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Air Quality Good

" THE TIMES THEY ARE A-CHANGIN' "

MOP 8.00
HKD 10.00

ARTS & CULTURE P18





BEIJING'S HOTEL LEGENDALE, LINKED TO MACAU LEGEND, IS SET TO BECOME A WELLNESS COMPLEX AFTER REPORTED SALE P11

TRUMP TO MEET XI AND PUTIN FOR A RARE THREE-WAY NUCLEAR SUMMIT P14

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BEYOND THE TABLES

In his Policy Address, Sam says non-gaming sectors could account for 60% of Macau's GDP within five years P2-3



AP PHOTO



India Prince William and Princess Catherine arrived in Mumbai yesterday for a three-day visit, their first overseas trip together since her cancer diagnosis. They will attend Tuesday's Earthshot Prize ceremony, highlighting environmental innovation, before meeting Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Wednesday.

AP PHOTO



Pakistan Imprisoned former Prime Minister Imran Khan appealed to Pakistan's top judges yesterday for urgent medical treatment for himself and his wife. Khan warned of serious cardiovascular risks, while his wife faces possible permanent vision loss. The government disputed his allegations.

AP PHOTO



European Union foreign ministers accused Russia yesterday of prolonging Ukraine peace negotiations while intensifying attacks on energy infrastructure ahead of winter. The bloc sanctioned nearly 50 Russian financial institutions and rejected Moscow's demands for a new European security framework.

GETTY IMAGES



UK Prime Minister Andy Burnham is expected to declare that Britain has lost more than it gained from Brexit, according to BBC. Ahead of Friday's UK-EU summit, he plans to pursue agreements on food, energy and youth mobility while ruling out immediate major changes.

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FORMER PROSECUTOR GETS 26 YEARS

Top court increases Kong Chi's sentence on final appeal

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BATTERY LIFE

Macau to cut cost of charging EVs by about 10%

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MACAU'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

Macau airport warns of possible flight adjustments during APEC Summit

Macau International Airport said it will fully support security arrangements for the APEC informal leaders' meeting in Shenzhen, with some flights possibly being adjusted in response to temporary airspace restrictions. The airport advised passengers travelling between Nov. 11 and 22 to check the latest flight information and airline announcements before departure and cooperate with airline and airport arrangements. It said it will maintain close communication with airlines and operating units to manage flight sequencing and resource allocation and safeguard regional aviation safety.

Customs seizes 600,000 cigarettes on bridge

Gongbei Customs said officers intercepted a cross-border truck suspected of carrying 600,000 cigarettes for export at the Zhuhai Port of the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge on Oct. 26. According to the Customs announcement, officers found anomalies in machine-scanned images during an inspection at the port. A subsequent inspection uncovered 3,000 cartons of cigarettes concealed in wooden crates labeled as custom-made furniture for a house. Customs urged individuals to abide by relevant laws and regulations when carrying items in and out of the country and refrain from engaging in illegal trafficking for profit.

IAS launches 'Elderly Entrepreneurship' funding scheme

The Social Welfare Bureau has launched the "Entrepreneurial Talents for the Elderly" social enterprise funding scheme. The scheme offers up to MOP4 million per application to help organizations create jobs for elderly residents and people with disabilities, according to the bureau. The program supports social service organizations in establishing enterprises with accessible workplaces and suitable roles, encouraging beneficiaries to become self-reliant, use their strengths and integrate more fully into community life. The bureau held an information session on Nov. 6 at a government-run elderly apartment, explaining funding details, application requirements and key considerations. 34 community representatives attended, according to an announcement issued Monday.

POLICY ADDRESS

CE confident non-gaming sectors

RENATO MARQUES

CHIEF Executive (CE) Sam Hou Fai said the government believes it can achieve its goal of having non-gaming economic activities account for 60% of Macau's gross domestic product (GDP) within five years.

"This is a very clear goal. We have established it in the five-year plan. In the future, we hope revenue from non-gaming activities will reach 60%. We hope that through various efforts, we can achieve this goal," Sam said in response to a media question during the Q&A session following his presentation of next year's main government policies.

Sam said his confidence stemmed from the performance of the "1+4" development strategy, which he said had already produced important and visible results this year.

He noted that tourism remained Macau's flagship industry and would continue to be its main source of income. He said the city must continue investing in the sector and attracting more visitors, particularly from European and Asian markets, including those with higher purchasing power.

However, he cautioned that while tourism remained the flagship industry, it was vulnerable to various external factors. Macau had previously experienced the negative effects of downturns in the tourism industry, which had significantly reduced the city's overall income.

"Certainly, we need to strengthen further our flagship industry, which is tourism. You may notice that in the first three quarters of this year, total tourist arrivals have gone up. It's more than 30 million a year. International arrivals originally represented only 8.5% of total arrivals. And in the last year, year-on-year, it was an increase of 3.5%. So, to enhance our flagship industry, we need to explore international markets further."

Sam said the government's goal of increasing international visitor numbers had already been achieved last year, when arrivals reached 1.9 million. He noted that although overall international visitor growth this year had been relatively modest, European arrivals had recorded particularly strong growth.

"I told our colleagues in the tourism office that we need to have a vision. Our vision increased total international tourist arrivals to 1.9 million a year. This year, the total international tourist arrivals represent only 3.5% year-on-year. Tourists from Europe in the first three quarters [of this year] totaled over 200,000 arrivals. This is very significant growth," the CE said.

"We will continue to promote the '1+4' development strategy, and we also need to expand our tourist market to attract high-end customers to Macau. Whether these [visitors] will come to our tourism and leisure industry operators or our SMEs, [either way] that's going to help a lot," he said.

Another area Sam identified as having significant economic potential was Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM), which he said Macau needed to continue investing in and promoting.

The CE also pointed to new infrastructure and cross-border transport projects as important to achieving the economic diversification target, particularly through their potential benefits to the financial sector.

"I can tell you that this year, we have amended our legislation, the legal framework. Our current bond volume is over 11,000 billion," he said, noting that further developments in the sector were awaiting approval.

He said Macau could benefit from financial market activities of this kind because the transactions were subject to relatively low taxes.

Similarly, he said high-tech companies would be able to make use of the planned industrial park, adding that many companies had expres-



RENATO MARQUES



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s can reach 60% of GDP in five years



sed interest in establishing operations there.

"High-tech companies will be able to make use of our [future] industrial park. Many companies want to come in. We hope that through our in-depth research and development, we can promote a high-tech industry. So that is also part of our '1+4' policy. I believe this policy can reach 60% [of Macau's GDP] in five years. But the main thing is that we won't be dependent on a single industry. We want and believe all these sectors [1+4] can develop steadily [in a synergistic way]," Sam said.

He added that these policies were closely linked to research and development opportunities arising from the new University Town in Hengqin, expressing confidence that investments in these projects would begin yielding results in the coming years.

ADMINISTRATIVE REFORM REMAINS A PRIORITY

Responding to another media question, Sam said continued public administration reform would be one of the government's priorities next year.

"The objective of the administration reform is to improve our governance. This is one of the most important tasks we need to do this term of the government. Last year we started the reform. We started by examining and analyzing the structure of the different departments. We look at the responsibilities and their functions. And we try to decide on the staffing group. We can summarize it in three decisions. We decide on the responsibilities, we decide on the structure, and we decide on the number of staff," the CE explained.

He added: "This year, a few government departments have merged. Altogether 19 departments or units are actually restructuring their organizations. We have reduced the total number of leaders by 23, departments by 22, and divisions by 57."

In the 2027 Policy Address, the government would continue the reform by merging six more departments and units, Sam said. These include the Pension Fund, the Gaming Inspection and Coordination Bureau, the Social Welfare Bureau, the Education and Youth Development Bureau, the Pharmaceutical Administration Bureau, and the Marine and Water Bureau.

He said the government would also consider merging other departments where necessary, with the ultimate aim of simplifying administrative structures and improving communication between departments so residents could benefit from more efficient public services.

According to Sam, the government reduced the total number of civil servants from 31,000 to 30,528 this year, without laying off any employees.

"We will continue to make arrangements to meet the objective of enhancing our performance," he said.

During his presentation at the Legislative Assembly (AL) earlier in the afternoon, Sam also cited the launch of Version 3.0 of the Macao One Account as part of efforts to improve administrative efficiency, but did not elaborate on the changes.

URBAN RENEWAL TO PROCEED GRADUALLY

Sam said the urban renewal process would be gradual and take into account the specific characteristics of individual communities and neighborhoods.

He noted that work was underway to identify solutions to benefit residents of Pátio do Espinho and areas surrounding the Ruins of St. Paul's. He reiterated his earlier announcement at the Legislative Assembly that buildings aged 40 years or older would be given priority in assessments of building conditions.

While acknowledging that urban renewal also involved improving the city's appearance, he stressed that the priority was to improve residents' living conditions and quality of life.

Sam said the work would focus on three areas: revitalizing communities, improving the environment and upgrading urban conditions.

Main financial benefits to remain unchanged in 2027

At the Legislative Assembly (AL), Chief Executive (CE) Sam Hou Fai announced that the main financial support measures and government benefits for residents would remain unchanged next year.

Measures such as the injection of MOP10,000 into the central provident fund accounts of each eligible resident and MOP7,000 for those already enrolled will continue, along with most subsidies and cash handouts.

Old-age pensions and other pensions and subsidies for elderly residents and people with disabilities will also remain at the same levels as this year.

Changes will be introduced in some areas, including tax benefits. According to the Policy Address document, in 2027, the government will reduce the urban property tax rate on rented units to 8%, while the rate for unrented properties will remain at 6%.

Residents will also benefit from an increase in the discount on the use of government seniors' residences, which will rise from 20% to 25%.

To encourage a higher birth rate, the government will adjust the child care subsidy, setting an annual allowance of MOP18,000 for the first child, from birth until the age of 3. The amount will increase to MOP27,000 for the second child and MOP36,000 for the third.

The government will also adjust the nursery subsidy for underprivileged families, setting the monthly allowance at MOP500 for families with one child and MOP800 for those with two children.

Most other subsidies and support measures, including those for education, child care and elderly care, will remain unchanged.

Addressing a proposal by some civil society groups to convert the Continuous Education Subsidy, which provides MOP6,000 every three years, into a health care benefit, Sam said during the Q&A session at government headquarters that he believed the proposal lacked logic.

The CE said the proposal aimed to allow residents aged 65 and older to use the allowance for other purposes, particularly health care, instead of education. He said this would not make sense given the existing health care support available to elderly residents.

"The original purpose, set by CE Fernando Chui, was for residents to improve their skills," Sam said, adding, "It does not make much sense to request that this be transformed into healthcare, as residents over 65 already benefit from free healthcare and special support in cases of serious illness, such as cancer and others."

"We hope that the citizens continue to use this benefit to improve themselves and their knowledge and skills; even those over 65 can use it. They can learn more. There are some courses available where they can learn more about self-care and health-related matters," the CE said.

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COURTS

Former prosecutor Kong Chi sentenced to 26 years in final appeal ruling

YUKI LEI

THE Court of Final Appeal (TUI) has sentenced former assistant prosecutor Kong Chi to 26 years in prison, increasing his prison term after convicting him on 52 counts of malfeasance and one count of accepting bribes to commit unlawful acts.

The court delivered its ruling on the appeals on Friday, combining the sentences with those imposed in an earlier case.

Kong, a former assistant prosecutor, was found to have worked with lawyer Ho Kam Meng and businesswoman Choi Sao Ieng between 2008 and 2022 to accept bribes ranging from tens of thousands to hundreds of thousands of patacas in exchange for "splitting" criminal investigation cases - either having the cases unlawfully archived or helping suspects evade legal sanctions.



Ho Kam Meng, a former lawyer, saw his sentence increased to 17 years after the court overturned his acquittal on two counts of malfeasance and convicted him on some of the bribery charges. Businesswoman Choi Sao Ieng also received a 17-year prison sentence after being convicted of one count of accepting bribes to commit unlawful acts.

TUI overturned several acquittals by the Court of Second Instance (TSI), including Kong's acquittal on 52 counts of malfeasance, the acquittal of Kong and Ho on one count of joint bribery, and Choi's acquittal on one count of bribery. It also increased the sentence for each bribery count to four years for Kong, three years and six months for Ho, and three years for Choi.

TSI had sentenced Kong to 24 years in March 2026, Ho to 15 years and Choi to 16 years and nine months, before the appeals were heard.

The Commission Against Corruption's earlier investigation found that Kong had received about MOP5.8 million in bribes, held unexplained assets of about MOP8.33 million and transferred more than MOP30 million through currency exchange transactions.

The case was heard in stages, with TSI issuing rulings in 2024 and March 2026, increasing Kong's sentence from 21 to 24 years before the Court of Final Appeal issued its ruling in November.

EMPLOYMENT

Gaming workforce falls to lowest level since records began

NADIA SHAW

MACAU'S resident gaming workforce fell to 62,100 in the third quarter of 2026, its lowest level since the Statistics and Census Service's quarterly employment series began in 2013, as the industry adjusted to the end of satellite casinos in the city.



Employment survey data released by the Statistics and Census Service (DSEC) showed that resident gaming employment declined 1.7% from the previous quarter and 9.9% from 68,900 a year earlier.

Since the first quarter, when the sector employed 65,900 residents, the workforce has contracted by 3,800, or 5.8%. Gaming's share of resident employment consequently fell to 21.7% from 23.0%.

The decline follows Macau's phaseout of satellite casinos at the end of 2025.

In June 2025, the government estimated that those operations employed about 5,600 residents, including 4,800 through concessionaires and 800 directly through satellite operators.

However, the survey does not identify how many former satellite casino employees left the gaming industry.

Additionally, falling headcounts can also reflect retirement and natural attrition rather than dismissals, limiting conclusions about the closures' direct impact.

According to DSEC, median monthly earnings among resident gaming workers stood at MOP22,000, unchanged from the second quarter but MOP3,000, or 12%, below the first quarter's MOP25,000.

Gaming also accounted for a growing proportion of unemployed residents seeking another job. Its share rose from 13.3% in the first quarter to 14.4% in the second and 19.5% in the third, an increase of 6.2 percentage points over the period.

