

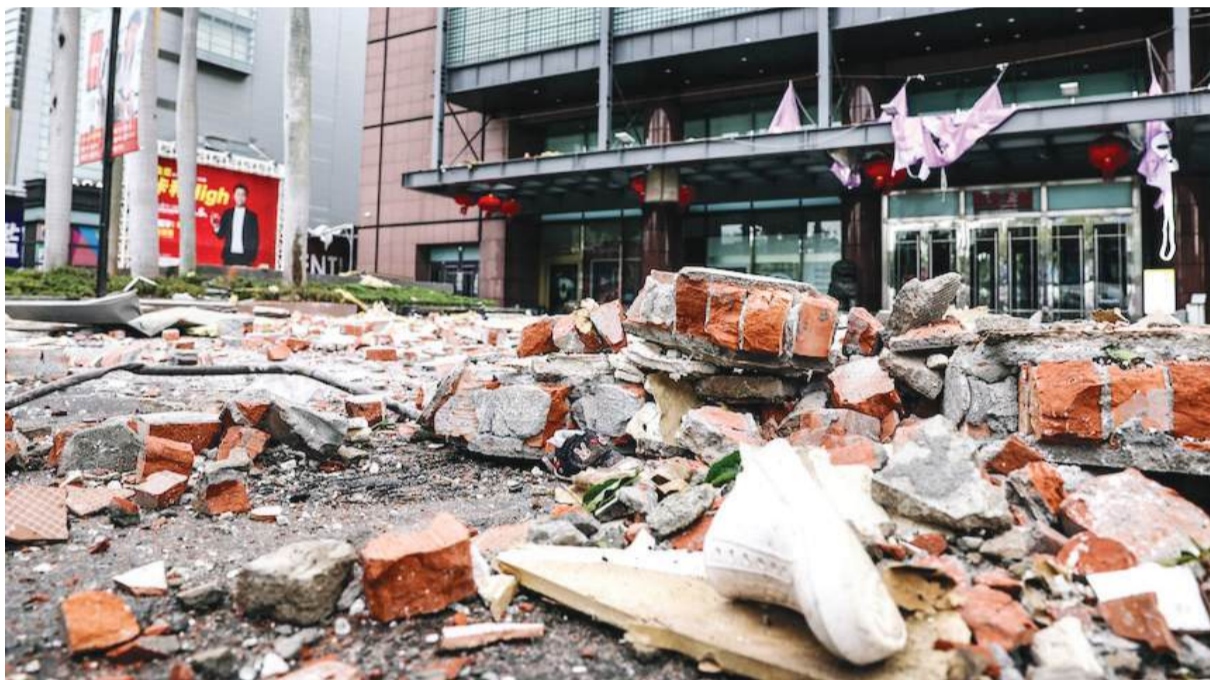


Taichung gas blast victims include 2 Macau police officers, 1 Hotel Fortuna staff

Yuki Lei

A family of four generations from Macau was affected by a gas explosion at the Shin Kong Mitsukoshi Department Store in central Taiwan's Taichung City on Thursday, resulting in two fatalities and five injuries – and the Public Security Police confirmed the next day that the victims include a retired PSP officer and an in-service officer from the Police Tactical Intervention Unit (UTIP) as well as a staff member of the Fortuna casino-hotel in Zape.

According to Taiwan media reports, an explosion on Thursday morning, suspected to have been caused by a leaking gas pipe during renovation work at the food court on the 11th and 12th floors of the building, resulted in the destruction of the building's external wall, cracked windows on several floors, and falling building materials and bricks. The blast killed four people and injured at least 39, including a Macau family surnamed Tang, who were passing by the building and were about to enter the nearby department store. The other two fatal victims were Taiwan residents



Rubble including bricks litters the entrance after Thursday's deadly gas explosion at the Shin Kong Mitsukoshi Department Store in Taichung. – AFP

employed by the department store. Taichung City Mayor Lu Shioh-yen said reportedly that the seven Macau tourists were struck by falling objects in front of the Shin Kong Mitsukoshi Department Store, in which, according to the city's Cheng Ching Hospital, the

family's grandfather was confirmed dead at the accident scene, while the grandmother was pronounced dead after the hospital's treatment to save her life had failed. Their two-year-old granddaughter, who had suffered cardiopulmonary arrest at one point and was intubated due

to severe head trauma and lung contusions, has been transferred to China Medical University Hospital. During a regular press conference on Friday, Public Security Police (PSP) spokesman Lam Keong identified one of the deceased in the blast as a retired PSP

officer and one of the injured males as a serving UTIP officer. Lam said that the Public Security Police were "very concerned" about the incident and conveyed their deepest sympathies and condolences to the victims and their family members, adding that the Public Security Police would continue to maintain close communication with the Macau Government Tourism Office's (MGTO) crisis assistance team and render their full and appropriate assistance to the victims and their family members.

The Fortuna casino-hotel expressed in a statement on Friday its deepest condolences to its "cooperative colleague" who was killed in the gas explosion and who had worked at the casino for two decades, promising that the company "will do its utmost to provide support and assist the family in this time of grief", including to liaise with the hospitals in Taichung through the group's Yin Kui Hospital to provide the families with the immediate medical assistance they need as well as financial support for immediate medical treatment there.

Continued on p.5

How to understand Wang Yi's citation from martial arts quotation in Munich

BEIJING – During a Friday session at the Munich Security Conference (MSC), Foreign Minister Wang Yi cited a quote from a popular martial arts novel to illustrate China's position in handling its ties with the United States.

Acknowledging the difficulty of translating the quote, Wang, also a member of the Political Bureau of the Communist Party of China (CPC) Central Committee, demonstrated his sense of humor by recommending that journalists seek assistance from DeepSeek, a Chinese AI model.

Below are two versions provided by DeepSeek:

"Let him be strong, the breeze still brushes the mountain ridge; let him be fierce, the moon still shines upon the great river."

"Let him be strong, the gentle wind still caresses the hill; let him be fierce, the bright moon still illuminates the river."

Despite the misuse of the word "strong" – the original Chinese word means "toughness" here, both translations largely preserve the core meaning of the quote, which is taken from a fictional martial arts manual of Jin Yong's martial arts universe.

It suggests that no matter how arrogant or aggressive one's opponent may be, one should remain calm and unwavering, treating the arrogance or aggressiveness with ease – like feeling the gentle breeze and enjoying the moonlight.

