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SPEAKING AT SYMPOSIUMS ATTENDED BY OVER 500 MANAGEMENT-LEVEL CIVIL SERVANTS, SAM HOU FAI CALLS FOR XI'S VISION TO BE PUT INTO ACTION

P3

CRIME: EIGHT DETAINED BY PJ IN ANTI-PHONE SCAM OPERATION

P4

THE PRESIDENT'S MAN AT TRUMP'S INAUGURATION: HAN ZHENG

P6



AP PHOTO



Thailand Same-sex couples celebrate as the country becomes the third in Asia to legalize same-sex marriage. The law, effective Thursday, guarantees equal rights for LGBTQ+ couples and reflects growing inclusivity despite ongoing societal challenges.

Pakistan Gwadar Airport, Pakistan's largest, built under China's Belt and Road Initiative, is now operational. Officials yesterday highlight its potential to enhance the economy and attract investment in Balochistan, despite local opposition citing exploitation concerns.

AP PHOTO



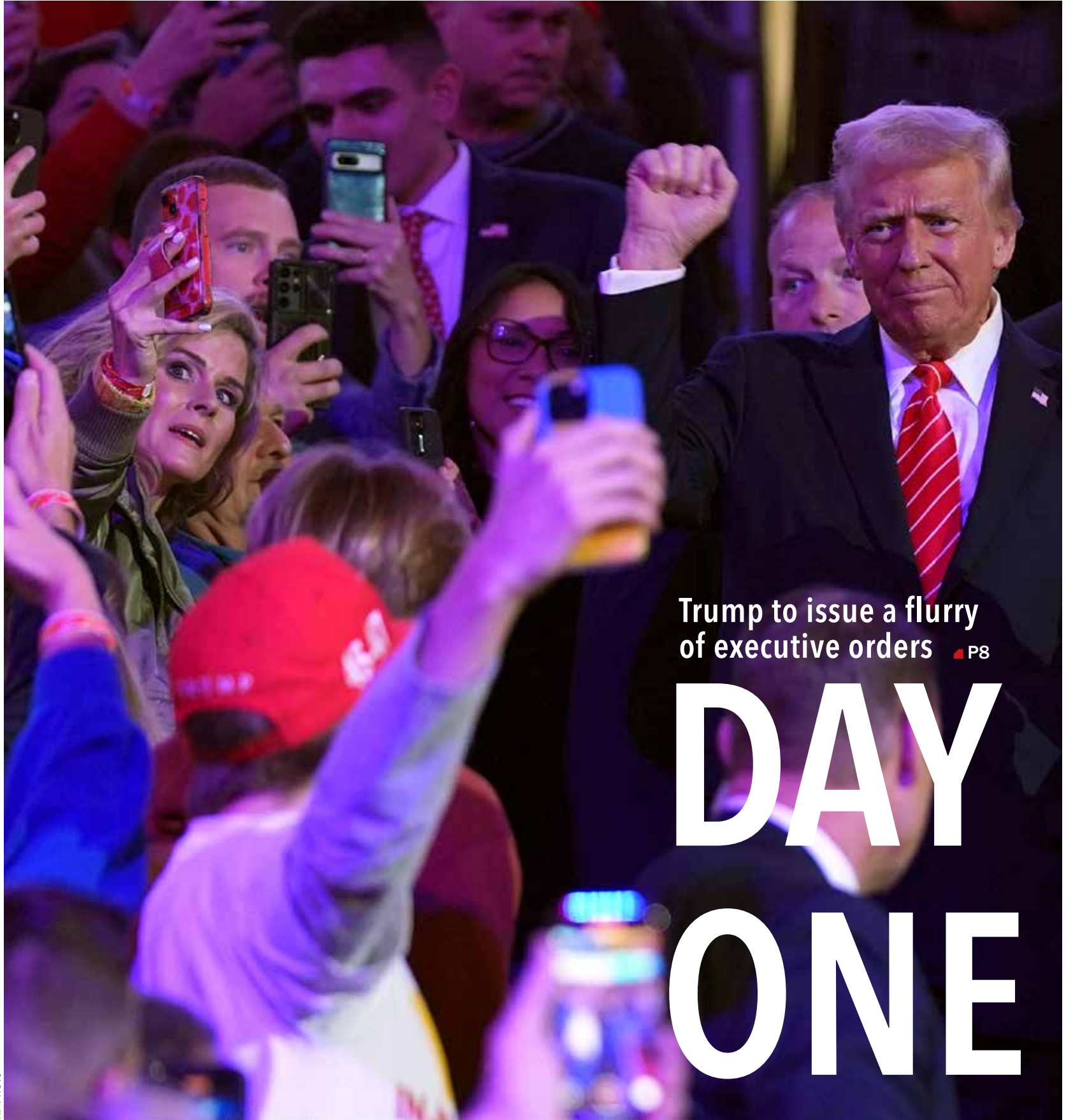
Chinese developer Country Garden seeks to restructure \$16.4 billion in offshore debt amid an industry downturn, the company said yesterday in a statement. The company expects to finalize a deal by May, reflecting the broader challenges in China's property market.

AP PHOTO



Israel-Palestine An Israeli hostage freed yesterday [Macau time] during a Gaza ceasefire expressed gratitude and joy after her release following 471 days in Hamas captivity. The truce also facilitated the exchange of Palestinian prisoners, offering a momentary reprieve in the conflict.

More on backpage



Trump to issue a flurry of executive orders P8

DAY ONE

AP PHOTO

ECOLOGY
OTTERS RETURN AFTER A DECADE'S ABSENCE

P4



K-POP
SHINEE'S MINHO TO PERFORM IN MACAU IN MARCH

P2

FIFA LAUNCHES TENDER FOR MACAU MEDIA RIGHTS TO WORLD CUPS

The international self-regulatory governing body of association football, Fédération Internationale de Football Association (FIFA), has officially launched "Invitations to Tender" (ITT) for the media rights in Macau for the FIFA World Cup 26 (WC26) and the FIFA Women's World Cup Brazil 2027 (WWC27), FIFA announced in a statement. Canada, Mexico, and the United States will co-host the WC26. The competition will feature a record 48 teams, 16 host cities, and an unprecedented 104 matches. Thirty-two teams will participate in the WWC27, competing in at least eight host cities. These teams will represent the different regions of Brazil. Entities wishing to participate in the tender processes can request the ITT by emailing macau-media-rights@fifa.org until February 25, 2025, at 10 a.m. CET (5 p.m. local time).

43% OF EMPLOYERS HAVE NOT YET PAID FSS CONTRIBUTIONS

The Social Security Fund (FSS) has informed that some 18,000 employers (43%) have yet to pay the obligatory system contributions for their employees under the Social Security System for the fourth quarter of 2024. In the same statement, the FSS urges employers and residents to use the "Business & Associations Platform" or the "Macao One Account" to make payments as soon as possible, especially before the approaching Lunar New Year holiday, to avoid overdue payments and long queues. Those whose employee status remained unchanged during the quarter and whose employee data was previously submitted through the online platforms can pay the obligatory system contributions and the employment fee for non-resident workers via the same two online platforms within this month.