Despite that increase, the resident unemployment rate fell 0.2 percentage points to 2.3% during July-September, with 6,800 residents unemployed.

The employment figures also come against a softer casino revenue backdrop. October gross gaming revenue fell 10% year-on-year to MOP21.68 billion. Meanwhile, visitors' third-quarter non-gaming spending increased 13.3%.

CRIME

Woman arrested after false robbery report

NADIA SHAW

AUTHORITIES have arrested a mainland Chinese woman who falsely reported a robbery after gambling away more than HKD320,000 she had borrowed to operate as an illegal money changer.

Police said the woman, in her late 20s, entered Macau on Nov. 11 carrying HKD400,000 borrowed from relatives and friends in mainland China. She had planned to operate as a money changer but instead used the cash to buy casino chips and gamble, losing more than HKD320,000 and leaving herself with only HKD73,300.

Fearing she could not repay the money or explain the losses to those who had lent it to her, she went to the Judiciary Police (PJ) on Nov. 14 and falsely claimed that a friend's apartment in the city's northern district had been burgled and HKD400,000 stolen.

To investigate her claim, officers searched the unit but found no signs of forced entry or damage to its doors, windows or locks. They also identified inconsistencies in the woman's account.

During subsequent questioning, the woman admitted fabricating the robbery because of her gambling losses and debts.

In a separate case, the PJ said an unemployed mainland man was detained for allegedly defrauding a female tourist of more than MOP200,000 in a bogus currency-exchange deal.

Police said the two had met through gambling.

On Nov. 13, the suspect allegedly offered the woman a discounted exchange rate, saying he would soon leave Macau. The two subsequently agreed to exchange RMB293,300 for HKD346,000 in casino chips.

That evening, the woman went to a hotel in the NAPE district to complete the deal. After transferring RMB173,300, the man allegedly claimed that his bank account had been frozen and refused to hand over the chips. He then left with another man.

The victim followed the pair but was led around the area without recovering her money.

Suspecting she had been scammed, she reported the case to police the following morning.

Local authorities have repeatedly warned that illegal currency exchanges tied to gambling carry fraud and security risks.

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The Government of the Macao Special Administrative Region

(TRANSLATED VERSION)

Highlights of 2027 Policy Address

UNITING TO DELIVER THE DEVELOPMENT BLUEPRINT; COLLABORATING TO BUILD A BETTER FUTURE

Implement the development blueprint, promote appropriate diversification

Continuously improve public wellbeing, enhance governance efficiency

Strengthen development resilience, and maintain social stability

In 2027, the Government of the Macao Special Administrative Region ("MSAR") will unite all sectors of society to fully implement the spirit of the Fifth Plenary Session of the 20th Central Committee of the Communist Party of China and the central authorities' strategic decisions. We will strengthen our sense of mission, deepen reform and innovation, and comprehensively advance the implementation of the "Third Five-Year Plan". By placing public wellbeing at the core, we will enhance the level of precision governance, stimulate the development vitality of the society, and boost the momentum for high-quality development. Furthermore, we will accelerate the development of appropriate economic diversification and the construction of the Guangdong-Macao In-Depth Cooperation Zone in Hengqin, better integrate into and serve the overall development of the nation, and advance the implementation of the "One country, two systems" principle with Macao characteristics to open up a new horizon of high-quality development.

Strengthen capacity to address internal and external risks and challenges, and advance the sustainable development of the MSAR

- **Strengthen the institutional mechanisms and enforcement capacities for safeguarding national security**
- **Build a higher-level safe city to safeguard high-quality development**
- **Strive to promote and strengthen the forces for loving the country and loving Macao**
- **Uphold and perfect executive-led administration and comprehensively advance public administration reform**
  - Fully leverage the institutional advantages of executive-led administration.
  - Launch the second phase of work to improve organisational functions and structures.
  - Continuously strengthen departmental performance management.
  - Optimise staffing control and optimise government human resources.
  - Strengthen the development of the civil service talent pipeline.
  - Advance the comprehensive upgrade of major e-government platforms.
  - Reinforce oversight in anti-corruption and government auditing efforts.



- **Accelerate the refinement of the MSAR legal system**
  - Strengthen overall planning and coordination for major legislative projects.
  - Accelerate the amendment of major codes of law.
  - Deepen inter-regional and international legal cooperation.
- **Continuously enhance precision governance at primary level**
  - Better leverage the synergistic role of organisations and associations in community governance.
  - Optimise responsiveness and efficiency in handling public comments and suggestions.



Enhance the competitiveness of diversified industries and build a vibrant MSAR

- **Foster a new framework for the development of diversified industries**
  - Advance the development of "One Centre".
  - Promote the development of the Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) and Big Health industry.
  - Actively cultivate the development of featured finance industry.
  - Develop high-technology industries suited to Macao.
  - Promote the high-quality development of the MICE, trade, and commerce industry.
  - Promote the sustainable development of cultural and sports industries.
  - Support the upgrading of traditional industries.



- **Optimise business environment and support enterprise development**
  - Implement supportive measures for enterprises.
  - Generate the momentum of community economic development.
  - Create a competitive business environment.
  - Support small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) to enhance their competitiveness.
- **Advance the construction of the Cooperation Zone in Hengqin to promote Macao's appropriate economic diversification**
  - Promote and improve the "Four-shared" mechanism (joint discussion, joint construction, joint administration and shared benefits).
  - Make effective use of legislative resources to promote "soft" institutional connectivity.
  - Advance flagship projects to strengthen "hard" infrastructure connectivity.
  - Leverage diversified advantages to empower industrial synergy.
  - Optimise public services to foster closer ties between peoples.



- **Build an international hub for high-caliber talent**
  - Amend the legal regime for talent recruitment.
  - Deepen regional and international talent cooperation.
  - Closely align the structure of academic disciplines with industry demands.
  - Focus efforts on nurturing talent specialised in Chinese and Portuguese languages, culture, science and technology, and medical sciences.
  - Accelerate the cultivation of local talent with practical skills.

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Prioritise public wellbeing to build a MSAR where residents can live and work in peace and contentment

- **Review and optimise employment support measures**
- **Improve the two-tier social security system**
- **Accelerate urban renewal and the construction of urban infrastructure**
  - Formulate a planning framework for priority areas of urban renewal.
  - Carry out inspections and repairs for old buildings.
  - Designate target streets and districts to implement beautification pilot projects.
  - Revitalise undeveloped state-owned plots of land.
- **Deliver continuous support to vulnerable communities**
- **Proactively address the challenges of declining birthrate and population aging**
- **Enhance the overall level of medical and health services**
- **Optimise housing policies and improve residential amenities**
- **Leverage technology to empower development and consolidate the foundation of education**
- **Provide comprehensive support for the growth and advancement of young people**
- **Enhance Macao's cultural soft power**
- **Promote the coordinated development of public participation and competitive sports**
- **Proactively advance environmental protection works**
- **Strengthen precision urban management**
- **Accelerate the building of a beautiful city**



Leverage the advantages of domestic links and external connectivity to better integrate into and serve the overall development of the country

- **Participate in the development of the high-quality development of the Great Bay Area and jointly advance the "Belt and Road" Initiative.**
- **Intensify cooperation with provinces and cities of the Chinese mainland.**
- **Promote the high-quality construction of the platform between China and Portuguese-speaking countries.**
- **Expedite the construction of "One Base".**



2027 Major Welfare Measures

All Macao residents

Non-mandatory individual accounts of the Central Provident Fund

- Start-up fund of 10,000 patacas (eligible residents).
- Additional fund injection of 7,000 patacas (eligible residents).

Wealth Partaking Scheme

- 10,000 patacas (eligible permanent residents).
- 6,000 patacas (eligible non-permanent residents).

Healthcare voucher (Healthcare subsidy scheme)

700 patacas per person (permanent residents).

Allowance scheme for Macao residents to gain access to basic medical insurance in Chinese mainland new adjustment

Provide allowances of up to 1,000 patacas to eligible Macao residents for joining personal medical insurance schemes in Chinese mainland. The coverage of the scheme will be extended to all provinces, autonomous regions and direct-administered municipalities in Chinese mainland.

Birth allowance new adjustment

Increase to 8,000 patacas ↑ (both parents may apply at the same time).

Marriage allowance

4,000 patacas (both spouses may apply at the same time).

Unemployment allowance

210 patacas per day (eligible residents).

Sickness allowance

- 180 patacas per day for non-hospitalisation allowance (eligible residents).
- 240 patacas per day for hospitalisation allowance (eligible residents).

Funeral allowance

5,200 patacas (eligible residents).

Continuing Education Programme (2026-2029)

Maximum 6,000 patacas (per eligible resident).

Electricity bill subsidy for residential units

200 patacas per month (each residential unit).

On-going water tariff subsidy

Water tariff subsidy for residential and general non-residential users. (Tiered subsidies to encourage water conservation.)

Bus fare concessions

Fare concessions for people holding top-up cards, student cards, senior cards, disability cards approved by the Transport Bureau, or people using electronic payments approved by the Transport Bureau.

Real estate tax (all real estates)

Deduction of first 3,500 patacas of tax (Macao residents).

Waiver of real estate stamp duty

First six million patacas of a residential unit's value. (Eligible residents purchasing residential property for the first time.)

Incentive for the increase of supply in the real estate rental market

Reduction of the property tax rate for leased properties to eight percent; property tax rate for non-leased properties remains at six percent.

The elderly

Old age allowance

10,000 patacas per year.

Pension

3,900 patacas per month (13-month disbursements per year).

Incentive for employment for senior citizens

The basic allowance for personal income tax is 198,000 patacas for elderly employees over 65 years of age.

Rental price for Government elderly housing units new adjustment

The discount will increase from 20 percent to 25 percent.

New measures:

- Establish a new support and services centre for elderly carers.
- Establish a new outreach service team for elderly community.
- Launch a home adaptation subsidy scheme for the elderly. Elderly living alone or elderly couples may receive a maximum of 3,000 patacas during the scheme period for the purchases of essential home safety and protective age-friendly equipment.

Disadvantaged families

Minimum subsistence index

4,350 patacas per one-person household.

Financial assistance

- Continue disbursing 13 months of financial assistance per year.
- Disburse an additional month of financial assistance to eligible families (financial assistance amounting from 4,350 patacas for one-person household per month to 20,270 patacas for eight-person household per month).

Special subsidy for three categories of disadvantaged families

- Learning activity subsidies: 400 patacas to 900 patacas per month.
- Medical subsidies: 1,200 patacas to 1,440 patacas per month.
- Subsidies for the disabled: 900 patacas to 1,200 patacas per month.

Social Inclusion Scheme – Special living allowance

Two disbursements of special allowance per year. Each disbursement ranging from 2,900 patacas for one-person households, to 11,200 patacas for eight-person households. The income ceiling of the eligible households is 1.8 times the minimum subsistence index (single-parent households, the disabled and patients with chronic illness).

Short-term Food Assistance Programme

For a maximum of 10 weeks. The income ceiling of the eligible households is 1.8 times the minimum subsistence index.

Public housing tenants

Tenants whose income does not exceed the income ceiling are eligible for a rent waiver of up to 2,000 patacas per month.

Positive Life Programme

If a benefit recipient is re-employed, when assessing the household income of the family receiving financial assistance, the household is entitled to an income exemption of up to 6,530 patacas per month, for up to 18 months.

Community Employment Assistance Scheme

Participants of this scheme will receive a monthly subsidy of up to 2,000 patacas, subject to individual work situations.

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Childbearing families

Childcare allowance scheme new adjustment

Disburse an allowance of 18,000 patacas per year to toddlers aged 3 or below (Macao permanent residents)

Introduce tiered measures:

- 18,000 patacas per year for the first newborn.
- 27,000 patacas per year for the second newborn.
- 36,000 patacas per year for the third newborn.

Increased support for families with toddlers in nurseries new adjustment

- Expand free coverage (exemption of basic monthly fee):
  - Families with three or more toddlers in nurseries
  - Means-test exemption for specific families. (Families of inclusive and special education studies are benefit recipients.)
- Subsidy for two-year-old toddlers in nurseries:
  - 500 patacas per month for families with one toddler.
  - 800 patacas per month for families with two toddlers.

People with disabilities

Disability subsidy

- 10,000 patacas per year (ordinary).
- 20,000 patacas per year (special).

Disability pension

3,900 patacas per month (13-month disbursements per year).

Employers hiring people with disabilities

A tax deduction of up to 5,000 patacas on profit tax or personal income tax per employee with disabilities.

Income subsidy scheme for employees with disabilities

Subsidised to minimum wage level.

Employment incentives

The personal income tax allowance for eligible employees with disabilities is 198,000 patacas.

Carers allowance new adjustment

2,400 patacas per month.

Expand the scope of benefit recipients: individuals assessed with severe or profound mental disability (dementia) and whose loss of self-care ability (ADL) reaches a moderate level or above.

Scheme to support people with disabilities to purchase assistive devices and special household equipment

People with disabilities who meet the described financial criteria will be subsidised with an accumulative maximum of 30,000 patacas to purchase assistive devices and special household equipment during the scheme period.