Regarding China-US relations, Wang said at the session that China is ready to build a stable, healthy

and sustainable relationship with the United States based on the three principles of mutual respect, peaceful coexistence and win-win cooperation, and to find the right way for the two major countries to get along, expressing hope that the United States will move in the same direction as China.

However, he said, if the United States is unwilling to do so and persists in suppressing and containing China, China will take the United States on till the end, firmly fight back the bullying, and resolutely defend China's sovereignty, national dignity and legitimate development rights.

Wang then used the famous quote to illustrate China's attitude in the face of the challenges in

China-US relations – no matter how arrogant or aggressive the United States might be, China will remain composed and resolute, not easily swayed or intimidated.

This is not the first time a Chinese saying cited by the Chinese top diplomat has sparked discussions about translation. In a phone call with US Secretary of State Marco Rubio last month, Wang told Rubio to "hao zi wei zhi," a Chinese set phrase commonly used to convey a message of warning.

International media outlets gave various translations for the phrase, including "conduct yourself well," "conduct yourself properly," and even "take good care of yourself."

It is a common practice for the Chinese foreign minister to invoke

traditional Chinese proverbs when discussing China-US relations. At last year's Munich Security Conference, for example, Wang quoted an ancient Chinese adage during his meeting with then US Secretary of State Antony Blinken.

The saying, "An act of kindness, no matter how trivial, is worth performing, while an act of evil, no matter how small, must be shunned," was first spoken by a dying Chinese emperor during the Three Kingdoms Period to warn his son, who was also his successor, at his bedside, and has been quoted for centuries to caution that plenty of small good deeds may add up to great deeds while multiple small evils can pile up to grave evils.

– Xinhua (Editorial on page 2)

Macau's most popular English-language newspaper – Your trustworthy source of news & views

The Macau Post Daily

Xi's congratulatory message to 38th AU summit draws warm responses

President Xi Jinping on Saturday sent a message to the 38th African Union (AU) Summit, extending warm congratulations to African countries and people.

– Story on p. 7

Austria calls stabbing that killed teen 'Islamist attack'

A stabbing that left a teenager dead and five other people injured in southern Austria was an "Islamist attack", the interior minister said yesterday, with a 23-year-old Syrian asylum seeker held. – Story on p. 11

Angolan president takes over AU chairmanship

Angolan President João Lourenço on Saturday took over the rotating African Union (AU) chairmanship at the opening of the 38th Ordinary Session of the AU Assembly of the Heads of State and Government in Addis Ababa, the capital of Ethiopia. – Story on p. 12

Wang Yi offers MSC pragmatic, erudite advice



Wang Yi, one of the world's most experienced foreign ministers, gave last week's Munich Security Conference (MSC) a healthy dose of pragmatic and erudite advice on how to handle international relations.

And, incidentally, he also promoted China's brand-new DeepSeek chatbot, which was released to the amazement of the whole world just about a month ago to much acclaim. Of course, I am already its regular user, alongside Quora's Poe chatbot which, no surprise, includes DeepSeek.

DeepSeek is another sign that China has reached the top development level of artificial intelligence (AI) alongside the United States and, unsurprisingly, lightyears ahead of the European Union (EU) which, instead of developing its own AI industry, seems to be focused on criticising, monitoring and regulating AI providers from outside the 27-nation bloc. Well, the point is that the EU is run by bureaucrats who, and that's a global phenomenon, love to over-regulate existing industries rather than to create new ones – the former is easier than the latter. The problem is that it stymies technological progress.

After his speech on Saturday at the 61st MSC, in an on-stage conversation with German diplomat Christoph Heusgen, who chairs the MSC, Wang quoted two Chinese proverbs that he admitted were difficult to translate into other languages. With a twinkle in his eyes, Wang suggested that the international audience turn to DeepSeek to check it out.

2 quotes

Aiming to illustrate China's determination to defend its national sovereignty and development rights, Wang quoted a phrase from the ancient classic Book of Changes (I Ching) which was published in the late 9th century BCE. According to DeepSeek, the phrase means "As Heaven moves with vigour and strength, the noble person strives tirelessly to strengthen themselves".

An alternative translation is provided by the Pekingology website*: "As Heaven maintains its vigour through movement, a man of virtue constantly strives for self-perfection." Essentially, the phrase urges all of us to emulate the ceaseless and vigorous movement of Heaven by continuously improving ourselves and cultivating virtue.

And Wang, known for his erudition, also quoted late Hong Kong journalist, publisher and writer Louis Cha Leung-yung (1924-2018), widely known by his pen name Jin Yong, who advised humanity in his seminal "The Heaven Sword and Dragon Sabre", which was published in the early 1960s, to remain unperturbed in the face of external challenges, much like the gentle breeze or the bright moon, resonating with the Daoist concept of "wu wei", i.e., effortless action, and the Buddhist concept of equanimity. Alternatively, the phrase has been translated by the Pekingology website as "Let the strong do as they will; we remain as unperturbed as the gentle breeze caresses the hills. Let the fears act as they may; we maintain our poise as the bright moon illuminates the river."

I had the pleasure to meet Louis Cha, then still a co-publisher of Hong Kong's respected *Ming Pao* daily, at a media forum in Hong Kong in the late 1980s. As a then still relatively young journalist I was impressed by his outstanding demeanour combining humbleness and sagacity.

In his keynote speech**, headlined "A Steadfast Constructive Force in a Changing World" in the Bavarian capital, Wang reaffirmed that a multipolar world is not only a historical inevitability but it is also becoming a reality. He said China's answer to the world's "increasing mix of turbulence and transformation" is that "we should work for an equal and orderly multipolar world". He underlined that "this is another major proposition put forward by President Xi Jinping, and it represents our sincere expectation for a multipolar world.

"China will surely be a factor of certainty in this multipolar system, and strive to be a steadfast constructive force in a changing world."