DSEC LAUNCHES NEW E-SERVICE FOR COMPANIES

To enhance statistical services and improve service quality, the Statistics and Census Service (DSEC) launched a service that provides enterprises and establishments with another convenient way to respond to government statistical surveys. Following the launch of the Macao One Account, DSEC rolled out the "Government Statistical Questionnaires" service via the "Business & Associations platform" to facilitate data submission for enterprises and establishments. Upon receiving a survey notification letter from DSEC, enterprises and establishments may activate and bind the online questionnaire to the platform and complete it via a mobile phone or computer.

CITY OF SHOWS

SHINEE'S MINHO TO PERFORM IN MACAU IN MARCH

RENATO MARQUES

SOUTH Korean singer-songwriter and rapper Choi Min-ho, best known by the mononym "Minho," is bringing his solo concert 'MEAN: of my First' to Macau, the concert promotor Wanxing Entertainment announced.

According to the information available, Minho, the star performer of the K-pop boys' band SHINee, will perform at a Macau concert on March 8 (6 p.m.) at the Broadway Macau Theatre.

The tickets will go on sale from 12 p.m. on January 23 (Thursday) and will be available through Galaxy Ticketing (www.galaxyticketing.com) and Damai (damai.cn).

The Macau performance comes after a series of South Korea and Taiwan shows.

According to the organizer, the Macau performance should follow another concert from the same tour, which will be held at the New Frontier Theater in Manila on March 16.

Marking a milestone in his 16-year music career, the artist started his solo tour in November 2024 with back-to-back shows in Seoul. The concerts followed the release of his first studio album, "Call Back," which has received outstanding reviews from the audience.

Minho debuted as a member of SHINee in 2008 and rose to fame with the band. Over the years, the five-member band became famous for hits like Ring Ding Dong, Sherlock, and Don't Call Me. Apart from his lead roles in SHINee, Minho also ventured into acting two years later, appearing in several TV series such as Salamander Guru and The Shadows, To the Beautiful You, Medical Top Team, My First Time, and Hwarang: The Poet Warrior Youth.

Minho's concert will be one of the many planned in Macau in 2025, including worldwide famous names such as "Green Day," which will play at the Galaxy Arena on February 9.



IPIM tours four GBA cities to foster regional cooperation

STAFF REPORTER

The Commerce and Investment Promotion Institute (IPIM) visited Zhuhai, Foshan, Zhongshan, and Jiangmen—four cities in the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area (GBA)—this month. The visit included discussions with foreign-invested enterprises, relevant associations, and organizations in Jiangmen about the potential for establishing new service points, further enhancing Macau's investment network in the western



Guangdong market, and facilitating companies' broadening their market reach. Among those visited, a Fortune 500 company mentioned plans to utilize Macau

as a "precise liaison window" for Portuguese-speaking countries, with plans to establish factories in Brazil and Angola within the year.

Additionally, new material, home appliance, and building material manufacturing companies in Macau have expressed interest in participating in the "2nd China-Portuguese-Speaking Countries Economic and Trade Expo (Macau)" and the "16th International Infrastructure Investment and Construction Forum and Exhibition," seeking business opportunities through Macau's international exhibition platform while inspecting the investment environment in Macau.

In recent years, in-

quiries from GBA enterprises about investing in Macau and establishing a presence there have shown an upward trend. In 2024, around 30% of GBA investors used IPIM's "one-stop" services.

IPIM is said to continue supporting mainland enterprises in expanding into international markets through services such as the "China-PSC Business Compass" and "Facilitation Services for Commercial Registration in Nine Cities of GBA." It also provides a platform for international investors to access the mainland market, helping enterprises leverage Macau's advantages as an intersection for the national "dual circulation" strategy.

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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

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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
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For subscription and general issues: general@macaudailytimes.com | Printed at Welfare Printing Ltd

CULTURE

Consultative committee praises CNY activities in the community

VICTORIA CHAN

THE Cultural Development Consultative Committee convened for its inaugural plenary meeting yesterday.

The meeting, chaired by Deland Leong, director of the Cultural Affairs Bureau (IC), focused mainly on the activities planned to celebrate the upcoming Lunar New Year (CNY).

According to information aired in a press briefing after the meeting, the committee members praised the activities brought to community neighborhoods, which they noted promoted community engagement and cultural exchange.

In her opening remarks at the press briefing, Leong emphasized the committee's dedication to enhancing the re-



gion's cultural offerings. "We all hope to experience our Chinese New Year with our citizens," she said.

Among the events planned

and previously unveiled by the Macao Government Tourism Office, the IC president noted a series of special performances, workshops, and traditio-

nal elements from the Chinese Provinces of Hebei and Guizhou that will be showcased in different community neighborhoods in the Peninsula and Islands.

"We hope to create a better festive atmosphere and celebrate the New Year in harmony," Leong added. She also highlighted the importance of linking these cultural activities with the development of local small and medium-sized enterprises, further positioning Macau as a hub for cultural exchange.

Ieng Weng Fat, a member of the Cultural Consultative Committee, expanded on the planned activities, stating, "The members here were very refreshed and happy to hear it." He detailed the three-day series of events during the

Spring Festival.

The committee member also noted the initiative that will open to the public 29 cultural venues during the Spring Festival, a move expected to enhance the celebratory atmosphere. "These three days will bring a very good and joyful atmosphere to our Spring Festival this time," Ieng remarked.

Questioned on the topic by the media, Leong noted that the cultural performances from the two Chinese provinces are the main difference from this year's celebrations, noting that these ethnic performances come in line with the call from the National Ethnic Affairs Commission to promote and emphasize the disclosure of the traditions of these two regions.

Responding to another media inquiry, Leong said integrating cultural initiatives within local neighborhoods is vital. "Bringing our culture to our different communities is a long-term task," she said. She highlighted plans to showcase performances in various areas, including Taipa and the Macau Peninsula.

ELECTRIC MOBILITY

DSPA launches pilot project for the exchange of e-scooter batteries in several street locations

RENATO MARQUES

THE Environmental Protection Bureau (DSPA) launched a new pilot project yesterday. The project aims to establish battery-swapping cabinets in four locations.

The cabinets allow users of electric scooters with removal batteries to swap them for others when needed without waiting for re-charging time.

These cabinets have been installed in four locations: Reservoir Park, Rua da Doca Seca, Rua Central da Areia Preta, and Taipa Central Park.

In a statement, the DSPA said the measures align with the government's efforts to improve air quality, protect residents' health, and implement the national "double carbon" goal.



The same bureau noted that installing the cabinets will provide more options for users of this type of electric vehicle. This follows the "Macau Electric Vehicle Promotion Plan," which includes improving charging and battery swapping facilities.

Following the introduction of national standard sockets in public parking char-

ging spaces, enforced earlier, this new pilot project will have a duration of two years, which will be evaluated, aiming at its adjustment and potential expansion.

For specific locations, users should refer to the DSPA Environmental Geographic Information System (<https://apps.dspa.gov.mo/gis/index.html?lng=pt>).

DSPA is said to be closely monitoring the plan's implementation while maintaining communication with the industry to find more suitable locations to set up additional battery-swapping cabinets.

Until now, the government has established 630 electric motorcycle charging facilities in 49 public parking lots in Macau, electric motorcycle battery swapping cabinets in 8 public parking lots, and reserved electric motorcycle charging facilities in newly built public parking lots. Based on the popularity of this type of vehicle, the government will continue to evaluate the usage situation and the need for expansion of the charging stations and battery-swapping points.