Schools

Free education basic subsidy (2026/2027 school year)

- kindergarten education
  1,095,700 patacas per class
- primary education
  1,193,900 patacas per class
- junior secondary education
  1,438,700 patacas per class
- senior secondary education
  1,631,800 patacas per class

Free education supplementary subsidy (2026/2027 school year)

- kindergarten education
  77,500 patacas to 232,500 patacas per class
- primary education
  88,300 patacas to 264,900 patacas per class
- secondary education
  90,300 patacas to 361,200 patacas per class

Tuition fee subsidy (2026/2027 school year)

- kindergarten education
  21,350 patacas per person
- primary education
  23,560 patacas per person
- secondary education
  25,940 patacas per person

Recurrent education subsidy (2026/2027 school year)

- primary education
  926,600 patacas per class
- junior secondary education
  1,106,000 patacas per class
- senior secondary education
  1,246,900 patacas per class

"Optimisation of Class/Teacher and Student/Teacher Ratios Subsidy Scheme", a special project of the Education Fund under the "School Development Plan" (schools not providing free education) (2026/2027 school year)

- kindergarten education
  77,500 patacas to 232,500 patacas per class
- formal primary education
  88,300 patacas to 264,900 patacas per class
- formal secondary education
  90,300 patacas to 361,200 patacas per class
- recurrent primary education
  88,300 patacas to 264,900 patacas per class
- recurrent secondary education
  90,300 patacas to 270,900 patacas per class

Students

Textbook allowance for non-tertiary education

- secondary education
  3,550 patacas per school year
- primary education
  3,000 patacas per school year
- kindergarten education
  2,400 patacas per school year

Tuition fee subsidies, meal allowance and stationery allowance for students from families with financial difficulties

Tuition fee subsidies:

- senior secondary education
  Maximum 9,000 patacas per school year
- junior secondary education
  Maximum 6,000 patacas per school year
- kindergarten and primary education
  Maximum 4,000 patacas per school year

Meal allowance:

- kindergarten, primary and secondary education
  3,950 patacas per school year

Stationery allowance:

- secondary education
  3,350 patacas per school year
- kindergarten and primary education
  2,600 patacas per school year

Tuition fee subsidies and stationery allowance for Macao students studying in Guangdong province

Tuition fee subsidies:

- primary, junior secondary, full-time senior secondary and full-time mid-level vocational education at senior secondary education stage
  Maximum 6,000 patacas
- pre-school education Maximum 8,000 patacas.

Stationery allowance:

- junior secondary, full-time senior secondary and full-time mid-level vocational education at senior secondary education stage
  1,700 patacas per school year
- primary education 1,450 patacas per school year
- pre-school education 1,150 patacas per school year

Stationery allowance for tertiary students

3,300 patacas (eligible residents).

Internship programme for Macao tertiary students in Chinese mainland

Each student will receive a subsidy of 5,000 patacas after completion of internship.

Teaching staff

Professional development allowance for teaching staff

From 3,100 patacas to 11,790 patacas for school year 2026/2027 (eligible teaching staff)

Direct allowance

From 3,100 patacas to 6,550 patacas for school year 2026/2027 (eligible teaching staff)

Employees

Personal income tax deduction and tax rebate

30 percent reduction in personal income tax, with the basic allowance for personal income tax at 144,000 patacas for general employees; 60 percent rebate of personal income tax payable by each Macao resident for the year 2024, subject to a ceiling of 14,000 patacas.

Greater Bay Area Youth Employment Scheme

Support young people to seek employment in the Greater Bay Area (GBA). Tertiary graduates (aged 35 or below) employed in the nine GBA cities or the Cooperation Zone in Hengqin will be offered a monthly subsidy of 5,000 patacas for up to 18 months.

Business owners and related persons

Tax concessions

- Profit tax allowance will remain at 600,000 patacas.
- Waivers of all business taxes, hawker licence fees, wet market stall rents, inspection and quarantine fees for live food, stamp duty on life or non-life insurance, and bank service charges, and stamp duty for auctions.
- Waivers of signboard taxes for businesses and exemption from tourism tax for restaurants.
- Waivers of stamp duty on eligible entrance passes and tickets for performances, exhibitions and entertainment programmes.
- Waiver of profit tax on dividends and investment income from local bonds issued in Macao; and exemption of stamp duty for issuing, transaction or compensable transfer of such bonds.
- Profit tax waiver for Macao businesses for income or profits received in Portuguese-speaking countries.
- Enterprises can enjoy extra reduction in profit tax for eligible research and development expenditure.
- Qualified corporate treasury centres (CTC) set up in Macao will be eligible to enjoy a preferential tax rate of five percent for profits tax.
- Qualified fund management companies set up in Macao, specific fund investment businesses and fund investment profits will be eligible to enjoy relevant tax benefits.

Maternity leave remuneration subsidy scheme new adjustment

Eligible employers who have legally paid maternity leave remuneration to local employees for childbirth or other related circumstances may apply for a subsidy equivalent to a maximum of 20 days of the employee's basic remuneration.



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Major Policies on Various Areas

(TRANSLATED VERSION)

Administration and Justice

The administration and justice domain will focus on "enhancing the capacity and efficacy of law-based governance" as its core task. In accordance with the Chief Executive's directives and requirements, as well as the MSAR Government's overall policy deployment, the sector will continuously coordinate and deepen public administration reform. On the basis of upholding and improving executive-led administration, it will strengthen positive interaction between the executive and the legislature. Adhering to the "people-centred" philosophy, it will elevate the quality of public administration and municipal services. It will also steadily advance the alignment of rules and mechanisms in the Cooperation Zone in Hengqin, thereby boosting Macao's development through its proactive integration into and service toward the overall development of the nation.

Planning and implementation

- Enhance governance efficiency and advance the modernisation of the legal system.
- Deepen the alignment of rules and mechanisms, and improve municipal infrastructure.

Executive-led administration

- Uphold high-level coordination and leadership, and strengthen cooperation between the executive and the legislature.
- Create channels for government-public interaction, and solidify the foundation of primary-level governance.

Public administration reform

- Continue to promote the restructuring of functions and organisational frameworks, and reform systems to optimise human resources.
- Attach great importance to the development of talent pipelines, and care for the physical and mental wellbeing of personnel.



Through the continuous innovation of public administration, the legal system, and municipal services, we are committed to benefiting residents, facilitating businesses, promoting integration, and optimising governance.

Legal system development

- Deepen the legislative coordination mechanism, and orderly advance the amendment of legal codes.
- Strengthen inter-regional legal connectivity, and elevate capacities in judicial practice.

Municipal services

- Improve the urban environment to create a liveable city for the benefits of residents, and expand spaces for community activities.
- Revitalise wet markets through custom-tailored approaches, and monitor food safety scientifically.

Macao-Hengqin integration

- Facilitate the integrated development of Macao and Hengqin, and expand cross-boundary e-government services.
- Build a high-quality living environment in Macao and Hengqin, and collaboratively participate in the development of Hengqin.

Promote technology-driven administrative streamlining

- Upgrade electronic public service platforms to empower efficiency, benefit residents, and facilitate businesses.
- Advance electronic governance infrastructure, and expand visa-free travel for greater convenience.

Community synergy

- Broaden legal outreach and publicity network, and actively promote civic education.
- Build a broad social consensus, and foster a favourable atmosphere for a law-based society.

Economy and Finance

Closely aligning with the strategic deployment of the nation's "15th Five-Year Plan", we will adopt innovative thinking, refined approaches, and greater determination to solidly advance the implementation of the goals and tasks outlined in Macao's "Third Five-Year Plan" to deliver concrete results. We remain dedicated to fostering a new paradigm of diversified industrial development, striving to optimise the business environment, earnestly safeguarding employment rights and interests of our residents, advancing the high-quality development of the Cooperation Zone, and more proactively integrating into and serving the overall development of the nation.

Fully align with the nation's "15th Five-Year Plan" and advance the implementation of Macao's "Third Five-Year Plan"

Build a new paradigm of diversified industrial development and enhance the economic resilience of the MSAR

- Create a competitive business environment, and improve the effectiveness of investment promotion.
- Leverage the strengths of the integrated tourism and leisure industry, and strengthen external publicity and promotion.
- Bolster scientific research and innovation competency in TCM, and facilitate international market expansion.
- Actively cultivate new business models in modern finance, and improve the digital currency ecosystem.
- Foster an optimal development environment for the technology industry, and support the upgrading of traditional industries.
- Promote the quality-driven development of the MICE, trade, and commerce industry, and leverage its industrial spillover effects.
- Continuously improve and release statistical indicators, and constantly optimise statistical work.

Support the collaborative development of residents and enterprises, and share the fruits of economic growth

- Provide fiscal guarantees for social development, and ensure public financial sustainability.
- Support SMEs in enhancing their competitiveness, and promote the economic growth of local communities.
- Review and optimise employment support measures, and support residents' career advancement.
- Enhance the capacity to guarantee daily necessities to maintain social stability, and protect consumer rights and interests according to law.

Fully advance the integrated development of Macao and Hengqin, and collaboratively implement phase-specific goals

- Expedite the implementation of new layouts for key projects, and promote the synergistic development of Macao and Hengqin.
- Advance the high-quality integration of Macao-Hengqin industries, and enhance the industrial agglomeration effects.
- Implement the new model of joint Macao-Hengqin investment promotion, and support the development of Macao-funded enterprises.
- Deliver high-standard public welfare and security services, and foster an environment favourable for living and working.
- Upgrade the infrastructure standards of the Cooperation Zone, and bring greater convenience to residents' lives and mobility.
- Further facilitate the alignment of rules and mechanisms, and enhance the efficiency of authorities.



Closely align with the new positioning of "Macao+Hengqin" and promote the integrated development of Macao and Hengqin.

Integrate into and serve the overall development of the nation, and align with the national development strategies

- Proactively participate in the development of the Greater Bay Area, and deepen cooperation with the Chinese mainland.
- Enrich the connotation of Macao's platform between China and Portuguese- and Spanish-speaking countries, and broaden the international cooperation network.

Public Security

The year 2027 is a critical year for the full implementation of Macao's "Third Five-Year Plan". The security domain will unswervingly implement the "holistic approach to national security" and adhere to the coordinated balancing of development and security. We will adopt bottom-line thinking to prevent and defuse risks, and leverage technological empowerment to drive the transformation of public safety governance. All personnel in the public security sector will resolutely shoulder the political responsibility of safeguarding national security and social stability, thereby anchoring and safeguarding the long-term peace and stability of the MSAR.

Take the holistic approach to national security as the cornerstone, and build a strong line of proactive defence

- Advance the formulation of the *Overall Plan for National Security Education for All (2027–2032)*.
- Complete the supporting legislation for the legal frameworks against money laundering and terrorism.
- Advocate the updating of the cyber security law and related technical specifications, and carry out "clean internet" operations.
- Continuously advance the orderly operation of the risk monitoring and early warning indicator system for safeguarding national security.
- Complete the fourth round of risk assessment on money laundering and terrorist financing.

Take urban resilience as the core, and promote the coordinated synergy in civil defence emergency response

- Comprehensively review the effectiveness of the *Ten-Year Plan for Disaster Prevention and Mitigation of the Macao Special Administrative Region (2019–2028)*.
- Revise the *Civil Protection Master Plan* and various specialised emergency response contingency plans.
- Participate in the "Liancheng-2027" joint emergency rescue drill.
- Launch a pilot scheme for the "Fire Safety Network" specialised collaboration programme.

Take technological empowerment as the orientation, and comprehensively elevate law enforcement efficiency

- Complete the construction works of the "Sky Eye" surveillance system (phase six) and Zone A of the New Urban Zone.
- Advance smart customs clearance and maritime surveillance, and make good use of unmanned vehicles and equipment for law enforcement.
- Upgrade anti-fraud mobile applications and diversely optimise anti-fraud technologies.
- Construct an artificial intelligence-assisted digital forensics system.



The security sector will fortify an all-encompassing security shield to safeguard the high-quality development of the MSAR.

Take Macao-Hengqin integration as the positioning, and build a regional connectivity and integration ecosystem

- Implement the construction of the modern smart port at the University of Macau's Hengqin Port subsidiary channel.
- Advance the smart upgrading of the Hengqin Port vehicular lanes through "face+iris" contactless recognition.
- Support and complement the construction of the Macau International Airport's Hengqin upstream cargo terminal and the inspection area.
- Facilitate the use of "single-ID clearance" via automated channels at the three major joint-inspection ports.

Take institutional development as the benchmark, and forge a clean, professional, and modern Police Force

- Comprehensively popularise Chinese-style military drill and foot drill.
- Perfect internal and external supervisory mechanisms and integrity building.
- Accelerate personnel recruitment to fill staff vacancies.
- Advance the restructuring of functions and frameworks at the Academy of Public Security Forces.

Take social integration as the goal, and refine the building of an inclusive support network with diversified resources

- Launch convenient public services on "Macao One Account" and "Business and Associations Platform".
- Expand the target beneficiaries of the "Video Visitation for Inmates" service.
- Strengthen the dissemination of safety information on civil defence and public security to foreign communities.
- Enhance support for vulnerable groups and upgrade barrier-free amenities at ports.

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Major Policies on Various Areas

(TRANSLATED VERSION)

Social Affairs and Culture

Resolutely implementing the requirements of the nation's "15th Five-Year Plan" and Macao's "Third Five-Year Plan", we will focus on enhancing the wellbeing of residents, maintaining a long-term commitment to the development of healthcare, culture, and sports, as well as the integrated development of education, technology, and talent, and bring people's livelihood and related services to new heights.

Effectively implement the "Third Five-Year Plan"

- Advance the phase two development of the Macao-Hengqin International Education (University) Town, and the construction of the phase one exhibition hall of the Macao National Museum of Culture.
- Promote the integrated development of Macao and Hengqin across various sectors, including healthcare, education, social work, social welfares, culture, and sports.
- Successfully host the International Forum on Mutual Learning Among Civilizations, expand the influence of "One Base", and more effectively integrate into and serve the overall development of the nation.

Proactively enhance social livelihoods and wellbeing

- Optimise childcare allowances and birth subsidies, expand free nursery services, and proactively respond to the declining birth rate.
- Launch a home adaptation subsidy scheme for the elderly, reinforce carer support services, expand the eligibility scope for carer allowances, and strengthen support for cross-boundary elderly care.
- Launch the fourth phase of the "Social Enterprise Subsidy Scheme", and perfect the double-tier social security system.

Comprehensively promote the integrated development of education, technology, and talent

- Popularise smart education, launch an international vision guidance programme for youth, and establish "Youth Innovation Stations" to build a supportive environment for the happy and healthy growth of young people.
- Establish a Macao higher education alliance for technological innovation and development to unleash the potential of technological advancement.
- Amend the legal framework for talent acquisition, and solidly advance the development of a premier talent hub.



Launch operations of the first phase of the Macao-Hengqin International Education (University) Town.

Vigorously elevate the standard of healthcare services

- Implement the "Health First" strategy, and build a healthy Macao.
- Enhance capabilities in treating complex, critical, and specialised medical cases, and optimise the healthcare experience for residents.
- Establish a breast cancer screening centre, and intensify cancer screening efforts.