4 points

Wang raised four realistic and pragmatic (that's music to my ears) points to tackle the increasingly turbulent state of international relations: 1) Advocating equal treatment among the world's 193 UN member states; "equal rights, equal opportunities and equal rules should become the basic principles of a multipolar world." 2) Respecting the international rule of law. "As an old Chinese saying goes, circles and squares cannot be drawn without compasses and rules, which means nothing can be accomplished without following norms and standard," Wang stressed, adding that "without norms and standards, one may be at the table yesterday but end up on the menu tomorrow". 3) Practising multilateralism; Wang stressed that "in the face of emerging global challenges, no country can stay unaffected and the 'we first' approach in international relations only leads to a lose-lose result." 4) Pursuing openness and mutual benefit. "Protectionism offers no way out, and arbitrary tariffs produce no winners. Decoupling deprives one of opportunities, and a 'small yard with high fences' only ends up constraining oneself". Let's hope that Donald Trump, Ursula von der Leyen et al. in Washington, Brussels and elsewhere take note.

At the conclusion of his speech, Wang also reaffirmed China long-held stance that China and the EU are partners, not rivals, reminding his audience of politicians, diplomats and scholars that this year marks the 50th anniversary of China-EU diplomatic relations.

It is my hope, as an EU citizen in Macau-China, that political, economic, scientific and cultural relations between China and the EU will further develop, benefiting both equally. Mutual benefits are what drives a partnership to be sustainable in the long term.

Feeling the chills

In his post-speech conversation with Ambassador Heusgen, Wang pointed out, quite diplomatically, without mentioning the obvious culprit, that "now there is a country that is withdrawing from international treaties and organisations, and I think in Europe you can feel the chills every day."

The chills worsened virtually by the minute during US Vice-President JD Vance's speech at the conference in which he lambasted European politicians for their perceived shortcomings such as on the migration front, telling them that the biggest threat to their security was "from within", rather than from foreign countries.

European politicians attending the conference were visibly taken aback by Vance's blistering speech, indicating a growing rift between the Trump administration and western Europe which has been in an

underling-like relationship with the US for over seven decades. Perhaps, but only perhaps, Trump's attitude towards the "Old Continent" will finally shake up European leaders to get their act together by finally cutting their politico-military umbilical cord with Washington.

Instead of merely expressing their fury that Trump, obviously, is intent on keeping them out of peace talks with Russia over the Ukraine conflict, EU politicians should ask themselves why, for the past three years, they have failed to come up with their own peace initiative, unlike the "Friends of Peace" group launched by China and Brazil at the United Nations in New York last September in response to the Ukraine crisis. Now EU politicians are in a tight spot, apart from the fact that they could have avoided the Ukraine crisis long ago by refraining from NATO's eastern expansion which, launched a quarter of a century ago, blithely ignored the Russian Federation's legitimate security interests. That's how it all started.

In his post-speech conversation, Wang also said that safeguarding the UN-centred international system by observing the basic norms governing international relations, based on the purposes and principles of the UN Charter, "is the biggest common denominator" to avoid double standards in international relations. He also stressed the importance of President Xi's vision of building a community with a shared future for humanity. "It is a very grand vision, and we hope to see that all countries will rise above the differences in history, culture, systems, and ideologies and work in solidarity to protect this planet," Wang said, adding that "this is a reflection of the international vision of the Communist Party of China [and] it is also a reflection of the fine traditional Chinese culture of thinking for the greater good."

Concerning the China-Russia relationship, Wang said it continued to be based on the principles of "no alliance, no confrontation, no targeting any third country, [and] based on our mutual trust, we build a comprehensive strategic partnership."

Pragmatically, Wang also said that China could not stop buying gas from Russia, as demanded by the West in the wake of the Ukraine conflict, for a simple reason, "Which country can provide so much gas as to meet the needs of the Chinese people? It's not possible, and it's not safe because you know some countries tend to politicise economic and trade issues and treat them as a tool to suppress China. We cannot let that happen. We must be responsible to our people."

Regarding China-US ties, Wang said that China's policy towards Washington "is consistent and stable," based on the three principles

put forward by President Xi: mutual respect, peaceful coexistence, and win-win cooperation... the right approach is to respect each other." Asked about the state of China-US ties, the world's most important bilateral relationship by a long chalk, Wang quoted the two literary phrases mentioned at the beginning of my editorial – and he added that "no matter which way the wind blows – north, south, east, or west – we will remain calm and unshakable."

Despite all the difficulties that China-US ties are currently facing, Wang said that "all in all, we are fully confident about the prospects of the world and we are fully confident about the future of China-US relations."

Common sense is, in my view, the best way for both countries get their relationship back on track. The crux of the problem is, of course, that common sense among in politics is not that common as one would expect, at least periodically (well, there is always, according to German Marxist philosopher Ernst Bloch (1885-1977), the principle of hope....

On the margins of the two-day conference, Wang met in a diplomatic marathon with a multitude of senior politicians from a wide range of countries to discuss bilateral and international matters, including EU foreign affairs and security commissioner Kaja Kallas, German Chancellor Olaf Scholz, who vowed to strengthen exchanges and cooperation with China; Friedrich Merz, who is widely forecast to become Germany's next chancellor after Sunday's general election; Argentine Foreign Minister Gerardo Wertheim, who thanked China for supporting his country in safeguarding its sovereignty over the Malvinas Islands; NATO Secretary-General Mark Rutte (Wang urged the military alliance dominated by the US to pursue a "positive and responsible" policy towards China); Israeli Foreign Minister Gideon Sa'ar (Wang said that China expects the Gaza ceasefire agreement to be effectively implemented); Ukrainian Foreign Minister Andrii Sybiha (Wang said that China expects a fair, lasting and binding peace agreement for the Ukraine crisis and pointed out that China has been Ukraine's top trading partner in recent years); and French Foreign Minister Jean-Noel Barrot, who also promised to strengthen ties with China, among many others.

Another tour de force both physically and mentally. For that alone, Wang deserves our admiration.

– Harald Brüning

*Transcript by Wang Zichen; <https://www.pekingology.com/p/wang-yi-at-munich-security-conference>

** https://www.fmprc.gov.cn/eng/xw/zjyh/202502/t20250215_11555665.html

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MACAU POST

Macau Weather

FINE APART FROM CLOUDY PERIODS.
FORCE 3 TO 4 EAST TO NORTHEASTERLY WINDS, OCCASIONALLY FORCE 5 WITH GUSTS.
RELATIVE HUMIDITY WILL RANGE BETWEEN 50% AND 90%.



