

Ho praises PLA on its 97th anniversary for its 'sacred mission' in Macau

William Chan

Chief Executive Ho Iat Seng yesterday praised the local garrison of the Chinese People's Liberation Army (PLA) for performing the "sacred mission of defending" the Macau Special Administrative Region (MSAR) since the latter's establishment on December 20, 1999.

Ho stressed that since the 18th National Congress of the Communist Party of China (CPC) in 2012, under the leadership of President Xi Jinping, the strategy of reforming and strengthening the military has been implemented in depth, marching towards the centenary goal of the founding of the PLA as scheduled, in order to usher in a new phase of politically built, reform-orientated, technologically advanced, talent-focused and law-based military development.

In his address at a reception held at the garrison's barracks in Taipa in celebration of the PLA's 97th anniversary, Ho said that he "would like to pay the highest respect to the glorious and great Chinese People's Liberation Army".

Ho, who returned to work on Tuesday after his first long leave following the COVID-19 pandemic, said that over the past 97 years, the PLA "has created a glorious history and



established everlasting achievements, which are always worth remembering and carrying forward."

Ho also pointed out that this year marks the 25th anniversary of establishment of the local PLA garrison.

PLA troops entered Macau on December 20, 1999, coinciding with the establishment of the MSAR.

Ho stressed that since the establishment of the local garrison, the PLA troops have strictly abided by the Macau Basic Law and "faithfully" implemented the "One Country, Two Systems" and

"Macau people governing Macau" principles, as well as the policy of Macau enjoying a high degree of autonomy.

Over the past 25 years, Ho said, the PLA troops stationed in Macau "have persistently carried forward the glorious traditions and excellent work ethics of the People's Liberation Army, maintained strict discipline, abided by law and regulations and continuously deepened communication and exchanges with Macau's civil society."

Ho also thanked the PLA garrison for "strongly supporting"

the local government's work. "With practical actions, the troops stationed in Macau have shown us the brilliant image of a powerful and cultured army earning the trust of the central government and the people across the nations, while being deeply respected and cherished by the local people."

The chief executive also expressed his "heartfelt gratitude to the PLA garrison for its crucial protection and vital safeguarding of the long-term prosperity and stability of Macau."

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◀ Chief Executive Ho Iat Seng (centre-right), National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC) Vice Chairman Edmund Ho Hau Wah (centre-left), Central People's Government Liaison Office in the MSAR Director Zheng Xincong (third from right), Foreign Ministry Commissioner in the MSAR Liu Xianfa (third from left), Legislative Assembly (AL) President Kou Hoi In (second from right), Court of Final Appeal (TUI) President Sam Hou Fai (second from left), People's Liberation Army (PLA) Macau Garrison Commander Yu Changjiang (right) and PLA Macau Garrison Political Commissar Lin Qinghua offer a toast during a reception to mark the 97th anniversary of the PLA at the PLA garrison barracks in Taipa yesterday. — Photo: GCS

French food flops at Paris Olympic village

Adam Plowright

PARIS – Despite promises that France's famed gastronomy would be showcased in the Paris Olympic village, many athletes have been left unimpressed by the catering and hungry for more meat on the eco-friendly menus.

At a trial run at the Olympics village restaurant in June, Games supremo Tony Estanguet stressed how Paris 2024 was aiming to cut the average carbon emissions per meal in half compared to previous Olympics by offering more vegetarian food.

Promising not to disappoint visitors to a country famed for its fine food, the organising committee also took on several Michelin-starred chefs as advisors to work alongside its food contractor, French multinational Sodexo.

But the first few days in the village, located in a deprived suburb north of Paris, saw demands for more steak, eggs and bigger helpings as athletes looked to replenish themselves after gruelling competitions or gym sessions.

American superstar gymnast Simone Biles said she had been left disappointed by the 3,300-seat food court, which features six different dining areas offering meals from around the globe.