Collaboratively promote the integrated development of culture and sports

- Launch an intangible cultural heritage festival, promote heritage trails, and initiate the construction of the "Digital Museum of Macao" to showcase Macao's profound cultural heritage.
- Develop new forms of popular literature and art, nurture more artistic and cultural talent, and cultivate cultural vitality for Macao.
- Coordinate and host cultural festivals as well as cultural and sports mega events to elevate the influence of Macao's cultural and sports intellectual properties (IPs).

Transport and Public Works

The transport and public works domain will closely align with the nation's "15th Five-Year Plan" and Macao's "Third Five-Year Plan". Adhering to a citizen-centric approach, we will accelerate the promotion of urban renewal, strive to build a liveable city, and proactively integrate into and serve the overall development of the nation.

Accelerate the urban renewal plan

- Accelerate the promotion of urban renewal, and construct a comprehensive planning system.
- Strengthen maintenance and repair support to improve the residential environment.
- Pilot neighborhood beautification schemes to revive the cultural charm of historic areas.
- Advance urban planning and optimise spatial layout for development.



Make every effort to advance the construction works of the LRT East Line.

Build a liveable and harmonious city

- Activate land resources, and improve public facilities.
- Expedite the allocation of public housing, and optimise residential support facilities.
- Accelerate the circulation of economic housing to meet housing demands.
- Optimise public spaces, and improve the quality of life.
- Construct government facilities to safeguard public services.
- Implement scientific approaches to urban development, and elevate governance efficiency.

Improve the urban transport system

- Strengthen coordination and alignment, and improve transport planning.
- Accelerate Light Rapid Transit (LRT) construction to meet commuting and travel demands.
- Perfect the road network layout to enhance the convenience of public commuting.
- Optimise public bus services, and elevate service quality.
- Improve parking services, and improve commuting experience.
- Advance the development of maritime and air transport, and integrate into national development.

Build a low-carbon green city

- Advance environmental protection planning, and drive low-carbon growth.
- Implement comprehensive pollution prevention and control to build a green city.
- Promote waste reduction to help develop a waste-free city.
- Improve sewage treatment, and promote the use of recycled water.
- Strengthen sea area management, and protect marine resources.

Strengthen urban safety and resilience

- Reinforce energy reliability, and improve supply systems.
- Accelerate water supply infrastructure development, and deepen smart water management.
- Implement the new Telecommunications Law to empower digital development.
- Refine meteorological forecasting to strengthen disaster response readiness.
- Improve flood control systems to build a resilient city.
- Execute emergency response contingency plans to safeguard infrastructure safety.

Integrate into and serve the development of the nation

Commission Against Corruption

In 2027, the Commission Against Corruption will grasp the profound connotation of the nation's anti-corruption policies. From a global perspective, the Commission will continue to adopt innovative ideas and measures to ensure the core spirits of the nation's "15th Five-Year Plan" and the MSAR's "Third Five-Year Plan" are successfully delivered at the operational level, and strive to consolidate Macao's foundation of integrity.

Build platforms and cultivate new virtues

- Advance the notification and prevention work of the "Integrity Management Plan – Progression and Innovation".
- Foster a culture of integrity and strengthen personnel training within the public sector by leveraging the role of "Integrity Coordinators".

Crack down on corruption and enhance coordinated investigations

- Strictly investigate all forms of disciplinary infractions and illegal acts that hinder economic and social development, and strengthen cross-boundary cooperation in combating corruption.
- Explore new anti-corruption pathways, reinforce proactive investigation and precise forecasting work mechanisms, and advance the anti-corruption frontline.

Optimise governance, plug loopholes, and consolidate the foundation

- Carry out research and reviews to improve departmental operations, and deploy personnel for on-site inspections to enhance supervisory effectiveness.
- Research on a new "retrospective review" model to monitor the effectiveness of departments in implementing measures for improvement.

Implement diversified education to build deep-rooted social awareness

- Continuously create conditions for youth development, and build a structured growth ladder for integrity-minded youth.
- Utilise community networks to promote a culture of integrity, expand public-private dual-track training, and advance family-based integrity education.

Leverage digital-intelligence synergy to advance innovative promotion of integrity

- Integrate investigative resources, optimise case management, and make good use of technology to enhance anti-corruption effectiveness.
- Launch tech-driven integrity promotion activities or projects to unleash the efficacy of digital intelligence in enhancing anti-corruption efforts.

Collaborative partnerships to expand horizons

- Strengthen regional interaction, advance cross-boundary cooperation, and broaden international cooperation channels, while drawing on external experiences to deepen local anti-corruption development.
- Promote the establishment of a long-term training mechanism with the Chinese mainland and Hong Kong to cultivate an anti-corruption team equipped with national patriotism, an international vision, and local practical capabilities.

Commission of Audit

The Commission of Audit focuses on the major deployments for the MSAR's better integration into and service toward the overall development of the nation. It will center upon the critical juncture where the MSAR's "Third Five-Year Plan" connects with the commencement of the nation's "15th Five-Year Plan", dynamically grasping the developmental direction of the overall situation and major livelihood issues. The Commission will actively empower public administration reform and deepen connectivity and synergy with other supervisory mechanisms, striving to leverage robust and effective audit supervision to jointly push forward the high-quality and sustainable economic and social development of Macao.

Improve quality and efficiency, and plug loopholes

- Further promote governance at source and break away from the traditional "ex-post rectification" mindset. By means of early intervention, proactively identify potential risks in public management, issue risk alerts, and conduct rectification tracking, while collaborating with other supervisory mechanisms to drive the continuous improvement of the management and operations of public departments and institutions.

Move beyond financial accounts and exercise macro-level oversight

- By moving beyond the traditional approach of tracing errors and omissions in public financial accounts, audit resources will now be strategically directed toward high-risk areas and projects. Particular attention will be paid to institutional barriers, mechanism deficiencies, and management loopholes, thereby assisting in evaluating the real risks behind financial data, issuing risk alerts, and offering recommendations for improvement.

Implement dynamic tracking to address symptoms and root causes

- Take "targeted rectification" as the core to enhance the effectiveness of audit supervision, preventing unfavourable outcomes such as formalism, perfunctory rectification, and the resurgence of issues. Consistently conduct "retrospective reviews" on past audit findings to ensure that rectification measures are fully implemented.

Foster audit empowerment and strengthen collaborative reform

- Coordinate with the deployments of the Public Administration Reform Leadership Group to systematically provide audit opinions on the restructuring plans of various departments. Leveraging the opportunity of departmental restructuring, comprehensively review the rationality of staffing allocations from a cost-benefit perspective, driving the enhancement of departmental operational efficiency and the effectiveness of resource utilisation.

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TRANSPORT

Electric vehicle charging fees cut 10% from January

YUKI LEI



PUBLIC electric vehicle charging fees will fall by about 10% from January 1 next year, with a new supercharging tier introduced ahead of the planned opening of supercharging stations in the first quarter.

Under the Environmental Protection Bureau's (DSPA) new tariff schedule, slow charging during the 9 a.m. to 8 p.m. peak period will fall to MOP1.75 per kilowatt-hour, with off-peak charging costing MOP1.15. Medium-speed charging will drop to MOP2.40 per kWh and fast charging to MOP2.80, while the new supercharging rate is set at MOP3.10 per kWh.

The bureau said the supercharging tier is being introduced to coincide with supercharging stations entering service next quarter, and that it will work to bring faster charging technology to Macau in response to demand.

It is the second cut to public charging fees this year, following a reduction in February. Macau first introduced public charging fees in July 2022 under the principle of user-pays, with rates then ranging from MOP1.42 to MOP4.40 per kWh.

Industry figures show electric vehicles still account for less than 20% of the registered vehicles, with 13,261 of 252,523 vehicles recorded as electric as of the end of March last year. The sector has cited insufficient charging facilities, relatively high charging costs and an incomplete management mechanism as obstacles, alongside a shortage of fast-charging points and frequent congestion at popular charging bays.



CHARITY

CESL Asia raises MOP163,000 for Macau Special Olympics

TIMES REPORTER

CESL Asia raised MOP163,000 for Macau Special Olympics (MSO) at its 10th annual Sport Fun Day, which attracted more than 200 participants and 29 supporting organizations.

The event brought together athletes, volunteers, families, business partners and community groups, with proceeds supporting sports training and development opportunities for athletes with intellectual disabilities.

The annual Sport Fun Day has been jointly organized since 2017. This year's program included an Inclusive Bocce Tournament, a Football Invitational Tournament and a new parent-child Beyblade activity.

António Trindade, president and CEO of CESL Asia, said: "Social investment goes beyond providing resources. It is about bringing people together and encouraging our employees and business associates to contribute with their resources, initiative and leadership to the community. Through experiences such as this, our people grow professionally while working together to create a positive and lasting impact in Macau."

CESL Asia established its Social Investment Initiative in 2000, focusing on education, inclusive sports, environmental sustainability and innovation. The company said the program also provides employees with opportunities to participate in community projects and develop professional skills through volunteer work.

***The Macau Daily Times is a media sponsor of the event.**

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Macau Legend hotel in Beijing to be converted into wellness complex

LYNZY VALLES

THE Beijing property linked to Macau-based casino operator Macau Legend is set to change its business model, with its reported acquisition by Chinese insurer Ping An Life Insurance paving the way for a conversion into a luxury health and wellness complex.

The five-star Hotel Legendale, which has operated for 18 years, will cease its traditional hotel operations following the reported transaction. The purchase price has not been disclosed.

According to mainland Chinese digital newspaper The Paper, the property was initially put up for sale last year for RMB3.7 billion, before its asking price was reduced to RMB3.3 billion due to a lack of buyers.

The hotel reportedly continued operating normally until November and recorded its highest annual revenue in 2025 since opening. Its sale is therefore being attributed primarily to financial pressures facing its parent group rather than weak hotel performance.

Macau Legend has faced mounting financial challenges following the end of the satellite casino model in Macau, which significantly affected its revenue.

Located in Beijing's Wangfujing commercial district, Hotel Legendale was launched in 2004 and became one of the most prominent property investments by Macau capital in the Chinese capital.

The property is 90% owned by New Legendale Development, a company linked to Macau Legend, which was founded by David Chow.

Economy grows 2.9% in first three quarters as sentiment holds steady

YUKI LEI



MACAU'S economy grew 2.9% year-on-year in real terms in the first three quarters, with gross domestic product (GDP) reaching a revised MOP316.22 billion, or 89.9% of the level recorded in the same period in 2019, according to the Statistics and Census Service. Meanwhile, an economic sentiment index showed conditions holding in the "stable" range.

Growth was supported by visitor-attraction measures and a packed calendar of major themed events, which lifted service exports by 3.5% year-on-year. Within that total, other tourism services rose 8.2%, while gaming services edged up 0.8%. Goods exports climbed 21.2% and imports increased 8.7%.

Domestic demand held firm. Gross fixed capital formation rose 4.6% as public and private projects advanced on schedule, while private consumption grew 2.7%, supporting the economy's steady expansion.

GDP for the third quarter totaled MOP106.05 billion, up 0.1% year-on-year in real terms and equivalent to 91.4% of the level in the same period in 2019.

The quarter was shaped by two opposing forces. Gross gaming revenue (GGR) came under short-term pressure from the external environment, pulling gaming services exports down 4.7%. By contrast, the summer travel peak and visitor measures lifted other tourism services by 6.8%, while accelerated public and private works drove gross fixed capital formation up 17.3%. The investment surge offset the gaming decline, which the statistics service cited as evidence of the economy's resilience and capacity to absorb shocks.

As Macau-Hengqin integration continues, investment by Macau entities - including public departments, enterprises and individuals - in the Guangdong-Macau In-Depth Cooperation Zone has continued to grow. In the third quarter, their gross fixed capital formation there reached MOP540 million, up 215.3% year-on-year in nominal terms. Including this investment, revised GDP stood at MOP106.58 billion, up 2.6% in nominal terms.

SENTIMENT REMAINS IN STABLE RANGE

The Macau Economic Association's latest economic sentiment index stood at 6.1 in September and 6.2 in October, and is expected to remain between 6.1 and 6.3 over the next three months.

The association said third-quarter GDP beat expectations on the strength of non-gaming consumption. Integrated resorts continued rolling out non-gaming offerings, and total non-gaming spending by visitors rose 13% to MOP23.09 billion even as gaming revenue fell. The association cautioned, however, that the recovery remains uneven and incomplete.

Looking ahead to the fourth quarter, gaming revenue may remain weak year-on-year, while GDP growth may slow slightly. Major sporting events, food festivals and performances are expected to draw visitors and support dining, retail and leisure spending, bolstering economic activity during the quarter.

Separately, Secretary for Economy and Finance Dora Ng told the Tourism Development Committee's first plenary meeting of the year that the government will align with the national 15th Five-Year Plan and Macau's Third Five-Year Plan, pursuing the "1+4" diversification strategy while consolidating integrated tourism and leisure and accelerating new "tourism+" formats.

She said three areas would be prioritized: improving community tourism support mechanisms and linking ticket-stub and fan economies with community tourism to draw visitors into neighborhoods; consolidating Southeast and Northeast Asian markets while expanding into Europe and exploring India, the Middle East and Central Asia, including developing Muslim visitor markets and using visa-free policies to promote multi-stop itineraries.

The third priority is deepening integration between tourism and events, gastronomy, education, cultural and creative industries and sport to strengthen Macau's appeal as a world center of tourism and leisure.

CORPORATE BITS

Galaxy trains 1,500 local staff in professional skills this year



Galaxy Entertainment Group (GEG) said around 1,500 local employees had participated in professional training and certification programs since the start of 2026, completing more than 16,000 training hours across food and beverage, facilities management, security and other fields.

The programs are conducted in collaboration with the Labour Affairs Bureau (DSAL), local associations and higher education institutions to strengthen employees' skills and professional qualifications.

GEG said it had partnered with DSAL and the Macau Federation of Trade Unions to conduct an advanced Chinese cuisine chef skills assessment, with 12 local employees participating. Successful candidates can receive both local and nationally recognized occupational qualifications under a dual-certification arrangement.