16°C~23°C

Source: SMG

Cultural activities reach out in neighbourhoods



Secretary for Social Affairs and Culture Wallis O Lam (standing behind, third from right), accompanied by IC President Deland Leong Wai Man (standing behind, second from right) and Macau Government Tourism Office (MGTO) Director Maria Helena de Senna Fernandes (standing behind, fourth from right) enjoy yesterday's storytelling during their visit to Praça das Orquídeas.



Parents and their kids listen to a music performance and attend a storytelling session at the Cultural Affairs Bureau's (IC) "Culture on Your Doorstep" flash mob in Praça das Orquídeas in Fai Chi Kei district yesterday. - Photos: Yuki Lei

Yuki Lei

The Cultural Affairs Bureau (IC) hosted its "Culture on Your Doorstep" flash mobs at 14 local neighbourhoods over the weekend – and two parents told reporters yesterday in Praça das Orquídeas (蘭花前地) in Fai Chi Kei district they hope that the bureau could organise more similar cultural activities outdoors in the community, while IC President Deland Leong Wai Man remarked that the results of the event had exceeded all expectations, with the number of participants for just half a day's event already surpassing the initial estimate of about 10,000 for the two days, adding that the future planning of related activities would be gradually carried out after a review of the recently concluded event.

Centred on the two themes of "Read in More Places" and "Music in More Places", the bureau's first

"Culture on Your Doorstep" event was held from 10 a.m. to noon and from 3 p.m. to 5 p.m. at 14 community venues in the Macau peninsula, Taipa and Coloane on Saturday and Sunday. Amongst them, under the theme of "Read in More Places", the bureau said in a statement, the community spaces were transformed into storytelling corners aimed at cultivating children's reading habits and fostering parent-child relationships through storytelling, singing and interactive games, while under the theme of "Music in More Places", the Macao Orchestra, Macao Chinese Orchestra and the bureau's Macao Conservatory performed in the community, allowing residents to experience the passion and vibrancy of music up close.

Secretary for Social Affairs and Culture Wallis O Lam, accompanied by Leong and Macau Government Tourism Office (MGTO) Director



Cultural Affairs Bureau (IC) President Deland Leong Wai Man speaks to reporters on the sidelines of yesterday's visit to Praça das Orquídeas.

Maria Helena de Senna Fernandes, visited the Praça das Orquídeas ("Orchid Square") sitting-out area at 4 p.m. yesterday, where they enjoyed music performances and storytelling with the residents.

Speaking to the media on the sidelines of her visit yesterday afternoon, Leong said she believed that the number of participants in the two-day event would reach 15,000, adding that different to the past practice of organising activities in large community spaces, the 16 sessions of music and reading cultural flash mobs held in 14 locations over two consecutive days aimed to bring culture directly to residents' doorsteps through a wider range of activities to engage them at their leisure.

Leong said: "The feedback we have received from the public so far has been positive", pointing out that organising activities in the community is the bureau's goal for this year, adding: "We hope that similar 'Culture on Your Doorstep' events will continue", with future activities possibly varying in content, "or incorporating intangible cultural heritage and drama performances".

Depending on the effectiveness of the event over this past weekend, relevant planning will be carried out gradually in the future, according to Leong.

The event attracted a lot of parents and their children to participate, participants described the scene as "very lively". A resident, surnamed Lam, told reporters the event was "quite wonderful" but also "rare", saying that the community activities allowed both children and adults to have different experiences, as in the past cultural activities were seldom held outdoors in the community, primarily taking place in libraries and other large-scale indoor venues.

Another resident, surnamed Wong, said she hoped that the bureau would step up its efforts in promoting and sustaining community activities in the local neighbourhoods, instead of confining them to a specific area such as a large-scale venue. ■

E-Channels at Macau checkpoint open for Brazilian & German passport holders

Yuki Lei

With effect from today, Brazilian and German passport holders aged above 10 can access the e-Channel service at local checkpoints upon successful registration, according to an announcement by the Public Security Police (PSP) on Friday.

The measure was launched to align with the local government's policy of attracting more international resources and creating a key platform for exchanges and mutual understanding between Chinese and Western civilizations, in accordance with President Xi Jinping's directive for the special administrative region (SAR) government to strive to build a platform for higher-level opening up to the outside world, Friday's statement noted.

Registration for e-Channel

services is available daily from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. at the Barrier Gate, Qingmao, Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macau Bridge, Outer Harbour Ferry Terminal, Taipa Ferry Terminal, Macau International Airport and the Macau side of Macau-Hengqin joint checkpoint, as well as from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. on working days at the PSP Immigration Building in Pac On.

In the statement, the Public Security Police remind all potential registrants to bring along their passports – which must be valid for no less than 90 days – for their registration, while those aged 11 to 17 must be accompanied by a parent or guardian, who should bring the minor's original birth certificate and their own identification document, or proof of legal relationship if accompanied by a guardian.

From today, nationals from six foreign countries can use Macau's e-Channels for immigration clearance, apart from Brazil and Germany also Australia, South Korea, Portugal, and Singapore

The statement underlined that Public Security Police will, by upholding the concept of "people-orientated, reform and innovation, technology-enabled and continuous enhancement", develop quality immigration services and measures to enhance inspection efficiency and facilitate border crossings, with a view to fostering people-to-people exchanges between China and the rest of the world, and contributing to the high-quality development of Hong Kong and Macau, as well as elsewhere in the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macau Greater Bay Area (GBA). ■



This undated pixilated handout photo provided by the Public Security Police (PSP) on Friday shows passengers at the airport's digitalised immigration checkpoint.

ABOUT The Young Post

The Macau Post Daily's The Young Post will be published every Monday to present and discuss topical issues that may interest not only the younger but also all the other generations.

YOUNG ARTIST EDITION



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13-year-old Lam Ieng San showcases works at 10 Fantasia Gallery

Rui Pastorin

A 13-year-old local artist and secondary school student named Lam Ieng San is showcasing his love for art through a variety of watercolours themed on China's 24 solar terms* (二十四節氣) in an exhibition presented at the 10 Fantasia gallery's room B05 on Calçada da Igreja de S. Lázaro (瘋堂斜巷).

On until February 28 and comprising 15 works, the free-admission exhibition is entitled "Chinese twenty-four solar terms - Art Exhibition by Lam Ieng San". While visiting, exhibitiongoers will find works themed on the different points of the 24 periods such as Rain Water (雨水), which indicates increased rainfall, the Winter Solstice (冬至) and Start of Autumn (立秋), along with things that might be associated with those periods.