"It's not proper French cuisine, like you guys might be eating because you're outside the village," she complained on Tuesday.

Team-mate and gold medallist Hezly Rivera agreed, saying: "I definitely think French food is good, but what we are having in there I don't think is the best. But it gets the job done." — AFP



China's Yang Jiayu celebrates after winning the women's 20km race walk of the athletics event at the Paris 2024 Olympic Games at Trocadero in Paris yesterday. Yang won the gold medal with a season's best time of 1:25:54. (More on the Olympics on pages 13, 14 & 16) — AFP

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Chinese scientists develop humanoid robots with realistic facial expressions

Despite the summer vacation, Liu Xiaofeng, a professor at Hohai University in eastern Jiangsu Province, and his research team has remained immersed in the laboratory, focusing on developing humanoid robots with highly expressive facial features.

— Story on p.6

Iran, allies ready Israel response as funerals held for militant leaders

Iran and its regional allies vowed retaliation yesterday for the deaths of Hamas and Hezbollah leaders, raising regional tensions as mourners filled Tehran's city centre calling for revenge.

— Story on p.10

Russia frees US reporter in major prisoner swap with West

US journalist Evan Gershkovich and a Russian intelligence colonel jailed for a Berlin killing were among 24 prisoners and two minors freed yesterday in the biggest East-West prisoner swap since the Cold War, officials said.

— Story on p.11

Mainlanders returning from Macau can now carry duty-free items worth 12,000 yuan

Yuki Lei

With effect from yesterday, mainland visitors entering the mainland from Macau can carry with them duty-free articles worth up to 12,000 yuan (13,320 patacas) through all border checkpoints.

The Ministry of Finance announced in late June an increase in the duty-free allowance for luggage items carried by mainlanders aged at least 18 entering the mainland from Hong Kong or Macau from 5,000 yuan to 12,000 yuan with effect from July 1 when the measure was only implemented at four Hong Kong-mainland border checkpoints, namely Lo Wu, Futian, Shenzhen Bay and West Kowloon Terminus Station of the Guangzhou-Shenzhen-Hong Kong Express Rail Link, as well as two Macau-mainland border checkpoints – Gongbei and the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macau Bridge.

The Notice on Increasing the Duty-free Allowance for Baggage

Articles for Personal Consumption Carried by Resident Visitors Entering the Mainland from Hong Kong and Macau by the General Administration of Customs noted that the scope for the duty-free limit measure for mainlanders would be extended from the six border checkpoints to all border checkpoints from August 1 onwards, except the “first-tier” checkpoint of Hengqin.

Consequently, the new measure took effect yesterday.

Personal baggage items, according to the ministry, carried by travellers crossing the “first-tier” Hengqin checkpoint will be allowed to be carried free of duty within a “reasonable” quantity for personal use. There is no restriction on the duty-free quota of 12,000 yuan, which implies that, subject to fulfilment of the new measure’s conditions, duty-free goods exceeding 12,000 yuan can be carried into the Guangdong-Macau In-depth Cooperation Zone



This file photo taken in July shows border-crossers entering the Barrier Gate checkpoint's departure hall.

– Photo: Rui Pastorin

in Hengqin via the checkpoint, the ministry’s notice points out.

The notice also noted that mainland visitors returning from Macau will not be taxed for purchases made at duty-free shops at border checkpoints, provided

that the purchase amount – plus the total value of personal luggage acquired outside the mainland for “reasonable” personal use – does not exceed 15,000 yuan.

Duty-free refers to the act of being able to purchase an item in

particular circumstances without paying import, sales, value-added, or other taxes.

Summing up the situation at the Barrier Gate checkpoint and the Macau side of the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macau Bridge checkpoint last month, the Macau Customs Service (SA) said in a statement yesterday that in the month since the implementation of the measure, the number of mainland visitors entering and exiting Macau through the two checkpoints has increased “significantly”, but at the same time, Macau customs officers have discovered that there have been occasional cases of touting for help from border-crossers in smuggling goods to the mainland.