Separately, 90 local employees completed the first phase of the GEG Security Officer Certification Program, organized with DSAL, Macao Polytechnic University and the federation between June and September.

The company also offers technical training in facilities maintenance, engineering and occupational safety.

USJ, Sands China complete Macau's first pilot rain garden



The University of Saint Joseph (USJ) and Sands China Ltd. have completed Macau's first pilot rain garden, a 92-square-meter green infrastructure project designed to absorb stormwater, filter runoff and improve urban biodiversity.

Located on Sands China's premises, the project was led by USJ's Department of Science and Environment under its "Sponge City Macao: Harnessing Nature for Urban Water Solutions" research initiative, coordinated by Karen Araño Tagulao, head of the Department of Environmental Sciences.

The rain garden is one meter deep and contains 75 tonnes of specialized filtration materials and 2,400 plants. It will serve as a living laboratory for studying how nature-based solutions can manage stormwater and support biodiversity in the city's urban environment.

The project was developed in partnership with Sands China's sustainability and landscaping teams, with support from the Drop by Drop Project. Other collaborators include the Tsinghua Shenzhen Innovation Center in Zhuhai and Portugal's Interdisciplinary Centre of Marine and Environmental Research. Student volunteers from USJ's Green Club and Sands China's ECO360 Ambassadors also contributed.

The initiative aims to demonstrate how universities and private companies can apply environmental research to practical urban challenges, while generating data to inform the future use of green infrastructure in Macau.

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SOUTH CHINA SEA

Beijing and Southeast Asia pledge to avoid disputes during talks on waterway pact

CHINA and Southeast Asian leaders will commit to avoid actions that can escalate disputes in the South China Sea in annual talks in the Philippine capital on Monday, aiming to foster a conducive atmosphere for negotiations on a non-aggression pact in the contested waters.

The territorial conflicts are high on the agenda in the summit meeting between leaders of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations and China's premier, Li Qiang.

China, Taiwan and four ASEAN states — Brunei, Malaysia, the Philippines and Vietnam — have been involved in the decades-long territorial standoffs in the busy waterway, a key global trade route. Confrontations have particularly escalated in recent years between Chinese and Philippine coast guard and naval forces in disputed shoals.

Li expressed hope for the early conclusion of a "code of conduct," which can help foster peace and stability in the South China Sea, according to China's Xinhua news agency.

AP PHOTO



Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese and Philippine President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. lead their delegations during a bilateral meeting on the sidelines the 6th ASEAN-Australia Summit in Manila, Monday

Philippine President Ferdinand Marcos Jr., who holds ASEAN's rotational chairmanship, praised the progress made so far in the negotiations this year for the regional agreement.

The sides did not immediately issue a joint statement with more details of the talks. But a draft of the statement seen by The Associated Press has the Chinese and ASEAN leaders pledging "to exercise self-restraint in the conduct of activities that would complicate or escalate disputes and affect peace and stability" in the disputed waters.

They will welcome the "positive momentum and significant progress" which have been achieved so far in the negotiations and "emphasize the need to maintain and promote an environment conducive to the negotiations," according to the statement.

There had been an agreement to conclude the negotiations this year after more than 21 years of talks and consultations. Philippine Foreign Secretary Theresa Lazaro said on Sunday that both sides have agreed on about 80% of the total number of paragraphs, but three contentious issues remain unresolved and negotiations will continue next year when Singapore takes over ASEAN's leadership.

The last major sticking points are the geographic scope to be covered by the agreement, the definition of sensitive terms and whether the accord should be legally binding or not, according to Southeast Asian diplomats.

The South China Sea conflicts are a flashpoint in Asia which many fear could draw in the United States if a major conflict erupts. The U.S. lays no claims in the waters but has warned that it's obligated to defend the Philippines, a longtime treaty ally in Asia, if Filipino forces come under an armed attack. **MDT/AP**

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DIPLOMACY

Carney says Canada could turn to Chinese automakers if Trump trade talks fail

CANADIAN Prime Minister Mark Carney said that Canada could turn to Chinese automakers if trade negotiations with U.S. President Donald Trump fail to preserve an integrated North American auto industry.

Carney's comments in Cambodia on Monday came ahead of a planned meeting with Chinese President Xi Jinping this week in Shenzhen, China, where Chinese auto manufacturing is expected to be discussed. The two leaders reached an agreement in January allowing tens of thousands of Chinese electric vehicles into Canada at reduced tariffs.

"We have the best auto workers in the world, and we want them fully deployed, full opportunity, in an integrated North American market," Carney told reporters in Cambodia. "That market has become less integrated because of U.S. trade actions."

Carney said Saturday in Manila, Philippines, that any trade agreement with Washington must leave Canada with a viable auto industry. He said Monday that negotiations with the United States remain his priority, but their outcome could determine whether Canada pursues alternatives involving European, Chinese or Japanese automakers.

AP PHOTO



Canada's Prime Minister Mark Carney speaks with reporters at the Francophonie Summit in Phnom Penh, Cambodia, Monday

Asked whether potential Chinese investment was leverage in the U.S. negotiations, Carney replied: "It's not leverage. But action, reaction."

"If they're not fully utilized in a North American context, that provides other opportunities," Carney said of Canada's auto workers and manufacturing assets. "Canada is going to move forward either way."

The Detroit Three — Ford, General Motors and Stellantis — operate factories across Canada, the United States and Mexico, with parts sometimes crossing borders multiple times before a vehicle is completed. Trump has repeatedly pushed automakers to move production to the United States from Canada.

Carney said any Chinese investment would have to involve substantial manufacturing in Canada rather than simply assembling imported parts. He said it would require proper labor standards, manufacturing facilities and domestic supply chains that expand over time, including Canadian critical minerals used in electric vehicles.

"It's not just about kit cars," he said. "There has to be a manufacturing aspect involved."

Under the January agreement, Canada reduced its 100% tariff on Chinese electric vehicles to 6.1%, initially allowing up to 49,000 vehicles annually, with the cap increasing over time. In exchange, China agreed to lower tariffs on Canadian agricultural products, including canola.

Carney said at the time that he expected the agreement to attract Chinese investment in Canada's auto industry and create jobs.

The deal drew criticism from Ontario Premier Doug Ford, whose province is the center of Canada's auto industry. Ford warned that allowing Chinese electric vehicles into Canada could threaten Canadian jobs and jeopardize access to the U.S. market.

Trump's tariffs have disrupted Canada's auto industry, which relies heavily on cross-border production. Canada recently threatened to sue Stellantis after the automaker shifted planned Jeep Compass production from Brampton, Ontario, to Illinois and agreed to sell its idled Canadian assembly plant.

Carney said Saturday that he had spoken at length with Trump and senior U.S. officials and that the two countries were making progress toward a possible trade agreement, although differences remained. **MDT/AP**

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TRUMP'S ASIA RESET

Deals in Manila and Shenzhen, then a rare nuclear summit with Xi and Putin

SEUNG MIN KIM, WASHINGTON

AP PHOTO



PRESIDENT Donald Trump is preparing to depart for Asia on Monday (today, Macau time), turning his focus to economic deals and historic three-way nuclear talks with Russia and China as his administration adjusts to a new political reality in Washington.

Trump's departure comes after the often-omnipresent president had remained largely out of public sight for the past several days, even as a nationwide ground stop snarled air traffic and the administration faced tough questions on its handling of the situation.

His trip to Asia, which begins in Manila then continues to the Chinese tech hub of Shenzhen, gives Trump the opportunity to change the narrative from his domestic woes, including the air travel problems and fallout from the November midterm election where his party lost both chambers of Congress.

NVIDIA UNDER SCRUTINY

The controversy over tech powerhouse and chipmaker Nvidia is also certain to hang over Trump's visit to China, despite efforts by administration officials to downplay the president's close ties to Jensen Huang, who resigned as CEO last week after admitting to an affair with an alleged Chinese government agent.

Beijing has said it was not involved. Trump had no plans to raise the issue with Chinese President Xi Jinping when the two leaders meet, said U.S. officials who briefed reporters anonymously about the president's Asia trip under ground rules set by the White House.

Huang accompanied Trump on Air Force One during the president's last trip to China in May, and he has been a sporadic presence around Trump at the White House while speaking to him frequently. Trump has argued that America needs to preserve its leadership on artificial intelligence, and warned of dire consequences if China wins that competition.

Scrutiny of the Trump administration's actions as they relate to Nvidia has been growing, including on the Commerce Department's delay in placing restrictions on Nvidia chip exports to a company led by the alleged Chinese spy with whom Huang had the affair.

Asked about the matter in an interview that aired Sunday, Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent said he will "leave the internal workings of the Commerce Department to the Commerce Department.

"I think what's more important here, Larry, is to examine whether Nvidia had a culture of compliance around the U.S. export restrictions ... and at what level?" Bessent told Fox News anchor Larry Kudlow.

He added: "I think we're going to see answers."

"Jensen Huang is an incredible innovator, but that does not abrogate their duties of compliance," Bessent said.

Among the travelers on the Asia trip with Trump will be Elon Musk, the head of SpaceX and Tesla, who is shaping up to be a top investigative target of the incoming Democratic majority in Congress.

TRADE AND NUCLEAR TALKS

In the Philippines, Trump will meet with Southeast Asian leaders who look to the United States for help countering Beijing's aggression in the region. He plans to sign a trade deal with Thailand while in Manila, the White House said.

Then he heads to China for the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation summit — and at the end of the trip, the first-ever three-way talks with China's Xi and Russian President Vladimir Putin to discuss nuclear stockpiles.

Trump and U.S. officials have indicated that the meeting with Putin and Xi will focus on nuclear weapons and that topics of discussion would not include Russia's war in Ukraine, now in its fifth year. Still, the president has recently played up chances for a settlement to the conflict.

The three-way meeting will also put in the spotlight the ongoing U.S. war with Iran, a country which has often allied with China and Russia. The war has been widely blamed for the Republican Party's steep losses in the midterms, and while Trump has tried to play down the chances he will order a resumption of major strikes against Iran, he also has said he does not see the need for talks.

China's Foreign Ministry spokesperson Mao Ning said Monday that the trilateral talks would be of "groundbreaking significance" and that China aimed to have in-depth exchanges about safeguarding world peace and promoting stability.

"Under the current circumstances, the three countries shoulder an important responsibility to work together in addressing global challenges," she said in a regular briefing in Beijing. **MDT/AP**

SOUTH KOREA

AI cheating fears spook the nation before high-stakes college entrance exam

AP PHOTO



South Korean Education minister Choi Kyo-jin watches a monitor showing about the scenario of a national tax accountant exam cheating

DAYS before South Korea comes to a standstill for its all-important college entrance exam, the nation is reeling after the top scorer on its tax accountant test was found to have cheated with a hidden camera and artificial intelligence.

The scandal has left authorities scrambling to prevent cheating on the exam, which will be taken Thursday by more than 500,000 students, as concerns grow that AI and smart devices are making fraud harder to detect.

Education Minister Choi Kyo-jin on Monday rejected calls by some lawmakers to postpone the exam until stronger anti-cheating measures are in place, telling a legislative hearing that a delay would cause "even a larger disruption" to students.

Han Won-seok's unusually high scores had drawn suspicion after he discussed them during recent media interviews. The case follows other incidents involving AI-assisted cheating in the past several months, including test-takers caught using AI-powered smart glasses on an English standardized test in June and on some university essay exams in October.

In a video posted Sunday on his lawyer's YouTube channel, Han said that he used a concealed camera to capture the questions, fed the images to a generative AI tool and received answers on a smartphone. He said that he would cooperate with police, who are investigating the case.

Han had previously said that he scored 397.5 out of a possible 400 points on the first-stage, multiple-choice test in April, and 663 out of 800 on the second-stage essay exam in July, unusually high marks that one Korean newspaper likened to "running a 100-meter sprint in under five seconds."

The national college entrance exam, known as "Suneung," or the College Scholastic Ability Test, is a high-stakes annual event in a country notorious for intense academic competition, where prospects for jobs, social standing and even marriage can depend on which university a person attends.

South Korea goes to great lengths each year to create an ideal testing environment, effectively bringing the country to a standstill by delaying the start of the workday and stock market trading to ease traffic for test-takers and pausing flights during the English listening section of the exam. Police officers often use cars and motorcycles to escort test-takers who are running late, while the military sometimes suspends training in areas near testing sites.

Education authorities will deploy at least one specially trained supervisor at each of the 1,300 test sites nationwide to identify such glasses. Officials also are considering requiring test takers to hand over their smart devices and shutting down public Wi-Fi connections at test sites, according to Prime Minister Han Seongsook's office. **MDT/AP**

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AP PHOTO



Flight information board at LaGuardia Airport in New York, Friday, Nov. 13, 2026, after the Federal Aviation Administration grounded flights nationwide

USA

Questions swirl around FAA's new SMART AI system, though officials say no link to ground stop

BARBARA ORTUTAY & JOSH FUNK

THE airline ground stop that wreaked havoc on travel since Friday was not related to the FAA's new, $875 million AI-powered system the agency is rolling out to help predict problems in the sky, according to government officials and the artificial intelligence company behind the technology.

But the timing of the ground stop, so close to the national rollout of the Federal Aviation Administration's SMART system, has raised questions about what the system does, its benefits and risks compared with the existing human system and what guardrails there are to address potential problems.

OFFICIALS SAY NO CONNECTION TO GROUND STOP

The SMART system is based in a single location near Washington where a team of experts analyzes flight schedules, weather forecasts and hundreds of other streams of data. Then that office sends recommendations to the FAA's command center, which relays them to air traffic controllers across the country for consideration.

Homeland Security Secretary Markwayne Mullin said Friday there's no indication the communications issues that caused the ground stop are linked to the new computer system, and the top officials at the Transportation Department and FAA reiterated that Saturday.

The startup that designed the system, Air Space Intelligence, or ASI, said the ground stop wasn't caused by "the SMART system, any product of ASI or our integration with FAA and ATC."

But lawmakers and outside groups raised questions about the SMART system before Friday's ground stop. Last month, House Democrats sent a letter to the U.S. Government Accountability Office requesting an audit of the new software, raising concerns about safety and guardrails.