A statement displayed at the gallery notes that the young artist has had a passion for painting from an early age, especially on culture-related themes. Through the exhibition, the statement said, it is hoped that visitors can gain a deeper understanding of each solar term's characteristics, seasonal changes and folk activities.

Lam is in his second year of secondary school at Instituto Salesiano** (慈幼中學), according to the organiser of the exhibition. The statement added that he has learnt sketching, traditional Chinese painting, anime, which is a style of Japanese television and film creation, and watercolour

online, having a preference for watercolour and anime creation.

The statement added that the young artist has taken part in contests and won various awards, and has also designed on-campus murals.

One can visit the gallery from Tuesday to Sundays from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m.

*The 24 solar terms, known as "二十四節氣" in Chinese, are a traditional Chinese calendar system that divides the year into 24 periods based on the position of the sun. They reflect changes in climate, natural phenomena, and agricultural activities.

-Source: Poe

**According to Wikipedia, the Catholic school is one of the oldest educational institutions founded in Macau.



題目：立春
媒介：水彩
尺寸：270 x 380 mm
創作年份：2024



題目：大暑
媒介：水彩
尺寸：270 x 380 mm
創作年份：2024

題目：冬至
媒介：水彩
尺寸：270 x 380 mm
創作年份：2024

題目：清明
媒介：水彩
尺寸：270 x 380 mm
創作年份：2024

題目：白露
媒介：水彩
尺寸：270 x 380 mm
創作年份：2024

Taichung gas blast victims include 2 Macau police officers, 1 Hotel Fortuna staff

Continued from p.1

Girl remains in coma, not recommended to return Macau

As reported on Friday, the girl, who then was in a coma, remained in the hospital's intensive care unit (ICU) with stable vital signs after craniotomy surgery. However, due to severe brain damage, swelling, and a lack of oxygen and blood, doctors recommended that she, at least for the time being, does not return to Macau for treatment as "the following week will be critical". The girl was, as reported yesterday, still receiving treatment that includes medication and temperature control.

In the accident, according to multiple media reports, the girl's 85-year-old great-grandmother and 24-year-old uncle sustained multiple injuries, while her parents suffered contusions. The uncle, who suffered fractures in his face and hands, has undergone surgery and was reportedly stable on Friday, while the great-grandmother sustained fractures to her left rib and arms.

MGTO to assist in returning remains

Macau's tourism crisis

assistance team arrived in Taichung in conjunction with the Macau Red Cross on Thursday night for full assistance to the victims. MGTO said in a statement on Saturday that two of the three hospitalised victims had completed surgery and were in stable condition, while the other – the two-year-old girl – was still in the ICU, noting that the MGTO crisis team and the Red Cross were assisting the family in arranging the transport of the two victims' remains back to Macau.

According to the statement, staff members of the insurance company concerned in Macau have arrived in Taichung to assist the family in following up on the claim.

Shin Kong Mitsukoshi Store Manager Wendy Tsao Mei-hong said at a press conference on Saturday that the group would provide each family of the deceased with NT\$11 million (2.68 million patacas) in compensation, including consolation money and insurance claims.

The explosion remains under investigation, and the results are expected to be released within a month at the earliest, according to several media reports. ■

'Tribute to Brahms' concert series to take place in March

Rui Pastorin

The "Tribute to Brahms" concert series is slated to take place next month at the Macau Cultural Centre (CCM), featuring five concerts by the Macao Orchestra (OM) and international musicians over two consecutive weekends.

The five shows are part of Macao Orchestra's 2024-2025 concert season.

According to a Thursday statement by the Cultural Affairs Bureau (IC), next month's concert series, which is a tribute to German composer, virtuoso pianist and conductor Johannes Brahms (1833-1897), comprises "Night of Grand Premiere", "Romantic Pastoral", "Free Flow Chamber Music Sunday", "Niu Niu's Concerto No.1" and "the Great Music Scores". The concerts will take place on March 7, 8, 9, 14 and 15 respectively.

Brahm's representative works will be performed during the concerts, among which are "Symphony No. 1 in C minor" during the "Night of Grand Premiere", "Symphony No. 2 in D major" on "Romantic Pastoral", and "Piano Concerto No. 1 in D



This undated handout photo provided by the Macau Cultural Affairs Bureau (IC) shows the Macao Orchestra (OM) posing.

minor" on "Niu Niu's Concerto No.1", the statement noted.

The concerts, the statement said, include performances by international musicians - Moldovan violinist Alexandra Conunova, Spanish cellist Pablo Ferrández, Czech violinist Josef Špaček, China's pianist Zhang Shengliang ("Niu Niu") and Russian pianist Alexei Volodin.

The statement added that Music Director and Principal Conductor

of the Macao Orchestra Lio Kuokman will be conducting the "Night of Grand Premiere" and "Romantic Pastoral", while "Niu Niu's Concerto No. 1" and "The Great Music Scores" will be under the baton of Austrian conductor Christian Arming.

Ticketing and more programme details, including the dates of when the international musicians will be performing with the orchestra, can be found on www.macauticket.com. ■

Police nab local man for stealing cash from tip & donation boxes

Ginnie Liang

A 50-year-old local man was arrested on February 7 for stealing 500 patacas in cash from a restaurant and a beverage shop in Praia do Manduco district, a Public Security Police (PSP) officer said in a regular press conference on Friday.

The suspect surnamed Lin told police that he is jobless, the spokesperson said.

PSP officers received a report on February 1 at about 8 p.m. from the owner of a restaurant in Manduco, who said that 100 patacas in cash had disappeared from an unlocked tip box on the cash desk, the spokesperson said.

After checking the surveillance system of the restaurant, it was found that at around 6 p.m. on February 1, a man had entered the premises to buy a takeaway and took the opportunity to steal the money from the tip box,

the spokesperson said, adding that the owner of the eatery reported a loss of 100 patacas.

During the investigation, the PSP officers received another report from a staff member of a beverage shop in the same district on February 3, saying that a staff member went to the toilet without locking the front door at around 11 a.m. on that day, and then found that a donation box placed by Anima for animal protection donations had been stolen from the cash desk, which had contained 400 patacas in total, the spokesperson said.

PSP officers identified Lin through the citywide CCTV surveillance system and intercepted him near where he lives in Nam Van district on February 7 at 8 a.m., the spokesperson said.