According to the statement, Macau’s customs officers have recently detected two smuggling-related cases at the Barrier Gate checkpoint, in which penalties have been imposed on the culprits in accordance with the law. ■

2 motorbikes crash in Nam Van, involving traffic cop

Yuki Lei

An on-duty traffic policeman astride a motorcycle crashed yesterday morning with a motorcycle travelling from Avenida Panorâmica do Lago Nam Van after failing to stop at a junction with traffic lights, both falling off their vehicles.

According to a statement by the Public Security Police (PSP) yesterday, the accident happened at the junction of Avenida Doutor Stanley Ho near Travessa do Padre Narciso at about 10:40 a.m. that day when the traffic police officer failed to stop his motorcycle and hit a motorcycle coming from Avenida Panorâmica do Lago Nam Van at a junction with traffic lights, resulting

in injuries to both of them from falling to the ground.

The statement noted that their respective breathalyser tests showed that both riders’ alcohol concentration was zero grams of alcohol per litre of blood.

The Public Security Police stressed in the statement that they will follow up on the accident in accordance with the law, adding that the officer involved has meanwhile been admonished. The statement also underlined that safety awareness and related training of PSP officers in driving vehicles will be enhanced, and in particular, strengthen the operational coordination in discharging official duties. ■



Police officers and paramedics attend to the injured in Nam Van after yesterday's crash involving two motorbikes, one of them ridden by a traffic police officer. – Photo courtesy of TDM. The photo has been pixelated by the Post.

Local woman loses 1 million patacas in fake police scam

Leong Ian Kio

Judiciary Police (PJ) spokesman Leng Kam Lon said in a regular press conference yesterday that a local woman fell victim to a fake police scam, losing one million patacas.

The victim is under the age of 30, Leng said.

According to Leng, the victim received a call on June 10 from an individual claiming to be a staff member of the “Shanghai Anti-Fraud Centre”. The person alleged that the phone number linked to the victim’s mainland travel permit was involved in criminal activities, including intimidation and fraud.

The caller then transferred the victim to a “Shanghai police officer”, who instructed her to participate in a video conference and relocate to a hotel for “activity surveillance”, citing her status as a suspect.

For three days, the victim stayed in a hotel in the central district, reporting her activities to the fraudster. Starting from June 12, the scammer coerced her

into utilising the screen-sharing function on her phone to review her bank statements. The “police officer” also sent her a link, through which she entered her personal and banking details. Leng said that the link was a phishing attempt by the fraudsters.

The scammers then directed the victim to transfer all her funds to another of her bank accounts which the scammers already had control of. Between June 12 and July 19, the woman transferred around 800,000 patacas to this account.

On Wednesday, the fraudster told the victim to contact the Macau police about the investigation. It was then that the victim was informed by the Judiciary Police (PJ) that she had been scammed.

Leng underlined the importance of public vigilance regarding the selection of “cookies” when providing personal and banking information. Anyone encountering fraud or suspecting they have been scammed can call the anti-fraud



Judiciary Police (PJ) spokesman Leng Kam Lon looks on during yesterday's regular press conference at the PJ Headquarters in Zape.

– Photo: William Chan

enquiry hotline 8800 7777 or the crime report hotline 993.

According to Wikipedia, HTTP cookies (also called web cookies, Internet cookies, browser cookies, or simply cookies) are small blocks of data created by a web server while a user is browsing a website and then placed on the user’s computer or another device by the user’s web browser. Cookies are placed on the device used to access a website, and more than one cookie may be placed on a user’s device during a session. ■

Macau casino receipts rise 11.6 pct to 18.59 billion patacas in July

Macau’s 30 casinos produced total gross gaming revenue (GGR) of 18.59 billion patacas in July, a year-on-year growth of 11.6 percent, the Gaming Inspection and Coordination Bureau (DICJ) announced

GGR was up by 5.0 percent month on month.