"Concerningly, the nation's front line aviation safety workforce apparently had little to no input into SMART's development and have received limited training and information during the current deployment process," the Oct. 13 letter said. "The use of artificial intelligence within SMART has rightfully raised serious questions about its reliability and safety benefits, particularly on its potential to interfere with decision-making by experienced air traffic controllers or to hallucinate safety-critical information."

SMART, however, is not — at least not yet — set up for AI to be in charge of flight control. Rather, it is making recommendations to humans who do so.

WHAT IS THE SMART SYSTEM?

Transportation Secretary Sean Duffy and FAA Administrator Bryan Bedford unveiled the system in September, calling it a "cutting-edge tool that centralizes 200 data streams — including weather patterns, flight paths, traffic flow, and controller staffing metrics — into one platform." SMART stands for Strategic Management of Airspace, Routes and Trajectories.

The system's AI-supported engine synthesizes the data systems and shows a "comprehensive visualization" of where planes are going, how much traffic the system can handle and where congestion or weather could cause problems, according to the announcement. The idea is for specialists to then use the platform to fix problems before they arise.

The FAA says that during the initial test of the system in the Washington area this fall, the system helped reroute 180 flights and saved an average of 10 minutes and 80 gallons of fuel per flight by diverting around weather or other issues. The agency said that one flight cut 42 minutes off its trip from Tampa, Florida, to Dallas thanks to the system's recommendations.

So SMART was expanded for use nationwide on Nov. 10 for the airspace of all 22 air traffic control centers. That was three days before the ground stop.

According to a government fact sheet on the tool, SMART can predict where air traffic is headed and identify other routes before an area becomes too congested. The system can also help reopen restricted airspace faster and better manage airport arrivals.

SMART is also supposed to help with weather-related issues faster.

Currently, the FAA blocks off portions of airspace affected by weather as "large, rectangular boxes," according to the fact sheet, which doesn't reflect how weather actually looks, with quick-moving thunderstorms and storm systems that are "often irregular in shape, with narrow gaps or corridors that aircraft could safely fly through."

To help with this, SMART gives the FAA and airspace operators a "clearer picture of how weather will affect air traffic over time," allowing air traffic controllers to plan around storms and use available airspace instead of unnecessarily shutting down large areas.

No other country has a working AI air traffic tool like the SMART system, according to Michael McCormick, a former FAA airspace manager and an associate professor at Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University. Eurocontrol, the European air traffic authority, has a system in testing and several manufacturers are prototyping similar tools.

CONCERNS AROUND RELYING ON AI

While government officials and ASI, the company behind SMART, have stressed that its AI system is designed to assist humans and not run flight control, its deployment has raised concerns about relying on artificial intelligence when human lives are at stake, given that even the most advanced models are prone to hallucinations — when models fabricate false information and present it as fact.

Mike O'Donnell, a former top FAA official who worked for the agency for 17 years and now does aviation safety consulting work, said the agency "has got to make sure that this is just a tool in the toolbox and not the actual machine that's doing the work."

The FAA, he said, "cannot afford to be wrong on this."

"It's good to use it with the proper guardrails and backstops to ensure that they're not giving wrong information to controllers based on what (AI) has come up with," O'Donnell said. "There's got to be a way to verify and validate what it's doing to make sure that it's not the wrong information."

He cautioned against putting too much trust in AI "until we know for sure that it's proven itself time and time again. And that's going to take a while."

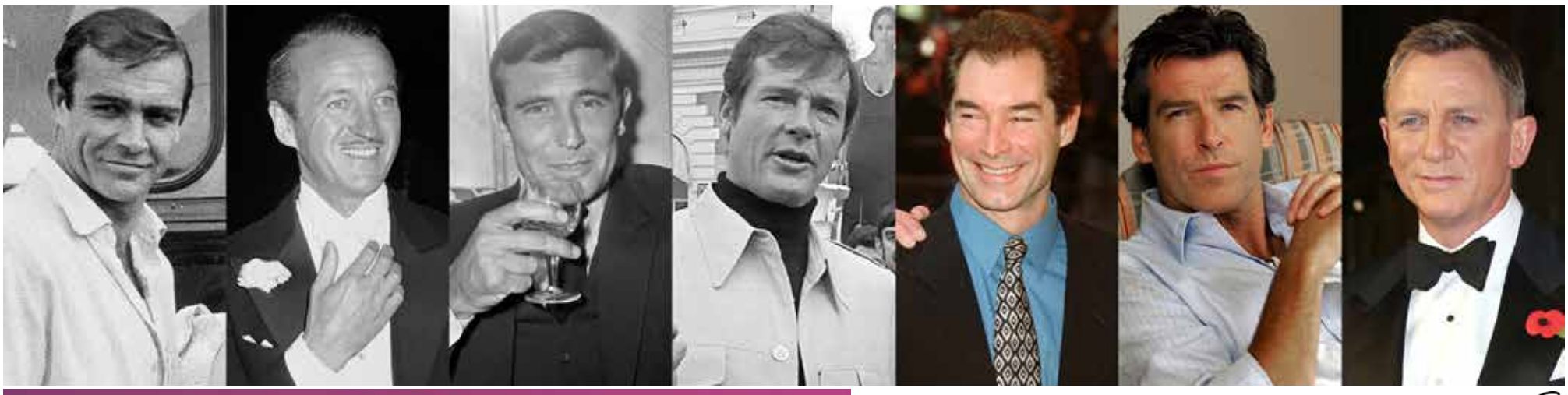
The AI system's launch comes amid a longstanding shortage of air traffic controllers around the country. The National Air Traffic Controllers Association has been raising concerns about this for more than a decade, telling Congress in 2015 that the shortage was at a crisis level. It said then that the FAA had missed its hiring targets for five years in a row. The union represents about 14,000 controllers, roughly 3,000 of them trainees. That said, experts say no AI system can replace the human air traffic controllers who spend years training for this highly demanding and stressful job.

In an October interview with NPR, ASI co-founder and CEO Phillip Buckendorf said the SMART tool is designed for traffic managers who manage the entire U.S. airspace.

"The AI does the math, the AI does the computation," Buckendorf told NPR, but it's ultimately up to the human operator whether to take the system's recommendation. "They make the decision, they are the decider, they are the judge." **MDT/AP**

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Robert Pattinson (above) and the previous Bonds (on top), Sean Connery, from left, David Niven, George Lazenby, Roger Moore, Timothy Dalton, Pierce Brosnan, and Daniel Craig

UK | FILM

Robert Pattinson is named the 7th Bond, taking over the role from Craig

JAKE COYLE, FILM WRITER

Pattinson. Robert Pattinson.

After years of debate and endless conjecture, Pattinson was unveiled as the next James Bond on Monday, becoming the seventh actor to play the iconic British spy and the first since Amazon MGM took over the beloved film franchise.

The naming of Pattinson comes during the longest hiatus in 007 history and ends years of rampant speculation about who would inherit the role from Daniel Craig. It comes five years after 2021's "No Time to Die," the first film in Bond's 64-year history on the silver screen to conclude with the character's death. But 007 will be reborn, yet again, in the 26th Bond film, directed by Denis Villeneuve.

Amazon MGM Studios announced Pattinson's casting on social media with a brief snippet of the actor emerging from the shadows with a gun.

"James Bond is one of the most legendary characters in cinema, and to be entrusted with 007 is the honour of a lifetime," Pattinson said in a statement. "To say this role is a dream come true is an understatement. I couldn't be more excited about this partnership and the work ahead with this fantastic team."

Pattinson only entered the Bond rumor mill recently after the revelation that he screen-tested for the role. Others reportedly in the mix included Callum Turner, Josh O'Connor, Jack Lowden and Nicholas Hoult.

But they were only the finalists in a Bond search that dated back to before Craig's final 007 film.

While producers were long expected to go with a young, less-proven star, they instead opted for one of the best-known actors of his generation. Pattinson, 40, is also relatively old to begin as 007. The actor is currently in production on another iconic role in "The Batman Part II."

Pattinson comes in already associated with several mega-franchises in "The Batman," "Dune," "Twilight" and "Harry Potter." But since his breakthrough in "Twilight," Pattinson has worked largely in more independent, auteur-driven films such as "Good Time" with the Safdie brothers, Robert Eggers' "The Lighthouse" and Bong Joon Ho's "Mickey 17."

Earlier this year, he drew rave reviews for his villainous performance in Christopher Nolan's "The Odyssey" and for his portrayal of "To Catch a Predator" host Chris Hansen in the film "Primetime." He co-stars in Villeneuve's upcoming "Dune: Part III" as a shape-shifting assassin.

Villeneuve said it was a tough choice, but the right one.

"We were surrounded by extraordinary talent, but there can only be one 007. I am overjoyed to welcome Robert Pattinson as our new James Bond. He has the timeless soul of 007 and brings a spirit that is completely new. I cannot wait to begin," the director said in a statement.

The casting comes at a pivotal juncture for the franchise. In 2022, Bond's longtime studio, MGM, was bought by Amazon for $8.5 billion. After haggling over next steps for 007, producers Barbara Broccoli and Michael G. Wilson relinquished creative control of Bond in 2025. The still-untitled Bond 26 is the first Bond movie since 1962's inaugural "Dr. No" in which a Broccoli didn't handpick the super spy.

"Today marks a defining moment for our studio and a significant milestone in the history of James Bond as we proudly introduce Robert Pattinson as the next 007," said Mike Hopkins, head of Prime Video and Amazon MGM Studios.

Casting a new Bond fell instead to producers Amy Pascal — the former Sony Pictures chief and "Spider-Man" producer — and David Heyman, shepherd of "Harry Potter" and "Paddington." Steven Knight ("Peaky Blinders," "Locke") was brought in to write the script.

Before Craig even departed the role, rumors and odds-making persisted nearly round-the-clock on who would follow in the footsteps of Sean Connery, George Lazenby, Roger Moore, Timothy Dalton, Pierce Brosnan and Craig. Idris Elba, for one, has spent half his career deflecting 007 conjecture.

The Bond machine has historically never slowed down. But the 26th installment will follow the longest absence ever for Bond. Given that "No Time to Die" completed principal photography in 2019 (its release was delayed due to the coronavirus pandemic), the lull is even longer.

Some fans are skeptical about the new Amazon-controlled chapter for Bond. Hopkins, head of Prime Video and Amazon MGM Studios, has vowed to uphold the franchise's legacy and usher in "the next phase in the legendary 007 for audiences around the world."

At stake is one of the most lucrative film series in Hollywood, based on Ian Fleming's series of novels. The Bond movies have grossed more than $7 billion worldwide in ticket sales. "No Time to Die" collected $774 million in 2021. The movies also spin out endless other revenue streams, from streaming deals and video games to Aston Martins.

Although some Bond actors came to view the role as a yoke around their necks, it turned Craig into a household name. The British actor wasn't widely known before his casting and, at the time, was derided as the first "blond Bond." **MDT/AP**

this day in history

1997 Egyptian militants kill tourists at Luxor



More than 60 people have been killed after an attack on a group of foreign tourists visiting a temple in southern Egypt.

The tourists' bus was fired on as they visited the temple of Hatshepsut, one of the main attractions in the town of Luxor in southern Egypt.

An Egyptian police spokesman said most of the dead were Swiss and Japanese tourists.

The spokesman said the six gunmen were killed in an ensuing two-hour gun battle with police.

According to initial figures released by Egypt's interior ministry, 57 tourists, a local guide and two policemen died in the attack.

Other reports say the number of people who have been killed could rise to 75 with up to 85 people injured.

An Islamic extremist group, the outlawed al-Gamaa al-Islamiya, is reported to have said it carried out the attack.

It came as 65 alleged members of the Islamic group went on trial in Cairo accused of conspiracy to murder.

Islamic militants have targeted tourists since beginning a campaign in 1992 to topple the government of Hosni Mubarak and set up a strict Islamic state.

Two months ago, nine Germans and an Egyptian driver were killed when gunmen opened fire on a bus in Cairo.

Two men have since been sentenced to death for the shootings.

Luxor, about 310 miles (500 km) south of Cairo, is visited by about two million tourists a year. [...]

Courtesy BBC News

In context

The final number of people known to have died in the Luxor attack was 68.
It devastated the tourism industry and the Egyptian economy.
The Egyptian authorities said they believed it was carried out by members of the Egyptian Islamic extremist group al-Gamaa al-Islamiya and financed by Osama Bin Laden and his al-Qaeda network.
Several people were arrested for the attack but none stood trial.
Al-Gamaa al-Islamiya declared a cease-fire in 1999 after the government agreed a prisoner amnesty.

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YOUR STARS

Aries
Mar. 21-Apr. 19

This is a feel-good day! Interactions with a friend or a member of a group will be warm and rewarding. In fact, a casual friendship might turn romantic. It's a great day to socialize.

Taurus
Apr. 20-May. 20

You impress bosses, parents and people in authority today! Meanwhile, this is the perfect day to make home improvements as well as entertain at home. Something related to home and family makes you feel confident.

Gemini
May. 21-Jun. 21

Look for ways to expand your world today because you have the gift of the gab, as well as the energy, drive and enthusiasm to make it happen! Your words are golden and everyone loves you! Tonight: You're admired!

Cancer
Jun. 22-Jul. 22

Today you are practically driven to make money or boost your earnings or make a little money on the side. You might discover a better paying job. Some of you are involved in work-related travel.

Leo
Jul. 23-Aug. 22

You have energy to burn today because fiery Mars is lined up with Jupiter in your sign, which makes you feel strong, vigorous and active! It boosts your confidence and makes you willing to take a risk

Virgo
Aug. 23-Sep. 22

This is an excellent day for financial discussions, perhaps even asking for a raise or looking for a better paying job. You have a strong, quiet determination today, which might blossom into eager enthusiasm.

Libra
Sep.23-Oct. 22

Grab every invitation to socialize with friends as well as groups and organizations because you will charm everyone with your grace and personality. Excellent day at work! Tonight: Get better organized.