CE CALLS ALL MANAGERS TO PUT XI'S VISION INTO ACTION

VICTORIA CHAN

CHIEF Executive (CE) Sam Hou Fai has urged Macau's civil servants to prioritize realizing President Xi Jinping's aspirations and requirements while considering the city's practical situation and maintaining a broad perspective.

Speaking at seven symposiums attended by over 500 management-level civil servants, Sam emphasized that raising the standard of public governance is the top priority for Macau's new government term. The sessions aimed to study, promote, and implement the spirit of President Xi's important speeches during his recent visit to Macau.

Sam summarized the President's speeches using four keywords: "depth," "foresight," "detail," and "acuteness." These keywords, he said, reflect Xi's strategic planning for the "One country, two systems" and specific expectations for the new government.

The CE stressed the importance of adhering to President Xi's directives and taking practical steps to advance the MSAR government's work. He called on civil servants to uphold ethical standards in public administration, serve with loyalty, and

fully implement the president's "Four Requirements."

Sam outlined specific requirements across various administrative areas and departments, including building service-oriented governance, enhancing e-government, and actively integrating into national development. He emphasized the need for interdepartmental collaboration, appropriate economic diversification, and effective investment promotion.

Furthermore, Sam urged civil servants to focus on maintaining Macau's harmonious stability, improving disaster prevention and response capabilities, and strengthening the social security system and public health services. He highlighted the importance of optimizing land and marine resource utilization, promoting green and low-carbon development, and advancing anti-corruption efforts.

In his closing remarks, Sam acknowledged the Central government and President Xi's high praise and strong support for Macau while cautioning against complacency. He called for proactive steps to create a new and promising landscape for the MSAR's future development.

CRIME

EIGHT DETAINED BY PJ IN ANTI-PHONE SCAM OPERATION

AUTHORITIES in Macau have detained the members of a phone scam operation group and are forwarding eight suspects to the Public Prosecutions Office (MP) for further investigation. This action follows a series of "Guess who I am" scams that have prompted 14 separate investigations since September 2023.

The suspects allegedly utilized numerous phone numbers to target victims, deceiving them into transferring money. The funds were funneled into the defendants' electronic payment accounts after these transactions. Investigators discovered that the group laundered the money through various methods, including RMB exchanges, fraudulent corporate transactions, and gold purchases.

Substantial evidence of fraud and money laundering led the Criminal Investigation Court, under the Public Prosecutions



Office, to impose coercive measures on the defendants. These include restrictions on leaving the jurisdiction, mandatory periodic appearances, and bail requirements. If further criminal activities are uncovered, a more extensive investigation will ensue.

As phone fraud cases continue to rise, the PJ urges citizens to remain vigilant. They

advise individuals receiving suspicious calls requesting payments or personal information to verify the legitimacy of such communications with family, friends, or official entities.

Victims or those who suspect they have been targeted are encouraged to report incidents promptly to law enforcement, which will help prosecute these crimes. VC



ECOLOGY

Otters return after a decade's absence

AFTER disappearing from local coastlines for over a decade, Eurasian Otters have reportedly returned to Macau, sparking excitement among environmentalists.

According to a report from public broadcaster TDM, local eco-enthusiast Kwan Hok In discovered what he believed to be otter droppings during a recent coastal walk.

While inspecting a rocky area, Kwan noticed black remnants and fish scales reminiscent of Eurasian otter feces he had encountered previously. Initially skeptical, he returned for a closer look, leading to a four-month investigation along Macau's coast.

Kwan collected 20 samples of feces and footprints, which were sent for analysis in Hong Kong. The results confirmed the presence of Eurasian otters, marking their first documentation in the region in more than ten years.

Kwan attributes the otters' return to improved ecological conditions and enhanced conservation efforts in mainland China. He emphasized the ecological importance of these creatures, noting that they serve as indicators of environmental health.

To ensure the otters thrive, Kwan advocates for a coordinated conservation strategy along the western bank of the Pearl River estuary, calling for monitoring and systematic surveys to support the species' continued recovery. VC

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法律專家及外地註冊律師

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QUALIFIED IN OTHER JURISDICTIONS:
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羅成軒 José J. Rodrigues
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法律專家 JURISTS:

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SOCIETY

Lawmaker wants cash handouts to be only distributed to those residing in Macau

RENATO MARQUES

LAWMAKER Lo Choi In wants the government to amend the rules of the wealth partaking scheme system, commonly known as the annual cash handouts.

In an interview with the Chinese language newspaper Si Man Pou (Citizen's Newspaper), Lo, who is a directly elected lawmaker representing the interests of the Macau Jiangmen Communal Society Affinity, said that the government should consider, for one side to make the measure permanent, and for another, to enforce restrictions on which residents are eligible to receive the annual cheques.

Lo believes the handouts should be distributed only to permanent and non-permanent residents who effectively reside in Macau.

She suggested that this scheme follow the same rules as others, such as the elderly pension and other government benefits attached to permanence for over 183 days per year or over six months.

The lawmaker justified her proposal by arguing that it would improve the use of the public purse and allow the government to allocate more financial resources to support those living full-time in Macau, such as by issuing electronic consumption cards or similar plans.

She also argued that the current system makes use of annual administrative regulations to enforce the cash handouts as



well as the period of distribution and amount to be distributed (MOP10,000 to each permanent resident and MOP6,000 to each non-permanent resident) is not practical and always causes some concerns and anxiety on the citizens wishing to know if the scheme will continue and when the money will be distributed in each year. She claims

that turning into a permanent measure would alleviate this pressure, particularly from those for whom this benefit is essential to balance their life and expenses.

According to government information, in 2024, the cash handouts reached 740,000 residents, which cost the public purse some MOP7.3 billion.

Official statistics show that the population of Macau at the end of the same year was just 683,700 people, which also includes a high number of non-resident workers.

This is not the first time this matter has been raised, but the governments have never accepted this suggestion. They justified that the scheme aimed to

support all residents and their families. They also noted that it would be challenging to create then an exception system for residents who are absent from Macau for long periods due to work, studies, or health-related matters, as well as those of old age who opted to live across the border in the neighboring cities of the mainland.

CORPORATE BITS

AMAGAO Gallery opens 2025 with the multinational art exhibition 'GOOD TIME'



AMAGAO Gallery has launched 'GOOD TIME,' a celebration of creativity featuring 32 renowned artists from 12 countries and regions, including Brazil, China, France, and many others. The exhibition

will be open to the public from Jan. 17 to Mar. 17, 2025, and all artworks are available for purchase.

The opening ceremony, held in the lobby of Artyzen Grand Lapa Macau, brought

together art enthusiasts and the media to honor this showcase of global talent. Inspired by a poem from the Southern Song Dynasty, 'GOOD TIME' encourages attendees to slow down, appreciate the art, and find tranquility in its diverse "garden" of creative expressions.

Additionally, Artyzen Grand Lapa Macau's Cake Shop also introduced the "Recreation of The Macau Cake," an edible map of historical Macau made from white chocolate, showcasing landmarks such as the Border Gate and Guia Lighthouse, with flavors of crystal pear, Madagascar vanilla and Valrhona chocolate.

BNU launches new MOP50 and MOP100 banknotes



BNU announced the launch of the redesigned MOP50 and MOP100 banknotes, which officially entered circulation

yesterday. Accredited as the first note-issuing bank in Macau in the early 20th century, the new

bills are inspired by the city's rich history and evolution. The artwork showcases a map of the SAR through different eras and generations.