Last month’s GGR was the fourth highest in the first seven months of the year. However, it recorded the lowest year-on-

year growth between January and July.

GGR in the first seven months rose 36.7 percent year on year to 132.3 billion patacas.

Macau’s government-concessioned gaming industry is run by six rival integrated resort (IR) operators – Sands, Galaxy, SJM, Melco, Wynn, and MGM. Under their concession agreements with the government, the IR operators are required to strengthen

their non-gaming attractions and support Macau’s cultural heritage promotion projects.

In the first half of this year, according to the latest available official figures, baccarat generated 85.2 percent of Macau’s GGR. Roulette, Europe’s classic casino game, produced a mere 0.4 percent of the GGR in the first six months of the year when the gaming industry offered over a dozen games of chance. ■

Published since Aug 2004

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- Printed by Tipografia Welfare Lda., 82-86 Rua dos Pescadores
- Wire services – AFP, Xinhua

MACAU POST

Macau Weather

CLOUDY APART FROM SUNNY PERIODS.
A FEW SHOWERS AT FIRST.
FORCE 3 TO 4 SOUTH TO SOUTHWESTERLY WINDS.
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27°C~32°C

Source: SMG

Macao Chinese Orchestra 2024-25 Concert Season to start next month

Yuki Lei

The annual Macao Chinese Orchestra Concert Season will be launched on September 1, staging 14 programmes directed by National Class One Conductor Zhang Lie at the Macau Cultural Centre (CCM) through July 26 next year.

The Cultural Affairs Bureau (IC) hosted a press conference yesterday at the CCM Conference Room in Nape about the Macao Chinese Orchestra 2024-25 Concert Season, during which IC President Deland Leong Wai Man – also president of Board of Directors of Macao Orchestra Company, Limited – and Zhang signed an employment contract, marking the appointment of Zhang as the Music Director and Principal Conductor of the Macao Chinese Orchestra (OCHM).

Zhang is a National Class One Conductor and renowned composer. He is currently the Music Director and Principal Conductor of the Nanjing Chinese Orchestra and Henan Chinese Orchestra and has served as a “Top Performer” appointed by the Ministry of Culture in Beijing, and he was the music director and conductor of several Chinese orchestras in the mainland, as well as being employed by various music institutions and organisations, according to an IC statement released during the press conference.

Delivering a speech during the press conference, Leong said that as a professional orchestra with a rich legacy – established in 1987 and which upholds the tenet “Based in Macau while embracing the world and promoting culture with an East-meets-West repertoire”, the Macao



Cultural Affairs Bureau (IC) President Deland Leong Wai Man (right) and National Class One Conductor Zhang Lie sign an employment contract appointing Zhang as the Macao Chinese Orchestra's (OCHM) music director and principal conductor, during yesterday's press conference about the Macao Chinese Orchestra 2024-25 Concert Season at the Macau Cultural Centre (CCM) in Nape. – Photos: Yuki Lei

Chinese Orchestra has been a unique cultural business card of Macau and an example of the in-depth integration of Chinese and Western cultures. Leong pledged that the Macao Chinese Orchestra will continue to give full play to its strengths and make concerted efforts to strengthen Macau's cultural heritage as a “One Base” including ethnic music, disseminating Macau's unique blend of Chinese and Western cultures while enabling local residents and visitors alike to appreciate the high quality of Chinese music and to enhance their understanding and love for Chinese culture.

According to Leong, the OCHM had organised 70 concerts in the past season.

“In the new season, we will bring a variety of concerts from traditional music to works with regional artistic

characteristics, presenting the diversity of ethnic music to you,” Zhang said during the press conference.

According to the statement, the



Members of the Macao Chinese Orchestra perform during yesterday's press conference.

new season will kick off at 8 p.m. on September 1 with “Splendour of the Strings”.

