked and ashamed over the country's worst aviation disaster in decades.

Many observers also worry how effectively the South Korean government will handle the aftermath of Sunday's crash as it grapples with a leadership vacuum following the recent successive impeachments of President Yoon Suk Yeol and Prime Minister Han Duck-soo, the country's top two officials, amid political tumult caused by Yoon's brief martial law introduction earlier this month.

New Acting President Choi Sang-mok yesterday presided over a task force meeting on the crash and instructed the Transport Ministry and police to launch investigations into its cause. He also ordered the ministry to implement an emergency review of the country's overall aircraft operation systems.

"The essence of a responsible response would be renovating the aviation safety systems on the whole to prevent recurrences of similar

incidents and building a safer Republic of South Korea," said Choi, who is also deputy prime minister and finance minister.

The Boeing 737-800 plane operated by South Korea's budget airline Jeju Air skidded off a runway at Muan International Airport in the country's south, slammed into a concrete fence and burst into a fireball. The incident killed all but two of the 181 people aboard. The two survivors are both crew members, and they were pulled from the plane's tail section — the only part that was still recognizable after the crash.

Joo Jong-wan, the Transport Ministry's director of aviation policy, said authorities have so far identified 141 of the bodies, and are conducting DNA tests on the other 38.

Alan Price, a former chief pilot at Delta Air Lines and now a consultant, said the Boeing 737-800 is a "proven airplane" that belongs to a different class of aircraft than the Boeing 737 Max jetliner that was linked to fatal crashes in 2018 and 2019.

But the Transport Ministry said yesterday the government plans to conduct safety inspections on all Boeing 737-800 jetliners

operated by the country's airlines.

Ministry officials said they will also look into whether the Muan airport's localizer — a concrete fence housing a set of antennas designed to guide aircraft safely during landings — should have been made with lighter materials that would break more easily upon impact.

Video of the crash indicated that the pilots did not deploy flaps or slats to slow the aircraft, suggesting a possible hydraulic failure, and they did not manually lower the landing gear, suggesting they did not have time, said John Cox, a retired airline pilot and CEO of Safety Operating Systems in St. Petersburg, Florida.

Despite that, the jetliner was under control and traveling in a straight line, and damage and injuries likely would have been minimized if not for a barrier being so close to the runway, Cox said.

Other observers say the videos showed the plane suffering suspected engine trouble but the landing gear malfunction was likely a direct reason for the crash. They say there wouldn't likely be a link between the landing gear problems and the suspected engine problem. MDT/AP



Croatia's incumbent President Zoran Milanovic (pictured) won most of the votes in the first round of a presidential election on Sunday, but must face a runoff against a ruling party candidate to secure another five-year term.



Israel Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu (pictured) underwent successful surgery Sunday to have his prostate removed, hospital officials said, a procedure that came as he manages multiple crises including the war in Gaza and his trial for alleged corruption. Netanyahu, who has had a series of health issues in recent years, has gone to great lengths to bolster a public image of himself as a healthy, energetic leader.



Germany Tech entrepreneur Elon Musk caused uproar after backing Germany's far-right party in a major newspaper ahead of key parliamentary elections in the Western European country, leading to the resignation of the paper's opinion editor in protest. Germany is to vote in an early election on Feb. 23 after Chancellor Olaf Scholz's three-party governing coalition collapsed last month.



Syria's de facto leader said it could take up to four years to hold elections in Syria, and that he plans to dissolve his Islamist group that led the country's insurgency at an anticipated national dialogue summit for the country.

HOLIDAY TIMES

Macau Daily Times will not be published during the holiday. The Times will be back on the stands on Friday January 3. However the MDT website will be updated with breaking news during the recess period. We wish our readers, advertisers and friends the best of times.