Each note tells a story of the city's transformation, reflecting Macau's unique cultural heritage and historical significance.

With the introduction of the new MOP50 and MOP100 banknotes, BNU continues to commit to providing citizens with a modern, aesthetically pleasing currency that incorporates updated security features.

This launch follows the introduction of the new MOP10 and MOP20 bills, expanding the family of this series of banknotes.

DIPLOMACY

VP Han Zheng, China's representative at Trump's inauguration, is a trusted adviser to Xi

VICE President Han Zheng, China's representative at Donald Trump's inauguration, is a trusted adviser to President Xi Jinping, a long-time survivor of Chinese politics who rose from toiling on a collective farm and in factories to becoming one of the most powerful people in the country.

China's decision to send Han, rather than its ambassador to Washington as is usual, appears to be a carefully calibrated signal that it is willing to improve relations with the U.S., while not leaving Xi exposed to criticism should ties worsen.

Many of the most divisive bilateral issues involve trade, with Trump threatening to impose 60% tariffs on imports from China, but relations have also frayed over technology and China's moves to assert its territorial claims in the South China Sea.

Like many young Chinese, Han was sent to the countryside during the Cultural Revolution to "learn from the peasants" on orders from then-leader Mao Zedong. Many on their return to the cities found jobs in state-run industries.

Han, 70, rose up the ranks in the financial center of Shanghai during the 1980s and 1990s, just as China's economy was catching fire, concurrently holding Communist Party and managerial positions in the chemical and ru-



Vice President Han Zheng meets with U.S. Vice President-elect J.D. Vance (right) in Washington yesterday

bber industries.

There he caught the eye of senior leaders and was elevated to district-level governance before becoming the city's mayor and then party secretary, the city's highest position, following a financial scandal involving his predecessor. Xi had briefly held the position after the scandal, giving Han access to him before him became China's new leader.

In 2017, Han reached the apex of Chinese political power, the party's seven-member Politburo Standing Committee, and after serving one five-year term was given the position of vice president,

a position Xi has imbued with new weight as adviser and envoy.

Throughout his career, Han has shown a flair for low-key diplomacy, helping to deal with unrest in Hong Kong and attending numerous international events such as the United Nations General Assembly.

Yesterday [Macau time], Han met with U.S. Vice President-elect J.D. Vance and U.S. business leaders, including Elon Musk, in Washington on the eve of the inauguration.

Han Zheng, who serves as an envoy for Chinese President Xi Jinping at the inauguration, "discussed a range of topics including fentanyl, balancing

trade and regional stability" with J.D. Vance, according to the Trump transition team.

Han stressed the "extensive common interests and enormous space of cooperation" the United States and China share in economic and trade relations despite "some disagreements and frictions," according to a readout of his meeting with Vance issued by the Chinese Foreign Ministry yesterday.

Trump has threatened to impose tariffs and other measures against China in his second term, while also hinting and ways in which the two rival powers could cooperate on issues such as regional con-

flicts and curbing the export of substances used in the production of fentanyl.

In an unorthodox move, Trump last month invited Xi to his inauguration. No head of state has previously made an official visit to the U.S. for the inauguration, according to State Department historical records.

While Xi will not personally attend the event, he and Trump held a phone call last week during which they discussed trade, fentanyl and TikTok. The Chinese social media app restored service to users in the U.S. yesterday, just hours after it went dark in response to a federal ban, which Trump said he would pause by executive order yesterday.

Han also met with Musk and other top U.S. business executives, including representatives of the U.S.-China Business Council and the U.S. Chamber of Commerce in Washington, D.C., according to the Chinese Foreign Ministry.

The Chinese vice president reiterated promises for an improved business environment for foreign firms in China and expressed hopes that U.S. companies will continue expanding investment in the country.

Musk, whose company Tesla operates a factory in Shanghai, posted on his platform X after the meeting that he has long opposed the TikTok ban "because it goes against freedom of speech."

"That said, the current situation where TikTok is allowed to operate in America, but X is not allowed to operate in China is unbalanced," he wrote. "Something needs to change."

X is banned in China alongside other major U.S. social media and news apps and websites, including YouTube, Google, Facebook and many major U.S. media. **MDT/AP**

CHINA has executed two men who committed deadly attacks that killed dozens in November, raising concerns about a surge in what are called "revenge on society crimes," state media reported yesterday.

Fan Wei-qu, 62, who rammed his car into a crowd outside a sports stadium in the southern city of Zhuhai, killing at least 35 people, was executed yesterday. The attack was the country's deadliest in over a decade, according to authorities. Police said Fan was upset over his divorce settlement.

China executes Zhuhai car attacker, another man who committed 'revenge on society crimes'

Also in November, 21-year-old Xu Jiajin killed eight people and injured 17 others in a stabbing attack at his vocational school in the eastern city of Wuxi. Police said Wu had failed his examinations and could not graduate, and was dissatisfied about his pay at an internship. He was also executed yesterday, according to state broadcaster CCTV.

The killings spurred Chinese President Xi Jinping to urge local governments to take measures to prevent such attacks, known as "revenge on society crimes."

The two men's death sentences were issued by the intermediate people's courts in the cities of Zhuhai and Wuxi, respectively, in December and approved by the Supreme

People's Court, according to state media.

China is believed to execute more prisoners each year than the rest of the world combined, though the precise total is classified a state secret. Executions are traditionally carried out by gunshot, though lethal injections have also been introduced in recent years. **MDT/AP**



A woman stands near flowers placed outside the "Zhuhai People's Fitness Plaza", where a man deliberately rammed his car into people exercising at the sports center, killing some and injuring others in Zhuhai on Nov. 12, 2024

INDIA

Court sentences a police volunteer to life in prison in the rape, killing of trainee doctor

SHEIKH SAALIQ, NEW DELHI

AN Indian court yesterday sentenced a police volunteer to life in prison after finding him guilty in the rape and killing of a trainee doctor last year, a crime that sparked nationwide protests over inadequate safety for women and led to a speedy trial in the country's slow-moving justice system.

Sanjay Roy, 33, who has consistently maintained his innocence, can appeal the judgment in a higher court.

The killing of the 31-year-old physician while she was on duty at a hospital in the eastern city of Kolkata highlighted the chronic issue of violence against women in the country. Police discovered the woman's bloodied body at the R.G. Kar Medical College and Hospital's seminar hall last Aug. 9. An autopsy found she had been strangled and sexually assaulted.

Federal police, who investigated the case, said the crime deserved the death penalty. Parents of the victim had also sought the death penalty for



Members of the citizen forum including doctors walk in a rally protesting a rape and murder of a resident doctor in a government hospital, in Kolkata last year

Roy and said they suspected more people were involved in the crime.

The case was initially investigated by Kolkata police but later the court handed

over the probe to federal investigators after state government officers were accused of mishandling the investigation.

After the assault, doctors

and medical students across India held protests and rallies demanding better security. Thousands of women also protested in the streets demanding swift justice for the

victim.

Roy was arrested a day after the crime, and arguments in the case began in November. The assault prompted India's Supreme Court to set up a national task force to suggest ways to enhance safety in government hospitals.

Many crimes against women go unreported in India due to the stigma surrounding sexual violence, as well as a lack of faith in the police. Women's rights activists say the problem is particularly acute in rural areas, where communities sometimes shame victims of sexual assault and families worry about their social standing.