Scorpio
Oct. 23-Nov. 21

Today you are confident, strong and eager to talk to others. It's a fantastic day to spend time with friends, kids and romantic partners because everyone wants to see your face.

Sagittarius
Nov. 22-Dec. 21

Today you're keen to travel or make travel plans. (In fact, lucky Sagittarians are on white beaches enjoying drinks with little parasols in them.) Friendships are warm and loving. Tonight: Conversations.

Capricorn
Dec. 22-Jan. 19

You make an excellent impression on parents, bosses and authority figures today, which will help you to successfully negotiate financial matters and disputes about inheritances.

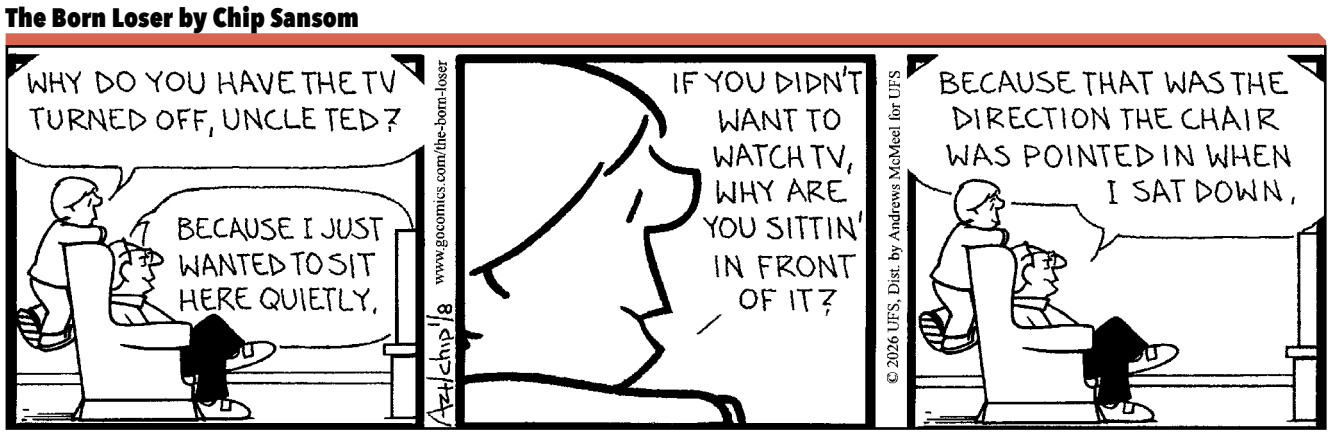
Aquarius
Jan. 20-Feb. 18

People admire you today, which is why you'll find it easy to make your pitch or express your views to others, especially authority figures. Travel appeals. People will listen to your ideas related to medicine and the law.

Pisces
Feb.19-Mar. 20

You have tremendous energy to work and accomplish a lot today. Work-related travel might also be in the picture. Financial discussions will go well. Gifts, goodies and favors from others will come your way.

The Born Loser by Chip Sansom



SUDOKU

Easy

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Easy+

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Hard

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WEATHER

	MIN	MAX	CONDITION
CHINA			
Beijing	2	8	overcast
Changchun	-6	0	overcast
Chengdu	10	17	overcast
Chongqing	13	16	rain
Fuzhou	19	26	rain
Guangzhou	20	27	cloudy
Guiyang	10	15	overcast
Haikou	23	31	cloudy
Hangzhou	13	15	rain
Harbin	-9	-1	cloudy
Hefei	10	14	overcast
Nanjing	10	16	overcast
Shanghai	13	16	overcast
Taipei	19	25	rain
Wuhan	12	14	rain
Hong Hong	24	27	sunny
WORLD			
Moscow	-2	1	cloudy
Frankfurt	7	14	rain
Paris	11	16	cloudy
London	9	13	sunny
New York	4	14	sunny

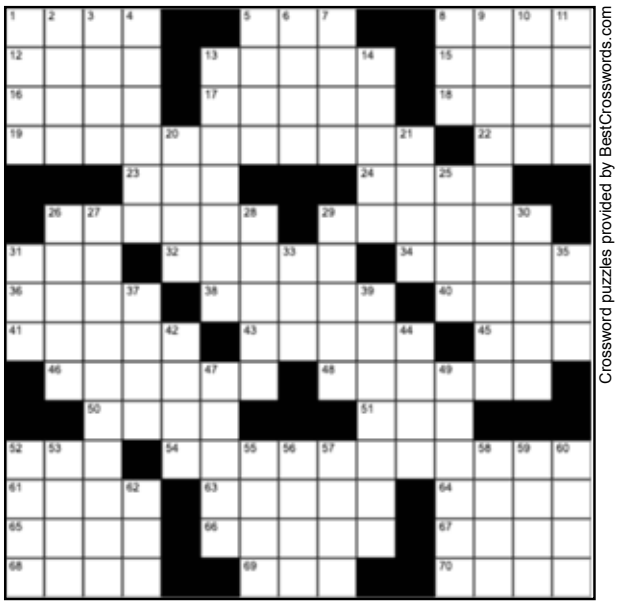
CROSSWORDS

ACROSS 1- Struck, old-style; 5- Rhine whine; 8- Burrows and Vigoda; 12- Top-flight; 13- German submarine; 15- Grumble; 16- Vincent Lopez's theme song; 17- Gallows loop; 18- Cubs slugger Sammy; 19- Leaping insect; 22- Frat party staple; 23- Seventh Greek letter; 24- Turndowns; 26- The continent; 29- Method; 31- Solo in space; 32- Month of showers; 34- Attorney follower; 36- Optic layer; 38- Affirmatives; 40- Forearm bone; 41- City near Phoenix; 43- West Pointer; 45- Moray; 46- Vital essence; 48- Scoffs; 50- Lion's den; 51- Greek nickname; 52- Can ___ now?; 54- Rivalry; 61- Actress Dunaway; 63- Peachy keen!; 64- Light ring; 65- Observed; 66- Mexican mister; 67- Discharge; 68- Like some shoppes; 69- 1980s movie starring Bo Derek and Dudley Moore; 70- Wife of a rajah;

DOWN 1- Squealed; 2- Heath; 3- To Live and Die ___; 4- One making fun; 5- Peek-___; 6- Poultry enclosure; 7- Clasp for a door; 8- Morning hrs.; 9- Paperbacks store owner; 10- Make simpler; 11- Glitch; 13- Sad; 14- Itty-bitty; 20- Greek portico; 21- Parks on a bus; 25- Words to Brutus; 26- Overhangs; 27- Without a job; 28- Standing up; 29- Snow conveyances; 30- Horse locks; 31- Simple shelter; 33- This ___ test; 35- ___Mart; 37- Capital city of Western Samoa; 39- Elected legislator; 42- Rock star Clapton; 44- Actress Garr; 47- Golf clubs; 49- One or the other; 52- Assuming that's true; 53- Scottish Celt; 55- Bump into; 56- Window section; 57- Thames town; 58- ___ Camera; 59- Lena of "Chocolat"; 60- Denier's words; 62- U-turn from WSW;

Yesterday's solution

L	E	N	I		O	B	E	Y		S	A	I	D
I	C	O	N		S	L	A	V		E	R	N	E
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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

AD



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Times
MACAU'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

GEN Z POLITICS

What to know as a Serbian student movement prepares to govern after election win

JOVANA GEC, BELGRADE

AP PHOTO



A grassroots, youth-led movement that won Serbia's election last month will take up parliamentary seats this week along with a chance to deliver a promised system overhaul. They will encounter an entrenched legacy of an established, long-ruling party.

The Students' List group on Oct. 25 defeated former strongman Aleksandar Vucic 's right-wing Serbian Progressive Party in the early parliamentary vote that came after two years of anti-corruption protests in the Balkan country. The inaugural assembly session on Tuesday will mark the first step toward the formation of their future government.

Students have promised to restore democracy and the rule of law, and to terminate deeply-rooted corruption, cronyism and alleged organized crime links that they say thrived under Vucic. They will have a tough job, observers say, that leaves little room for mistakes.

"To be honest, I do not envy them at all," said Zarko Korac, who was a deputy prime minister in Serbia's first democratically elected government after the ouster of former strongman Slobodan Milosevic in 2000. The new authorities, Korac said, "will face huge problems."

"I hope they will manage because it will be bad for all of us if they don't," he told The Associated Press.

VUCIC TO BE AMONG HIS PARTY LAWMAKERS AT THE FIRST SESSION

The Students' List group will have 140 lawmakers in the 250-member Parliament. They are mostly professors, teachers and varied experts with respectable careers in their fields but with little or no political experience.

"They will start from scratch in both the Parliament and the government," Korac said. He believes that the lack of experience could be both "an advantage and a downside" in reforming the highly politicized state administration, security system and public companies.

The new authorities, he said, will have to "go into each and every institution, one after another, and make the changes."

The inaugural assembly session today [Macau time] will mark the first step toward the formation of their future government

At the session on Tuesday, lawmakers will start by choosing a parliament speaker and his or her deputy speakers, as well as various parliamentary bodies. A new government then must be voted into office within 90 days.

Vucic will be one of the 103 opposition lawmakers from his SNS party. They are all well-experienced and versed in parliamentary struggle and verbal exchanges. The SNS is notorious for harsh language and insults against political opponents. Vucic promised his lawmakers will be "decent and civilized."

STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES MEET FOREIGN OFFICIALS

While making clear their focus is at home, student representatives already have made first international contacts.

A Students' List delegation earlier this month met with European Union officials, and last week with both the U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for European and Eurasian Affairs Brendan Hanrahan and the Russian ambassador in Serbia Alexander Botsan-Kharchenko.

Serbia's future government is not expected to tackle key foreign relations immediately — the Balkan country is seeking EU entry but has not joined sanctions against Moscow, and depends on Russia for energy. Vucic also developed close economic and political relations with China.

After the talks in Brussels, EU Enlargement Commissioner Marta Kos said that "we are ready to help the new government to really do all the necessary reforms in the field of the rule of law."

The U.S. "stands ready to continue working with Serbia and the Serbian people toward our shared goals, including regional security and economic cooperation," Hanrahan said on X last week.

Separately, the U.S. Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs said it joined the meeting with the student movement, "whose efforts to combat organized crime complement INL's ongoing work in Serbia."

CALLS ARE MOUNTING FOR DISMANTLING THE INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

Korac, whose post-Milosevic government in 2000 inherited a war-ravaged nation that was bombed by NATO a year earlier, said both then and now the systems were shaped to suit those in power rather than the citizens.

Led by Prime Minister Zoran Djindjic, the post-Milosevic government ended Serbia's international isolation and restarted the economy. But the fragile democracy barely took hold before the ruling coalition split, and Djindjic was assassinated in 2003 by the state security's ex-paramilitary fighters.

More than two decades later, Serbia's EU bid has stalled over democratic backsliding under Vucic, who imposed full control over all layers of power after his party took office in 2012.

Korac joined mounting calls for the dismantling of the state spy agency as a key reform step, after it was accused of widespread surveillance of Vucic's critics and opponents.

The Security Information Agency, or BIA, has denied wrongdoing, describing the accusations of wiretapping and phone spyware as "malicious" and designed to fuel instability.

Allegedly monitored have been the Belgrade University rector, students and their faculty premises, an opposition politician, the newsroom and journalists of the Radar weekly — including their homes and cars — activists and analysts.

MAKEOVER HAS STARTED BUT MAIN WORK IS YET TO COME

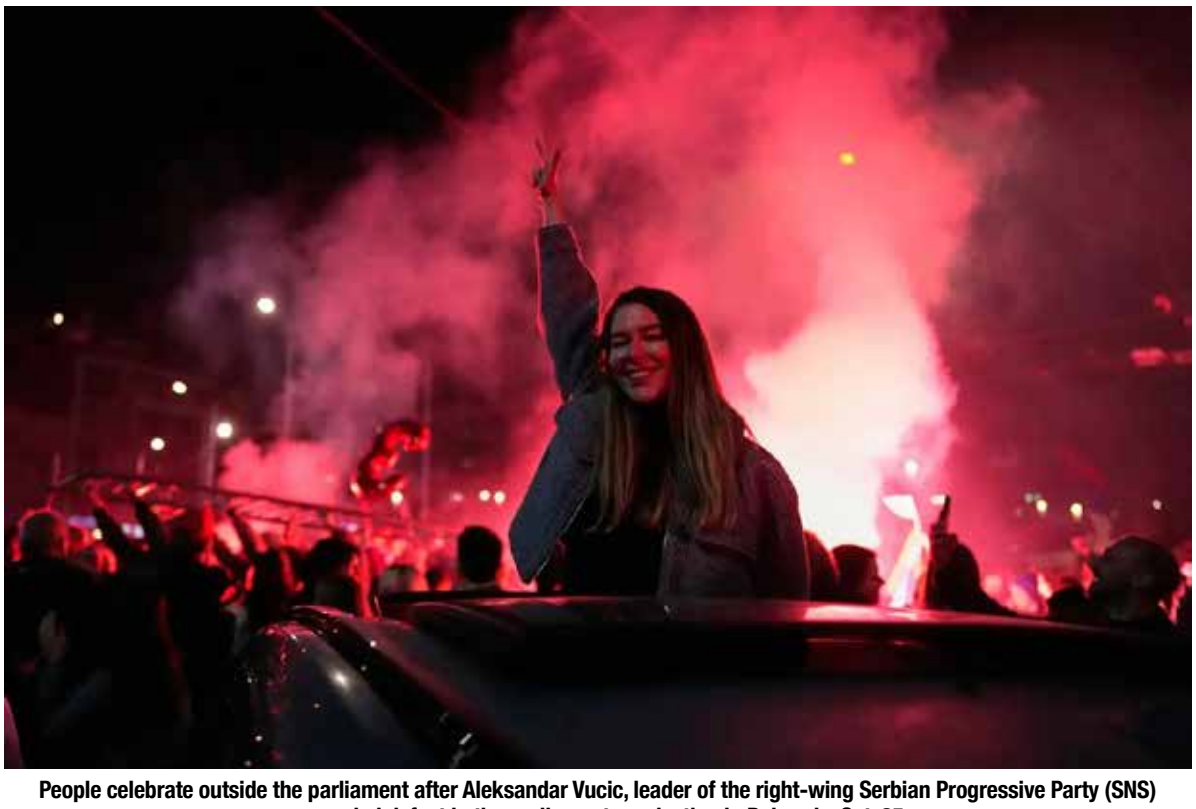
A surge in post-election arrests included officials, police officers and a private bank owner who allegedly attempted to siphon off money.