Lin admitted that he had committed the two thefts out of



This handout photo provided by the Public Security Police (PSP) on Friday shows the theft suspect being escorted by a PSP officer to a police station in Nam Van district.

greed, and that he had spent the loot, the spokesperson said.

Lin has been transferred to the Public Prosecutions Office (MP), facing a theft charge, according to the spokesperson. ■

Woman arrested for smuggling 'space oil' from Macau to HK

Ginnie Liang

Hong Kong Customs arrested a 28-year-old woman for smuggling drugs from Macau on Saturday, seizing a vape stick containing suspected "space oil", according to a statement from the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) government on Friday.

The statement pointed out that the main ingredient of "space oil" is etomidate*, which is under the Dangerous Drug Ordinance in Hong Kong, adding that the case is the first ever detected by HK Customs since the inclusion of etomidate into the ordinance on February 14.

The woman was arrested when entering Hong Kong through the Hong Kong-Macau Ferry Terminal in Sheung Wan, the statement said, adding that she told the HK customs officers that she is jobless, and has been released on her own recognizance pending further investigation.

Under the Dangerous Drug Ordinance, trafficking in a dangerous drug is a serious offence, the statement said, adding that the maximum penalty upon conviction is a fine of HK\$5 million and life imprisonment.

According to the Hong Kong Security Bureau Narcotics Division, the "space oil" can cause

serious physical and mental harm, including addiction, memory loss, seizure, unconsciousness, and even death.

*According to the Wikipedia, etomidate is a short-acting intravenous anaesthetic agent used for the induction of general anaesthesia and sedation for short procedures such as reduction of dislocated joints, tracheal intubation, cardioversion and electroconvulsive therapy. ■



A vape stick containing "space oil" seized at the ferry terminal in Sheung Wan on Hong Kong Island from a ferry passenger arriving from Macau on Saturday is pictured in this handout photo released by the Hong Kong authorities over the weekend.

One more critical flu case: 64-year-old man

Ginnie Liang

The Health Bureau (SSM) announced in a statement on Saturday that one more critical case of influenza was reported on Friday, a 64-year-old local man inflicted with various chronic diseases.

According to Saturday's statement, the 64-year-old man developed coughing, vomiting and shortness of breath on February 7. He went to a health centre for medical treatment, but his symptoms kept worsening, and he was taken to the public Conde de São Januário Hospital Centre on Friday after coming down

with dyspnoea (shortness of breath), where he tested positive for the influenza A virus in his respiratory specimen, the statement said.

In addition, the statement said, a chest X-ray at the public hospital centre also showed that he was suffering from pneumonia, because of which he also suffered from respiratory failure, and he was put on a ventilator, the statement said, adding that he was in a critical condition by the time the statement was released on Saturday.

The statement said that the patient has had the latest seasonal

influenza jab and his family members did not have any symptoms.

According to the bureau, the influenza virus in Macau is now active, exceeding the alert level and has entered its peak. Residents are urged to pay more attention to the threat, the statement said, adding that residents who have not been vaccinated, especially pregnant women, young children, the elderly and the chronically ill, are more prone to serious complications or even death after being infected with the influenza virus and should get their flu jab as soon as possible. ■

Sam visits HK, vows joint promotion of GBA high-quality development

Tony Wong

Chief Executive Sam Hou Fai visited Hong Kong on Friday where he met with his counterpart John Lee Ka-chiu to exchange views on both sides jointly promoting the high-quality development of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macau Greater Bay Area (GBA) and better serving the nation's overall development, the Macau Government Information Bureau (GCS) announced in a statement that day.

During their meeting at Government House in Hong Kong, according to the statement, Sam and Lee also exchanged views on deepening industrial cooperation in various fields such as science and technology innovation, finance, traditional Chinese medicine (TCM), tourism, culture and sports, MICE (meetings, incentives, conferences and exhibitions), and commerce.

In his meeting with Lee, the statement said, Sam expressed his gratitude to Hong Kong for its long-term support to Macau's development, noting that Hong Kong and Macau are both special administrative regions of the nation, implementing the "One Country, Two Systems" principle, which has given both cities significant institutional advantages, Sam said.

Despite their different development positioning and focuses, Hong Kong and Macau complement each other strongly, Sam said, adding that further strengthening cooperation between both sides, based on the existing solid foundation, will lead to greater development for both special administrative regions.

According to the statement,



Chief Executive Sam Hou Fai (left) shakes hands with his Hong Kong counterpart John Lee Ka-chiu at Government House in Hong Kong on Friday. — Photo: GCS

Sam said during the meeting that the various important speeches and instructions made by President Xi Jinping during his inspection visit to Macau in December last year, including his hopes for Macau to promote appropriate economic diversification and to build itself into a platform for higher-standard opening up, has injected new impetus into Hong Kong-Macau cooperation.

Consequently, Sam said, both cities should, by aligning themselves with the nation's overall development strategy while seizing the opportunities created by the GBA development, continuously enhance cooperation to achieve mutual benefits and win-win outcomes, ultimately improving people's well-being in Hong Kong and Macau.

Moreover, the statement said, the

two chief executives also exchanged views on continuously advancing judicial assistance between the two special administrative regions.

HK govt's statement

Meanwhile, according to a statement by the Hong Kong government on Friday, Lee noted during his meeting with Sam that both Hong Kong and Macau are special administrative regions of the nation, enjoying unique advantages brought about by the implementation of the "One Country, Two Systems" principle, adding that the two cities "are as close as brothers", with frequent people-to-people and cultural exchanges, alongside solid economic and trade relations.

According to the statement, Lee noted that the "One Country, Two Systems" principle is a good policy for maintaining the long-

term prosperity and stability of Hong Kong and Macau, pledging that Hong Kong will continue to firmly uphold the principle of "One Country" and leverage the benefits of "Two Systems" with Macau.

Lee also noted that Hong Kong and Macau, both of which are core cities of the GBA, can achieve complementarity, and jointly participate in and promote the GBA development, enabling the people of both cities to share the fruits of economic development.

According to the statement, Lee said that Hong Kong and Macau have been working closely in fields such as economy, cross-border infrastructure, tourism and culture. The Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macau Bridge (HZMB) has remarkably shortened the distance between Hong Kong and Macau, promoting closer communication and connections between the two cities, Lee said, underlining that the Hong Kong government has long provided dedicated support to the HZMB cross-border transport arrangements and measures with the aim of maximising the bridge's economic and transport benefits.