In 2012, the gang rape and killing of a 23-year-old student on a New Delhi bus galvanized massive protests across India. It inspired lawmakers to order harsher penalties for such crimes, as well as the creation of fast-track courts dedicated to rape cases. The government also introduced the death penalty for repeat offenders. Four men sentenced to death for the 2012 crime were hanged in 2020.

The rape law amended in 2013 also criminalized stalking and voyeurism and lowered the age at which a person can be tried as an adult from 18 to 16.

Activists say new sentencing requirements haven't deterred rapes and the number of recorded rape cases has increased. In 2022, police recorded 31,516 reports of rape — a 20% jump from 2021, according to the National Crime Records Bureau. **MDT/AP**

USA

Rubio will meet with peers from India, Japan, Australia after confirmation, officials say

THE Trump administration would begin formal international engagements this week when Marco Rubio — expected to be confirmed soon as secretary of state — meets with the foreign ministers of India, Japan and Australia, U.S. officials say.

The so-called Quad grouping is a main component of the U.S. strategy to blunt increasing Chinese influence and aggression in the Indo-Pacific, an initiative that Trump had championed during his first term in office but was elevated to the leaders' level by

outgoing President Joe Biden.

Rubio is expected to be confirmed by the Senate to the post of America's top diplomat today, just hours after President-elect Donald Trump was sworn in for his second term.

Rubio's meetings, together and separately, today with Australian Foreign Minister Penny Wong, Indian Foreign Minister S. Jaishankar and Japanese Foreign Minister Iwaya Takeshi, will be his first as secretary of state, the current and incoming officials said. The three ministers will



Sen. Marco Rubio

all be attending Trump's inauguration.

Biden and his outgoing Secretary of State Antony Blinken have touted their work

to rebuild ties with allies abroad after taking over from Trump in 2021. Trump has been skeptical of alliances, including NATO and

defense partnerships in the Asia-Pacific.

"When we came in, we inherited partnerships and alliances that were seriously frayed," Blinken told The Associated Press on Friday.

The leaders of the Quad countries met with Biden near the U.S. president's hometown of Wilmington, Delaware, in September. They agreed to expand the partnership among the four nations' coast guards to improve interoperability and capabilities, with Indian, Japanese and Australian personnel sailing on U.S. ships in the region.

All the countries are worried about China's increasing assertiveness in the Indo-Pacific, and the U.S.-China rivalry is set to intensify after Trump takes office. Beijing has sent Vice President Han Zheng to Trump's inauguration after the U.S. president-elect invited Chinese leader Xi Jinping, but tariffs imposed on Chinese products in Trump's first term were a hallmark of his trade policy, and he has signaled that he will increase and expand them in his second term.

Meanwhile, several of Trump's key Cabinet members are known China hawks, including Rubio. Rubio called China "the most potent, dangerous and near-peer adversary this nation has ever confronted" during his confirmation hearing last week. **MDT/AP**

USA

Trump pledges a series of Day 1 executive actions to end 'four long years of American decline'

WILL WEISSERT, FATIMA HUSSEIN & JOSH BOAK, WASHINGTON

PRESIDENT-ELECT Donald Trump used a raucous rally Sunday on the eve of his inauguration to promise swift Day 1 action remaking the federal government, shifting federal priorities at breakneck speed and ensuring that "the curtain closes on four long years of American decline."

Supporters filled nearly all of the 20,000-plus-seat Capital One Arena in downtown Washington for a "Make America Great" victory celebration, and cheered as Trump said he'd take quick action on everything from cracking down on the U.S.-Mexico border to promoting oil drilling, reining in the federal workforce and eradicating diversity programs.

"We're going to give them the best first day, the biggest first week and the most extraordinary first 100 days of any presidency in American history," said Trump, who also promised to roll back executive actions by his predecessor, outgoing President Joe Biden, "within hours."

In an unusual move, Trump entered at the arena's concourse level and deliberately made his way down the stairs before his speech, stopping frequently to pump his fist and pose for pictures with rallygoers. It was even more surreal after he finished speaking, when the Village People took the stage and the president-elect sang — and even briefly danced — along to "YMCA," an unofficial anthem of his campaign.

Trump said he'd jump start his agenda with a series of unilateral actions from the White House, telling the crowd, "You're going to see executive orders that are going to make you extremely happy. Lots of them."

"Tomorrow [today] we will not waste a single moment," he vowed later to attendees at a dinner reception.

Sunday was Trump's first full day back in Washington since his Election Day victory and gave him a chance to energize core supporters before the official pomp of Inauguration Day. Unlike when Trump helped spark a mob of his supporters

AP PHOTO



to attack the Capitol and tried to retain power in 2021 after his loss to Biden, officials did not expect massive protests, unrest or violence.

Instead, jubilant crowds reveled in Trump's coming second term and MAGA's total control of the Republican Party.

Yet even with a comfortable Electoral College victory and his party in full — albeit narrow — control of Congress, the incoming president is one of the most polarizing figures in U.S. history, with nearly as many fierce detractors as ardent supporters. That means it could be difficult for Trump to fulfill postelection pledges to promote bipartisanship while healing political differences.

Trump has nonetheless insisted that unity will be a theme of his inauguration speech, along with strength and fairness — despite spending months as a candidate saying that if elected he would seek retribution against political enemies.

That was the theme of much of his rally speech Sunday, when Trump returned to the greatest hits of his campaign — as if the race against Vice President Kamala Harris weren't already long decided. Trump denounced "migrant crime" by evoking one of his favorite fictional characters, Hannibal Lecter, and promised to stamp out "woke" policies and oppose transgender rights.

"Tomorrow [today], at noon,

the curtain closes on four long years of American decline, and we begin a brand new day of American strength and prosperity, dignity and pride," Trump said, adding, "Once and for all, we're going to end the reign of a failed and corrupt political establishment in Washington."

The event also featured a performance by Kid Rock, who performed "All Summer Long" despite a cold mix of rain and snow falling outside. Others taking the stage included singer Lee Greenwood, whose "God Bless the USA" is a Trump favorite.

Billionaire Tesla owner Elon Musk — who Trump has tasked with helping run a special commission to make the federal government more efficient — took the stage and said "we're looking forward to making a lot of changes." Jon Voight, an actor named by Trump as a special ambassador to Hollywood, declared the president-elect "our hero. A man who never gave up on the American people, and we the people never gave up on him."

Stephen Miller, Trump's pick to be deputy chief of staff and a key architect of the administration's promised hard-line immigration policies, vowed that "justice is coming."

"We are about to get our country back and our democracy back," Miller said, adding "Donald J. Trump is about to save this country."

With frigid temperatures, Trump directed most of yesterday's outdoor events to be moved indoors, and officials held a rehearsal Sunday for his swearing-in in the U.S. Capitol's Rotunda, which holds only 600 people compared to the 250,000-plus guests who had tickets to view the inauguration from around the Capitol grounds.

Also yesterday [Macau time], Trump had breakfast privately with Republican senators at Blair House, the president's official guest residence, across Pennsylvania Avenue from the White House, and took to his social media site to comment on the ceasefire between Israel and Hamas and the U.S. ban on TikTok.

"Hostages starting to come out today!" Trump wrote.

Overnight, millions of U.S. users of TikTok lost the ability to watch videos on the social media platform as a federal ban on the app took effect. Though the site later began working again for some users, the disruptions reflected a new law requiring its China-based parent company, ByteDance, to divest for national security reasons.