Vucic has accused the students of a "revolutionary terror" in daily appearances on loyal media and social networks. Vucic suggested his party may sit out an upcoming early presidential election to avoid "creating an illusion" that things are normal.

Such rhetoric will continue, Korac predicted, expressing hope that the new authorities will include "people with strong nerves."

The students, he said, have shown during the two years of anti-corruption protests that they are strong: "That strength is distinctive for young people and I do hope they'll preserve it." **MDT/AP**

AP PHOTO



People celebrate outside the parliament after Aleksandar Vucic, leader of the right-wing Serbian Progressive Party (SNS) conceded defeat in the parliamentary election in Belgrade, Oct. 25

MacauDaily 澳門每日時報 ®
Times
MACAU'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

FOOTBALL

World champion Spain loses first match since 2024 after home defeat to England

JEROME PUGMIRE,
SPORTS WRITER

SPAIN 2, ENGLAND 3

AP PHOTO



England's Harry Kane celebrates after scoring the opening goal

WORLD Cup winner Spain was beaten for the first time in more than two years after losing 3-2 at home to England in the Nations League on Sunday (yesterday, Macau time).

Spain's 43-game unbeaten streak ended with a first defeat since a 1-0 loss to Colombia in March 2024 in a friendly match played at London Stadium.

A few months later Spain won the European Championship and followed up that triumph with the World Cup earlier this year.

Although Spain lost the previous Nations League final to Portugal last year in a penalty shootout, that match counted as a draw statistically because it ended 2-2 after extra time.

Spain was constantly troubled by World Cup semifinalist England's intense pressing game, and coach Luis de la Fuente gave praise to his counterpart Thomas Tuchel's side.

"In the first 30 minutes, they knocked us out of our rhythm and were better than us. After that, we fought back, and I thought we were going to get the draw," he said. "The fact that the whole world wants to beat Spain is a great feeling. This was a 'final' and in this type of game, you have to be spot on, in great shape, and if not, then an opponent like England, France, Portugal or Italy can trample all over you."

England's goals came via a penalty from captain Harry Kane — who grabbed his 93rd goal for England — and defenders Ezri Konsa and Ben White.

Spain replied through Mikel Oyarzabal's penalty and a goal from Nico Williams, with Barcelona superstar Lamine Yamal involved in both.

But England goalkeeper James Trafford denied Spain with several fine saves in the closing stages.

PROUD NOT SAD

De la Fuente had some uplifting words for his team.

"If there are sad guys in my dressing room right now, then I'd like to be able to say to them over the next few days: 'Guys... be aware of the magnitude of what you've achieved, how difficult it was and how proud you should be,'" he said.

Spain goalkeeper Unai Simón was honest in his appraisal.

"Tonight they were superior to us, they employed a very aggressive one-on-one approach," he said. "Of course, we needed to keep trying until the very end, and we did fight, but this serves as a lesson on what we need to improve."

He added that Spain hadn't matched the defensive intensity it had shown during its run to World Cup victory, where the team conceded only one goal in eight games.

"The intensity present at the World Cup isn't quite the same here," the Athletic Bilbao goalkeeper said. "The game is played with more freedom, and we need to learn from our mistakes. It's better that this happens now, so we can improve (at the quarterfinals) in March."

The quarterfinal draw is on Friday. **MDT/AP**

FOOTBALL | END OF AN ERA

Unimpressed by Cristiano Ronaldo tributes, Denmark routs Portugal

CIARÁN FAHEY,
SPORTS WRITER

PORTUGAL 1, DENMARK 4

PORTUGAL slumped to a 4-1 loss at home to Denmark in its first game since Cristiano Ronaldo's retirement, while Viktor Gyökeres and Erling Haaland helped Sweden and Norway complete a Scandinavian raid on the Nations League last weekend.

Portugal paid tributes to Ronaldo before and during the team's lackluster display – one that earned whistles from disappointed home fans who had been looking forward to a party, with their previously unbeaten team already through to the quarterfinals.

The 41-year-old Portugal superstar announced his international retirement last week. His former teammates all wore Ronaldo No. 7 jerseys before kickoff, then failed to impose themselves on the game.

Denmark captain Pierre-Emile Højbjerg scored before the break with an emphatically-taken penalty after Rúben Dias was penalized for hand ball.

Rasmus Højlund made it 2-0 in the 50th with a volley to finish off a fine team move, then eluded Dias on the edge of the area and hammered the ball past goalkeeper Diogo Costa in the 57th.

Portugal fans whistled as their misfiring team needlessly conceded a corner, but it didn't get any better.

Joachim Andersen scored with a header to make it 4-0 in the 75th.

Bernardo Silva's stoppage-time response only meant the Group A4 game ended with a VAR check.

Gyökeres converted two penalties, after Daniel Svensson had opened the scoring, for Sweden to enjoy a comfortable 3-0 lead over Bosnia-Herzegovina at half time on the outskirts of Stockholm.

The Swedish-born Armin Gigovic pulled one back after the break and Sead Kolašinac got another in the 62nd to set up a nervy finale. Sweden, though, held on to clinch top spot in Group B4.

In the other group game, Romania enjoyed a 2-1 win over Poland in Bucharest. It was its first win of the campaign.

Haaland ended a two-game run without scoring for Norway with the third goal in a 3-1 victory over Wales in Oslo.

The 26-year-old Manchester City striker looked set to go three games without scoring – an anomaly for a player who averages at least one goal for every international match he plays – until Connor Roberts conceded a penalty with a foul on Andreas Schjelderup in the 85th minute.

Haaland stayed cool while the decision survived a VAR check, then swung his spot kick to the right of Wales goalkeeper Karl Darlow.

Norway needed Antonio Nusa to get the breakthrough in the 59th after Wales' defense failed to adequately clear a corner.

AP PHOTO



A banner is displayed on the stands thanking former Portugal team captain Cristiano Ronaldo before the Nations League soccer match between Portugal and Denmark in Braga

Haaland set up Schjelderup to make it 2-0 with a simple finish soon after, only for David Brooks to make the finish exciting with a brilliant chip over the goalkeeper.

Haaland then ended any suspense to seal Norway's second win in Group A4. It has six points, three behind Denmark and six adrift of leader Portugal.

Austria substitute Saša Kalajdzic scored late in a 1-0 win over Ireland to seal top spot in Group B3, where Israel held Kosovo 0-0 in Pristina earlier. Kosovan fans whistled the Israeli national anthem before the game.

Terry Devlin's second-half goal was enough for Northern Ireland to beat Ukraine 1-0 in Belfast to lead Group B2 by a point from Hungary.

Earlier, Dominik Szoboszlai was involved in both late goals as Hungary defeated Georgia 2-0 away. **MDT/AP**

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Times

OPINION



Multipolar World

Jorge Costa Oliveira

AItocracy and the power behind the algorithm

A government need never appoint an algorithm to its cabinet for artificial intelligence to acquire political power. It can happen one decision at a time, as agencies use software to screen benefit claims, flag people for investigation, or determine who gets medical attention first. Each decision may look like an administrative detail. Together, they shape how citizens experience the state and how much say they have when it gets something wrong.

Call it AItocracy, a system in which AI acquires a central role in setting public policy, allocating resources, or administering justice. The appeal is easy to see. Algorithms can sift through records in seconds, spot waste in public spending, and help health officials anticipate outbreaks. Consistent rules could curb favoritism and reduce the chance that two people in the same circumstances receive different treatment simply because their applications reach different desks.

In September 2025, Albania presented Diella, an AI assistant, as a virtual minister charged with tackling corruption in public procurement. A software system cannot pocket a bribe. The people who set the tender rules, choose the training data, or control the system can still shape the outcome. A bidder who loses a public contract should be able to see why and challenge the decision before someone with the authority to reverse it.

The same principle applies beyond procurement. A model trained on past lending decisions can reproduce discrimination while presenting its conclusions as objective risk scores. A system that allocates medical resources may look efficient on paper while failing patients whose circumstances are poorly represented in the data. When an official relies on a model whose reasoning is difficult to trace, a citizen may struggle to establish what went wrong, let alone persuade anyone to correct it.

Democratic government derives its authority from the people and depends on their ability to hold decision-makers to account. Deliberation can be slow because citizens disagree about what should count as a good outcome. Extending voting rights, for example, required people to challenge the rules that defined who could participate. A system designed to apply those rules uniformly could have enforced exclusion with consistency.

The concentration of advanced AI in a handful of technology companies compounds the problem. Training leading models requires vast computing resources, data, and specialized expertise. Governments can end up depending on the same vendors to supply the tools, explain their limitations, and advise on their regulation. As those tools become embedded in public agencies, decisions about what to measure and which risks to tolerate can shift from public debate to private design choices. Public scrutiny, independent oversight, and more accessible models can give governments more leverage over what they buy and how they use it.

AI can help officials detect patterns, test assumptions, and explain how they allocate resources. Citizens affected by its use should know when it shaped a decision, be able to challenge the result, and have access to a human official who can remedy an error. That official needs both the authority and the expertise to question the system. Accountability also has to reach the companies that build and maintain it, especially when defects or design choices cause harm.

A government can delegate a calculation. It must answer for the decision, especially when a citizen's access to care, justice, or a livelihood depends on it.

linkedin.com/in/jorgecostaoliveira

Cape Verde's president is reelected for a second 5-year term, provisional results show

THE BUZZ

Cape Verde's president, José Maria Neves, has been reelected for a second five-year term, beating five challengers, including the first woman presidential candidate in the country's history, provisional results show.

Neves called his reelection "a great victory." The election was dominated by high unemployment and the high cost of living, which has fueled emigration.

Provisional results showed Neves edged out his opponents, garnering 64% of the vote while Joana Rosa, the main opposition candidate, won 31.4%.

Rosa called Neves to concede defeat.

The small country has a history of smooth transfers of power and is one of the most stable in a region fraught with tense elections.

"The president of the republic does not have a majority; the president of the republic belongs to everyone," Neves said in his victory speech.

Turnout was low, with only 31.7% of the 418,000 registered voters casting a ballot.

Neves said the low turnout could be explained by high emigration, population movements within the country and outdated voter records. He promised a study.

Under Cape Verde's parliamentary system, the prime minister directs policy and holds most executive power. The directly elected president's role is largely ceremonial, although the president can veto legislation.

AP PHOTO



Actor Gerard Depardieu arrives with his lawyer Jeremie Assous, right, to face trial for the alleged sexual assaults of two women on a film set in 2021, in Paris

Gérard Depardieu drops appeal and accepts sexual assault conviction

SYLVIE CORBET, PARIS

FRENCH actor Gérard Depardieu said Monday he was dropping his appeal against a conviction for sexually assaulting two women on a film set and will accept the 18-month suspended sentence. He also issued an apology.

"I was found guilty," Depardieu said in a written statement, as his appeal trial was scheduled to open Monday in Paris. He added that he "hears it" and accepts the sentence.

"I therefore offer my deep and sincere apologies to those who may have suffered," he said.

Depardieu was convicted in May 2025 of groping a 54-year-old set decorator and a 34-year-old assistant during the filming of "Les Volets Verts" ("The Green Shutters") in 2021. He received an 18-month suspended prison sentence in a case that was widely seen as a post-#MeToo test for the country's film industry.

The court also ordered the 77-year-old Depardieu, one of the most prominent figures in French cinema for decades, to pay both accusers a total of 29,040 euros ($32,350) in fines, and that his name be listed in the national sex offender database.

"On film sets, I have long hidden behind provocation and crude humor. I believed my words and some of my actions had no consequences. But they did, particularly coming from someone who held as much power as I once did," Depardieu wrote.

"I have come to understand that I belonged to a world that no longer exists," he added. "I have therefore decided to withdraw my appeal."

The comments contrast with the actors' statements during the trial last year, when he had strongly denied the accusations. He acknowledged using vulgar and sexual language on the film set and grabbing the set dresser's hips during an argument, but denied that his behavior was sexual.

Depardieu is expected to face other legal proceedings soon.

In 2018, actor Charlotte Arnould accused him of raping her at his home. An investigating judge in August 2025 requested that the case goes to trial and a Paris appeals court is to decide next week whether it will proceed.

For more than a half-century, Depardieu was a towering figure in French cinema, known for his commanding physical presence and versatility. In recent years, his behavior toward women has come under renewed scrutiny, including after a documentary showed him repeatedly making obscene remarks and gestures during a 2018 trip to North Korea. **MDT/AP**

AP PHOTO



Russian air defenses intercepted 1,336 Ukrainian drones yesterday in what appeared to be Kyiv's largest aerial assault since Moscow's full-scale invasion. At least nine people were wounded in southern Russia, while Ukrainian strikes increasingly target oil refineries and military infrastructure.

Bulgaria A Somali-flagged cargo ship sank yesterday in Bulgaria's Black Sea economic zone, prompting an international rescue operation that saved all 12 crew members. The vessel was traveling from Romania to Egypt. Authorities have not established the cause amid recent regional drone attacks.

AP PHOTO



USA AAA forecasts 81.5 million Americans will travel at least 50 miles during Thanksgiving week, slightly below last year's record. Higher airfares and gasoline prices are discouraging some travelers, although airports and highways are still expected to experience heavy holiday traffic.

More on p15

AP PHOTO



South Africa At least 17 people were killed in two mass shootings Sunday in South Africa, police said Monday. Eight victims were found inside a vehicle near Pietermaritzburg, while nine others were discovered in a shack near Pretoria. Investigators are examining possible motives.

AP PHOTO



Music British singer-songwriter Raye leads the 2027 Grammy nominations with 11, tying Beyoncé's record for the most nominations by a female artist in one year. Spanish singer Rosalía follows with nine, while Olivia Rodrigo, Miranda Lambert and Phoebe Bridgers each received seven.