Moreover, Lee said, the "Mutual Use of QR Code between HKSAR and Macao SAR Clearance Service", jointly launched by the Hong Kong and Macau governments in July last year, has provided a faster and more convenient immigration experience for residents of both cities, further facilitating their exchanges.

The statement also said that in terms of promoting tourism, Lee said that Hong Kong will work together with Macau to expand the

market of twin-destination tourism of the two cities. Hong Kong will collaborate with other cities in the GBA, including Macau, to establish a regional and international tourism brand.

Members of Sam's delegation to visit Hong Kong on Friday included Secretary for Administration and Justice André Cheong Weng Chon, Secretary for Economy and Finance Anton Tai Kin Ip, Secretary for Transport and Public Works Raymond Tam Vai Man, Sam's chief-of-cabinet Chan Kak, Policy Research and Regional Development Bureau (DSEPDR) Director Cheong Chok Man.

Hong Kong officials who attended Lee's meeting with Sam comprised Chief Secretary for Administration Eric Chan Kwok-ki, Financial Secretary Paul Chan Mo-po, Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs Erick Tsang Kwok-wai, Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry Sun Dong, Secretary for Transport and Logistics Mable Chan, Secretary for Culture, Sports and Tourism Rosanna Law Shuk-pui, and Lee's chief-of-cabinet Carol Yip Man-kuen.

The GCS statement said that before meeting with Lee, Sam and members of his delegation visited the Hong Kong Science Park and the Hong Kong Palace Museum with the aim of gaining a better understanding of Hong Kong's innovation and technology development as well as the achievements in its cultural and heritage cooperation with the mainland. ■

Macau can contribute to nation becoming leading country in education: vice-minister

Tony Wong

Wu Yan, a vice-minister of the Ministry of Education, paid a three-day visit to Macau last week where he gave a presentation about the Master Plan on Building China into a Leading Country in Education (2024-2035) on Friday, saying that Macau can contribute its specific strengths to the building of a leading country in education, according to a statement by the Education and Youth Development Bureau (DSEDJ) that day.

The master plan has been jointly issued by the Communist Party of China (CPC) Central Committee and the State Council, aiming to build a strong education system by 2035 to support the country's modernisation drive and national rejuvenation.

Friday's DSEDJ statement noted that the master plan sets out a comprehensive and systematic roadmap for accelerating efforts to achieve the goal of building the nation into a leading country in education by 2035.

The statement said that at the

invitation of the Macau Special Administrative Region (MSAR) government, a delegation jointly organised by the Hong Kong and Macao Work Office (HKMWO) of the CPC Central Committee and the State Council's Hong Kong and Macao Affairs Office (HKMAO), and the Ministry of Education (MOE) visited Macau where the presentation session was held at the Services Platform Complex for Commercial and Trade Cooperation between China and Portuguese-speaking Countries (aka Forum Macao Complex) on Friday.

The statement said that the session aimed to enable members from various segments of Macau's civil society to gain a better understanding of the master plan.

According to the statement, about 400 attended the presentation session, including officials from the central government and the local government, representatives from the city's education sector and those from various other sectors.

During the session, the



Vice Education Minister Wu Yan delivers a presentation about the Master Plan on Building China into a Leading Country in Education (2024-2035) at the Forum Macao Complex on Friday. — Photo: DSEDJ

statement said, Wu presented key points of the master plan as well as President Xi Jinping's important speech made at the National Education Conference in Beijing last year, with an analysis of the accelerated evolution of current global transformation on a scale unseen in a century and the

profound changes in the country's internal and external education landscapes, in order to provide a comprehensive explication and a systematic interpretation focused on three aspects: the strength, the goal and the task of building a world leading country in education.

According to the statement,

Wu pointed out that Macau needs to closely align with national development strategies and speed up its integration into the nation's overall development, especially by fully leveraging the unique advantages of the Guangdong-Macau In-Depth Cooperation Zone in Hengqin, and deeply integrating itself into the development of an international innovation and technology hub in the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macau Greater Bay Area, the building of comprehensive national science centres and the establishment of a high-calibre talent hub.

Wu reminded the audience to carry forward the core values of the Chinese nation and to boost inclusiveness and harmony, and noted that it was essential that they live by the core values of loving the country and Macau, enhance exchanges and integration of diverse cultures, and muster all positive forces, in order to jointly contribute their "Macau strength" to the building of a leading country in education. ■

Xi's congratulatory message to 38th AU summit draws warm responses

NAIROBI – President Xi Jinping on Saturday sent a message to the 38th African Union (AU) Summit, extending warm congratulations to African countries and people.

Experts from African countries noted that the message highlights China's unwavering commitment to China-Africa relations and its steadfast support for Africa's independence, self-reliance and development.

They said that China-Africa relations will continue to serve as a model of South-South cooperation, as the two sides work together on the path to modernization.

STRONGER GLOBAL SOUTH COOPERATION

In his congratulatory message, Xi noted that over the past year, the AU has united and led African countries in vigorously advancing integration, actively responding to regional and global challenges and speaking in unison as the "voice of Africa."

Noting that these efforts have led to a continuous boost in Africa's international status and influence, he sincerely wished African countries and people even greater success on their path to independence, self-reliance and development.

Lerato D. Mataboge, the newly elected AU Commissioner for Infrastructure and Energy, could hardly contain her excitement during an interview.

"We're quite honored to receive the congratulatory message from President Xi. We all are quite proud of the China-Africa relationship over the years and the partnership in development," Mataboge said.

"President Xi's congratulatory message on the 'Global South' is truly inspiring," Ibrahim Gambari, a former Nigerian foreign minister, said after attending the opening ceremony of the AU summit.

Gambari, who has made many trips to China, highlighted China's role in strengthening the Global South's influence, especially within the frameworks of the G20 and BRICS.

"China was the first major country to openly support the AU's entry into the G20, which ensures Africa's voice is heard on the global stage," he said.

The 2025 AU summit, with the theme of "Justice for Africans and People of African Descent Through Reparations," reflects Africa's pursuit of strategic autonomy and self-determined development.

Benjamin Mgana, chief editor of foreign news at *The Guardian* newspaper in Tanzania, said global governance structures have long been dominated by developed nations, often sidelining the interests of the Global South.