The company made a personal appeal to Trump to intervene, posting a message saying, "We are fortunate that President Trump has indicated that he will work with us on a solution to reinstate TikTok once he takes office." **MDT/AP**

this day in history

1950 ACCLAIMED AUTHOR GEORGE ORWELL DIES



The writer, George Orwell, has died after a three-year battle against tuberculosis.

Until the last, news had been positive and it was hoped Mr Orwell was improving.

On Friday morning he had a long talk with a friend about his plans for the future.

However, a few hours later he suffered a fatal haemorrhage in a London hospital.

But illness had not dimmed George Orwell's enthusiasm for writing.

His last novel, 1984, published last summer was written in between periods spent in hospital.

The controversial book - like *Animal Farm* - was widely viewed as an attack on the Communist system.

However, it brought George Orwell widespread critical acclaim including the award of £357 by the influential *Partisan Review* for the year's most significant contribution to literature.

George Orwell was born Eric Arthur Blair in June 1903 into a family of relatively prosperous civil servants working in India on behalf of the British Empire.

He is said to have assumed his pseudonym, inspired by the River Orwell, near his parent's house in Suffolk, to spare his family embarrassment.

Orwell's early writings often drew on his own experiences of poverty which were in marked contrast to his privileged background.

He spent time living as a tramp in the East End of London and as a dishwasher in Paris - events which inspired his first book in 1933, *Down and Out in London and Paris*.

It was followed in 1934 by his first novel, *Burmese Days*.

And in 1938 after returning wounded after fighting for the socialists in the Spanish Civil War he wrote *Homage to Catalonia*.

But it was only five years ago that the book which made him world-famous, *Animal Farm*, appeared.

In reaction to the sudden glare of fame, Orwell moved to the island of Jura, off the coast of Scotland.

The move aggravated his tuberculosis which had developed after his return from Spain.

CourtesyBBCNews

IN CONTEXT

George Orwell's work has remained popular over the years, especially *Animal Farm* and 1984.

He began writing 1984 after resigning from the BBC World Service in September 1943 where he had been employed writing and producing news for India.

It was his increasing frustration with the Ministry of Information, which censored the news during World War II, which led to his resignation and subsequently became the central theme of 1984.

Words and phrases from the novel have passed into everyday usage, particularly "Big Brother". The book was also made into a film released in 1984.

George Orwell's name itself has become an adjective - "Orwellian" - meaning an oppressive system.

1984 and *Animal Farm* frequently appear in lists of the world's best-ever selling novels.

MACAU'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

YOUR STARS

ARIES
 Mar. 21-Apr. 19
 Make future plans with your partner. Imagine how you'd love things to be. Share secret confessions and dreams. Find ways to help each other.

TAURUS
 Apr. 20-May. 20
 Focus on your physical actions. The practices you maintain build long-term health, strength and endurance. Keep monitoring your performance. Push for a goal.

GEMINI
 May. 21-Jun. 21
 Someone makes your heart flip. Talk about dreams, curiosities and passions. Don't try to force anything. Creative collaboration develops naturally. Invent interesting possibilities.

CANCER
 Jun. 22-Jul. 22
 Make long-lasting domestic improvements to support your family. Go for simplicity and functionality, with the highest quality you can afford. Less is more.

LEO
 Jul. 23-Aug. 22
 Research and write your ideas, thoughts and visions. Artistic and musical expression flowers. Decisions made now can have lasting results. Make a startling revelation.

VIRGO
 Aug. 23-Sep. 22
 Business booms, along with expenses. Maintain momentum. Keep a positive balance sheet. Find safe places to stash your treasure. Save for the future.

LIBRA
 Sep. 23-Oct. 22
 Take action that forwards a personal dream. Long-term plans get realized step by step. Imagine your future goal completed, and the ensuing celebration.

SCORPIO
 Oct. 23-Nov. 21
 Plan and coordinate. Consider long-term goals, aspirations and dreams. Quiet moments can get especially productive. Articulate what you want and schedule your actions.

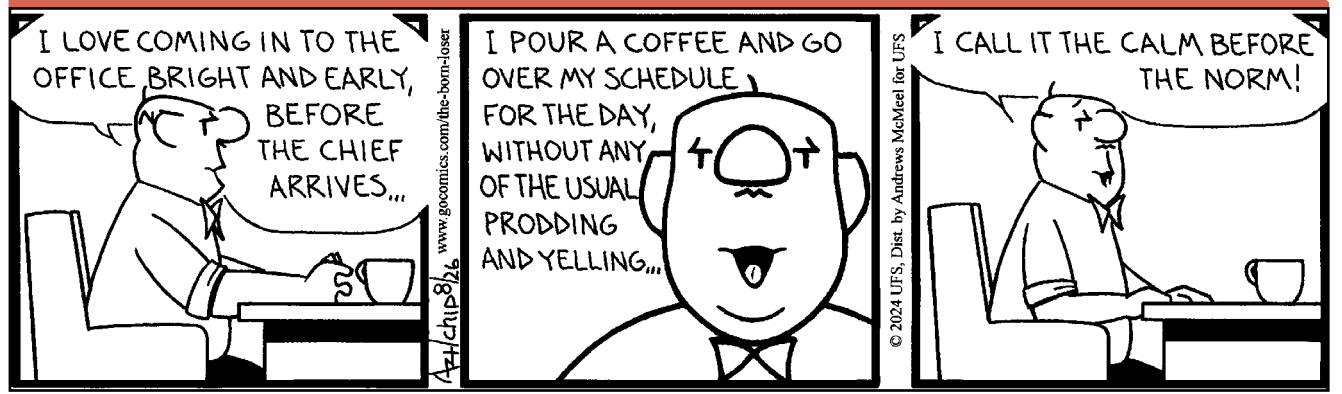
SAGITTARIUS
 Nov. 22-Dec. 21
 Align actions for shared dreams. Discuss long-term ambitions with your team. Coordinate collaborative efforts for efficiency and ease. Pull together for common gain.

CAPRICORN
 Dec. 22-Jan. 19
 Consider long-term career goals with trusted advisors and friends. Amazing developments grow with disciplined practice. Discover a logical progression. New possibilities arise in conversation.

AQUARIUS
 Jan. 20-Feb. 18
 Expand your horizons. Make long-distance connections. Travel and research provide illuminating fresh understanding. Share your views and discoveries. Research, write and post your story.

PISCES
 Feb. 19-Mar. 20
 Collaborate to maximize cash flow to shared accounts. Consider long-term goals and budget for what you want to create. Back up talk with action.

The Born Loser by Chip Sansom



SUDOKU

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

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

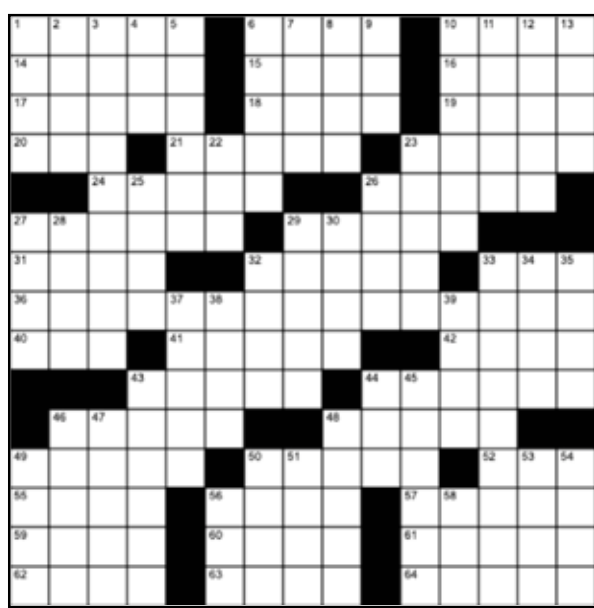
WEATHER

	MIN	MAX	CONDITION
CHINA			
Beijing	-3	8	cloudy
Changchun	-13	-5	fine
Chengdu	4	14	fine
Chongqing	7	16	cloudy
Fuzhou	9	18	fine
Guangzhou	8	22	fine
Guiyang	7	16	cloudy
Haikou	14	23	cloudy
Hangzhou	4	17	cloudy
Harbin	-19	-7	snow
Hefei	-1	17	fine
Nanjing	2	17	fine
Shanghai	4	15	fine
Taipei	13	18	fine
Wuhan	0	20	cloudy
Hong Kong	18	19	cloudy
WORLD			
Moscow	-7	-6	cloudy
Frankfurt	-2	3	sunny
Paris	3	6	cloudy
London	2	6	cloudy
New York	-12	-7	cloudy

CROSSWORDS

ACROSS 1- Humped ruminant; 6- Toll rds.; 10- What you do to a joint, prior to a heist; 14- Once ___ time...; 15- Israeli round dance; 16- Cain's brother; 17- Less covered; 18- Disturb; 19- Super Bowl XXXIV champs; 20- Illustrative craft; 21- Swerves; 23- Fasten again; 24- Without ___ in the world; 26- Affirmatives; 27- One who grinds grains; 29- Autocratic Russian rulers; 31- Diva's delivery; 32- Later!; 33- Worked (up); 36- In spite of; 40- At least one; 41- Fang, e.g.; 42- Yours, in Tours; 43- Lanterns; 44- Ballet's Nureyev; 46- Nimble; 48- Go into; 49- Adversary; 50- Cereal grain; 52- Long March leader; 55- Retain; 56- Designer Christian; 57- "All My Children" vixen; 59- Facilitate; 60- ... saw Elba; 61- Bowling alley button; 62- Historic Scott; 63- Zaire's Mobutu ___ Seko; 64- Fresh-mouthed;

DOWN 1- Castro's country; 2- On ___ with: equal to; 3- Death rate; 4- Vane dir.; 5- Immature insects; 6- Babe Ruth's number; 7- Needy; 8- Actor Kristofferson; 9- Baseball's Bando; 10- Fondle; 11- Diminish; 12- Big rigs; 13- Or ___; 22- Make a boo-boo; 23- Showed again; 25- Cat's weapon; 26- Divine Secrets of the ___ Sisterhood; 27- "Give that ___ cigar!"; 28- Pressing need; 29- Trials; 30- Adam's third son; 32- Hit the mall; 33- Haphazard; 34- Hydroxyl compound; 35- End-of-workweek shout; 37- Pisa place; 38- Heavy reading?; 39- Miami's county; 43- Walked lamely; 44- Genetic messenger; 45- Speaks; 46- Lend ___ (listen); 47- Farm birds; 48- Spine-tingling; 49- Barely managed, with "out"; 50- Metal filament; 51- Weed whackers; 53- Breezes through; 54- Like Cheerios; 56- ___ Plains; 58- "Michael Collins" actor;



Crossword puzzles provided by BestCrosswords.com

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

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



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FOOTBALL

THE WORST MAN UNITED TEAM IN HISTORY? HERE'S A LOOK AT THE NUMBERS BEHIND RUBEN AMORIM'S SHOCK CLAIM

STEVE DOUGLAS,
MDT/AP SPORTS WRITER

IT has never been this bad at Manchester United.

Well, that's the opinion of the club's latest manager, anyway, with Ruben Amorim saying yesterday [Macau time] about his underperforming team: "We are being the worst, maybe, in the history of Manchester United."

It's quite the claim.

After all, United is a record 20-time English champion, and one of the biggest sports teams and brands in the world.

Here's a look at some of the numbers behind Amorim's comment, which came after a 3-1 loss to Brighton:

13TH

Current position of United in the 20-team Premier League after 21 of 38 games. With 26 points, United is closer to the

AD

relegation zone than the European qualification places and on course for its lowest finish in the Premier League era (since 1992), which is eighth last year.

24

Number of points United is behind Premier League leader Liverpool, its great rival.

1893-94 The last time United had worse home form than this season, according to Premier League statistician Opta. The team has six losses from its first 12 league games at Old Trafford.

7

The number of losses in 15 games under Amorim since he took charge in November to replace Erik ten Hag.

20

Number of times United finished in the top two in the 26 full seasons under manager Alex Ferguson (1986-2013)

2

Number of times United has finished in the top two in the 11 full seasons since Alex Ferguson retired in 2013. On both occasions, United was in second place.

10TH

Amorim is the 10th manager — either permanent or interim — appointed by United since Ferguson's retirement.

1974

The last time United was relegated from the first division of English soccer. The team won promotion the following season and has been in the top flight ever since.

\$6.55B

The estimated worth of Man United, according to Forbes. That places the club in 14th place in Forbes' list of the world's most valuable sports teams in its most recent ranking.

AP PHOTO



Manchester United's Bruno Fernandes and Harry Maguire react after Brighton scored its side third goal

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SAILING

Australia beats Spain and Britain to win the New Zealand leg of SailGP

AUSTRALIA won the New Zealand leg of the SailGP series, pressing home an advantage they enjoyed throughout the event to beat Spain and Britain in the three-boat final.

Three-time champion Australia sailed a flawless race in gusty conditions in the final, beating Spain by 22 seconds with Britain third.

After two events this season, Britain and New Zealand are tied with 17 points to lead the series standings. Australia and Spain are third with 16 points each and Australia now heads to its home event on Sydney on Feb. 8 and 9.

After four fleet races on day one, Australia led the Auckland event standings with 34 points from Britain with 27, Spain with 26 and New Zealand with 25.

Australia then won the first of three fleet races on day two and finished second in the next to secure its place in the final before the third race from which it had to



The SailGP fleet on race Day 2 of the New Zealand leg of the SailGP series in Auckland

withdraw with a technical issue.

The Australians won the start in the final as they did in the first two races of the day. The boats

were close at gate one but Australia rounded narrowly ahead of Spain and Britain fell of the foils near the gate to lose any chance of

winning.

Spain closed the gap when the boats split on the fifth of seven legs but Australia managed to

hold onto its lead, then stretched away on the sixth leg to win comfortably.

Winds on the day reached 32 knots in choppy conditions in Auckland, which hosted a SailGP event for the first time. The conditions fully tested the teams and the new T-Foils which were being used for the first time in this event.

Canada was unable to race on Day 2 because of an injury to a team member and France did not take part in the Auckland event because of equipment problems.

Spain set the fastest speed on the final day of 96 kph (59.6 mph). Australia took 10 points, Spain 9 and Britain 8 towards the series standings.

SailGP involves 12 national teams sailing identical 50-foot foiling catamarans. The foils allow the boats to rise up and "fly" across the water at speeds of up to 100kmh (60mph). There are 13 events leading up to the series final in Dubai in late November.