By strengthening strategic partnerships with China and other emerging economies, Global South nations, including African countries, can navigate external pressures while pursuing self-reliant growth and sustainable modernization, he said.

"There is no doubt that China has become the biggest champion of pragmatic multilateralism, coming up with proposals that have significantly transformed the world economy," said Adhere Cavince, a Kenyan scholar on international relations.

China-proposed initiatives, including the Belt and Road Initiative, the Global Development Initiative and the Global Security Initiative, are designed to ensure that all nations share the benefits of peace and development, Cavince said.

He noted that these efforts are particularly valuable for Global South nations, helping advance sustainable development, maintain regional stability and promote intercultural exchanges.

SUCCESSFUL PLATFORMS, ALL-WEATHER FRIENDS

In his message, Xi said that the year 2024 saw a vigorous development of China-Africa relations.

With the successful Beijing Summit of the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC), China and Africa have embarked on a new stage of jointly building an all-weather community with a shared future for the new era, and stayed at the forefront of building a community with a shared future for humankind, Xi noted.

Xi's message not only affirms the joint efforts of the two sides in the past but also expresses hope for brighter prospects regarding China-Africa relations, said Marius Kudumo, a Namibian public policy analyst

and international relations expert.

China has made immense contributions to Africa's industrialization, agricultural modernization and talent cultivation as a major partner of the continent over the past years, he said.

The message also resonated with Mathias Eric Owona Nguini, vice-rector of the University of Yaounde in Cameroon. He said that the FOCAC, which was established in 2000, marked a new phase of practical and friendly cooperation between China and Africa.

The FOCAC has developed into an effective mechanism for China-Africa cooperation, and it has made remarkable gains in boosting mutual political trust and practical cooperation, benefiting the peoples of both sides, Nguini said.

Roger Agana, managing director of News Ghana, said the all-weather China-Africa community with a shared future for the new era exemplifies the fraternal bond between China and Africa.

"China and Africa have been all-weather friends, that is to say, the two sides will always support and trust each other regardless of the chaos and vicissitudes; this brotherhood is unbreakable," he said.

Dennis Munene Mwaniki, executive director of the China-Africa Center at Kenya's Africa Policy Institute, said that the concept of an all-weather community with a shared future for the new era reflects the deepening and multifaceted partnership between China and Africa.

"It emphasizes a long-term, resilient and mutually beneficial relationship that transcends political and economic changes. It is not just about economic gains but also about creating a model of South-South cooperation that promotes peace, development and prosperity for all," Mwaniki said.

NEW JOURNEY OF MODERNIZATION

In his congratulatory message, Xi expressed his readiness to work with African leaders to promote the implementation of the six proposals for jointly advancing modernization and 10 partnership actions, so as to bring more tangible results to benefit

over 2.8 billion Chinese and Africans.

"China has been quite a great contributor to infrastructure development on the African continent ... I'm looking forward to further exploring the type of collaborations that we can have with China," said Mataboge, the AU commissioner for infrastructure and energy.

The six proposals and 10 partnership actions provide a structured framework for addressing key development challenges in Africa, said Zan Bi Claude Evariste, a researcher and lecturer at the University of San Pedro in Cote d'Ivoire.

He suggested that to promote implementation, it is necessary to ensure the active participation of local governments, improve transparency, encourage the participation of the private sector, and establish a regular monitoring and evaluation mechanism.

China's zero-tariff treatment on 100 percent of tariff lines for least-developed countries with diplomatic ties reflects its sincerity in fostering development and achieving win-win outcomes, said James Arrey Abangma, a political science professor at the University of Buea in Cameroon.

The 10 partnership actions focus on the career development of African youth, help Africa cultivate a new generation of talents, and promote the long-term sustainable development of African countries, he said.

China-Africa ties focus on infrastructure development, industrialization and people-to-people connectivity, fostering long-term sustainable growth, said Mgana.

With the support of Chinese investment, Africa's industrialization and agricultural modernization will enhance job creation, economic resilience and self-sufficiency, Mgana said.

Emmanuel Yenshu Vubo, dean of the Faculty of Social and Management Sciences at the University of Buea in Cameroon, believed that sincerity, openness and mutual trust are the keys to China and Africa moving forward side by side.

President Xi's proposal to make sure "on the path to modernization, no one, and no country, should be left behind" has brought hope to the modernization of the Global South, he said.

– Xinhua

Chinese blockbuster 'Ne Zha 2' hits N American cinemas

LOS ANGELES – Chinese box office hit "Ne Zha 2" began to be screened on Friday in a limited theatrical release in North America.

The highly-anticipated film is being released by CMC Pictures in Mandarin with English subtitles in about 750 selected movie theaters in North American cities including Los Angeles, San Francisco, Houston, Chicago, New York, Boston, Atlanta, Toronto, Vancouver and a few other cities with a large overseas Chinese population.

The animated epic fantasy film's North American pre-sale box office alone has exceeded the opening weekend box office record in North America for any Chinese-language film in the past 20 years.

The animated film has captivated Chinese audiences with its exquisite animation production, grand visual imagination and rich cultural expression. After opening on January 29, the Chinese New Year, the film swiftly smashed box office records, becoming the highest-grossing film of all time in China.

The blockbuster became the first Chinese

film to gross 10 billion yuan (US\$1.39 billion) when its total global earnings, including presales, reached the mark on Thursday evening, according to data from ticketing platform Maoyan. It's also the first non-Hollywood film to cross the US\$1 billion benchmark.

"Ne Zha 2" is a sequel to the 2019 animated blockbuster "Ne Zha." Both films were inspired by China's 16th-century classic novel "The Investiture of the Gods."

The film has already sparked a wave of enthusiasm in North America with a high attendance rate in some cinemas, especially those in cities with big Chinese communities.

A lady, who gave her surname as Lai, told Xinhua that she was deeply moved by the film, crying and laughing while watching it.

"Compared with the century-old Hollywood, Chinese films started late but have made rapid progress in recent years," she said.

"Ne Zha 2" boasts a positive 8.3 out of 10 rating from over 2,800 users on the international review platform IMDb to date, with 60 percent of them giving the film a perfect 10. (More on p.15)

– Xinhua



People queue as a screen shows scenes from the animated film *Ne Zha 2* at a cinema to watch the blockbuster in Beijing yesterday.

– Xinhua