MDT/AP

AD

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OPINION

China Daily
 Editorial, China Daily

**TIKTOK TESTS US
 EARNESTNESS FOR
 COOPERATION**

TikTok "temporarily" suspended its services in the United States on Saturday, following the Supreme Court's ruling that a law requiring the app to sever ties with its Chinese parent company, ByteDance, or face a ban, is constitutional and does not violate the First Amendment.

The Protecting Americans from Foreign Adversary Controlled Applications Act took effect at midnight on Sunday.

After the US Supreme Court's decision on Friday upholding an earlier appeals court judgment in favor of the sell-or-ban federal law, White House news secretary Karine Jean-Pierre said in a statement: "TikTok should remain available to Americans, but simply under American ownership or other ownership that addresses the national security concerns identified by Congress in developing this law," noting that actions to implement the law will fall to the Donald Trump administration.

That means the Joe Biden administration has handed a poisoned chalice to its successor.

After meeting with TikTok CEO Shou Zi Chew last month, Trump told the media he would "take a look" whether he would seek to prevent the Supreme Court's ban from taking effect. And in a telephone interview with NBC News on Saturday, Trump said he hadn't made a decision yet but he will "most likely" give TikTok a 90-day reprieve from a ban in the US after taking office.

"I think that would be, certainly, an option that we look at. The 90-day extension is something that will be most likely done, because it's appropriate. You know, it's appropriate. We have to look at it carefully. It's a very big situation," Trump said.

The law allows for such a 90-day pause in the restrictions on the app if there has been significant progress toward its sale to a US entity before the law takes effect. But according to what the Justice Department has said in court filings, a sale of TikTok does not appear imminent and, although experts have said the app will not disappear from existing users' phones once the law takes effect, new users won't be able to download it and updates won't be available.

TikTok has about 170 million users in the United States, suspending its service before it has to is a risky action for the company as that might lead to its users migrating to other social media platforms. But if it continues to operate without compliance.

Media-savvy Trump attaches great importance to his media relations, as long as he thinks the media organizations are friendly to him, which is evidenced by the fact that several members of his Cabinet are former media veterans.

His personal rapport with Chew, and the important role TikTok played in helping him woo young voters in election mean TikTok might be regarded as a friendly social media platform that can contribute to his governance, as long as its alleged threat to the US' national security is addressed.

Trump is well aware TikTok's "threat" to US national security is just an excuse for some parties to try and Americanize the app, and the TikTok ban, one of the farewell gifts from the Biden administration.

Trump is certainly well aware that Biden's welcome-to-office gift is without substance and simply galvanized with a "national security" antitrust coating to make it appear of value. Thus it should not be difficult for the new administration to find a proper solution to the issue. [Abridged]

Chinese banks kept benchmark lending rates unchanged yesterday for the third straight month, reflecting ongoing efforts to keep the yuan stable even as officials vowed to cut interest rates to support the economy.

According to NikkeiAsia, the People's Bank of China said the one-year loan prime rate (LPR), the corporate lending rate, remained at 3.1%, while the five-year mortgage benchmark was maintained at 3.6%. The LPR is calculated by the central bank every month, based on quotes submitted by 20 commercial banks.

The Japanese economic agency, also said investors are expecting the

PBOC to cut interest rates more aggressively this year after the country's top leadership shifted its tone on monetary policy in a December meeting to "moderately loose" to support economic growth. But Nikkei analysts note that the outlook for monetary easing has sent government bond yields to historic lows, putting downward pressure on the yuan against the U.S. dollar.

After the yuan hit its lowest level in 16 months in early January, the PBOC officials vowed to guard against the risk of exchange rate "overshooting."

It also stepped up efforts to defend the currency, NikkeiAsia added.



**PRADA OFFERS
 SAVAGE, INSTINCTIVE
 MENSWEAR DURING
 MILAN FASHION WEEK**

COLLEEN BARR, MILAN

MIUCCIA Prada and her co-creative director Raf Simons described the latest Prada menswear collaboration unveiled during Milan Fashion Week on Sunday [yesterday, Macau time] as raw and cinematic.

While the Milan Fall-Winter 2025-2026 runway was full of faux fur collars, Prada went the usual step beyond and created primitive detailing in shearling that looked almost torn from the beast and set askew on outerwear lapels, or patchworked into garments.

"Maybe, it reads as savage, primitive cavemen. I think that our aim was to make it feel warm and human and instinctive, but also kind of beautifully domestic in a way," Simons said backstage.

**COLLECTION
 HALLMARKS**

Cinematic references were broad and not specific to any film, director or even character type, Simons said. Western touches included scuffed cowboy boots and knitwear mimicking a wrangler's shirt - without creating characters or ca-

ricatures.

Feminine touches flourished. Men were invited to wear jewelry, such as bracelets with mini basketballs or baseballs. Chains with amulets hung from fine knits. Fake fur-lined hoods came in florals.

The silhouette mixed skinny trousers, often in bright rock-and-roll satin, with more ample volumes like pajama tops or slightly ratty sweaters. Suits required no shirts, as the designers advocated instinctive dressing.

One look seemed to distill the collection to its boyish essence: Straight leg jeans with a knit top featuring striped detailing, worn with floral-stamped cowboy boots.

FASHION AS MEANING

The designers said the collection was meant to offer hope in difficult times, proffering humanity as a form of resistance to whatever may be oppressing.

"It's a bit of an answer to what of course is happening. We have to resist with our instinct, with our humanity, with our passion, with our romance," Prada said backstage. Good work, she said, is also a form of resistance.

The message contained in the collection "has to be optimistic by definition and in principle," Prada said.

THE SETTING

The ever-transforming showroom inside the Prada Foundation's Deposito contemporary art space was sheathed in Art Nouveau carpet, and the runway was set on raised metal scaffolding. Simons said it represented contrasts, decoration and a work-in-progress.

TREND WATCH

Suits require no shirts. Two puffers are better than one. Raw shearling collars let loose primitive instincts. Subtle jewelry and florals for men. Cowboy boots.

STAR POWER

Prada's front row hailed from across the globe and disciplines, including British actor and musician William Gao, arriving with British musician Olivia Hardy, U.S. actor Keith Powers, South Korean actress Kim Tae-ri, Chinese table tennis player Ma Long and British actor Louis Partridge. A crowd of fans waited just beyond a barricade to cheer them all. MDT/AP



United States A winter storm has blanketed the U.S. East Coast in snow and brought freezing temperatures across much of the country. Warnings remain yesterday in effect as millions brace for more snowfall and dangerous conditions this week.



Switzerland Global inequality deepens as billionaire wealth grows three times faster in 2024, Oxfam reports ahead of the Davos forum. The group urges policies to address wealth disparities, including progressive taxation and economic reform.



Vatican Pope Francis yesterday condemned President-elect Trump's mass deportation plans as "a disgrace," urging governments to prioritize dignity and rights for migrants over restrictive policies. His comments echo the Catholic Church's longstanding advocacy for migrants.



Poland's EU presidency prioritizes security at its border with Belarus, citing hybrid warfare by Russia and Belarus involving migrants. Critics question human rights practices, while Warsaw defends strict measures to safeguard European security.



United Kingdom A teen goes on trial today [Macau time] in England for the murder of three children and the attempted murder of 10 others at a Taylor Swift-themed dance class. July 29. The attack also triggered riots fueled by misinformation about asylum seekers.