Tickets for the Macao Chinese

Orchestra 2024-25 Concert Season are on sale through the Macau Ticketing Network from 10 a.m. next Tuesday. ■

Local woman becomes this year's 6th Legionnaires' disease patient

William Chan

Macau reported its sixth Legionnaires' disease case of the year yesterday, as announced by a Health Bureau (SSM) statement.

The patient, a 70-year-old local woman, developed a fever and cough on Sunday and was initially treated for influenza A with antiviral medication, the statement said.

She collapsed at home on Tuesday and was subsequently taken to the public Conde de São Januário Hospital Centre by ambulance, where she was scanned for pneumonia and diagnosed with Legionnaires' disease. The statement underlined that she had not travelled abroad during the incubation period, is currently hospitalised, and her condition is stable.

The statement noted that people can be infected with Legionnaires' disease after inhaling mist contaminated with Legionella bacteria released by artificial water systems such as central air-conditioning systems' cooling

towers, jacuzzis, fountains, and household respiratory medical devices.

The statement underlined that people normally will not be infected with the disease after drinking water contaminated with the bacteria.

The statement noted that symptoms of Legionnaires' disease consist of fever, cough, difficulty breathing, fatigue, headache, muscle aches, abdominal pain, and diarrhoea, and that early administration of antibiotics is effective in treating Legionnaires' disease. ■

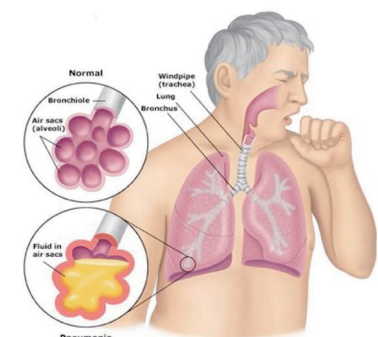


Image courtesy of SMS Environmental

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'Focus' exhibition showcases over 300 artworks

Rui Pastorin

Over 300 sets of export paintings and works are on display on the third and fourth floor of the Macao Museum of Art (MAM) for a large-scale exhibition entitled "Focus: Integration of Art between China and the West in the 18th -19th Centuries".

The term "export paintings" refers to paintings that are created in one country or region and then sold or shipped to be displayed or sold in another country or region.

Showcased across three sections across both floors, the works displayed at the free-admission exhibition are from MAM, the Macao Museum, Guangdong Museum and the Hong Kong Museum of Art, according to a statement from the Cultural Affairs Bureau (IC).

The statement added that the exhibition "presents a full account of export paintings, showcases the dialogue and integration between Chinese and foreign artists amid globalisation of the visual arts during the 18th and 19th centuries, and highlights Macau's significant role in the encounter between the Chinese and Western cultures".

Visitors to the museum's third floor will be able to view rarely seen artworks by English painter George Chinnery (1774-1852), along with works by his followers, the statement said.

Titled "Integration of the Painting Styles: George Chinnery and His Painting Styles", this section also shows Chinnery's "significant influence on export paintings", the statement said. One can view these works until September 15.

Moving up to the fourth floor, one can find the sections "Acclimation of the Painting Skills" and "Adaptation of the Painting Materials", which are both on until August 11. The former provides "a glimpse of the visual dialogue and integration of Chinese and Western painting skills", while the latter gives an overview of both the adaptation and integration of painting materials found in both styles, the MAM website notes.

The museum is open from Tuesdays to Sundays, including public holidays from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m., with no admission after 6:30 p.m. It is closed on Mondays. ■

Photos: Rui Pastorin



Zone A sports complex project to start in Q1 next year

Tony Wong

The Public Works Bureau (DSOP) said in a statement yesterday that it expects the construction of a high-rise sports complex in the Zone A land reclamation area to get off the ground in the first quarter of next year.

The government launched a public tender in late June for the project. Potential bidders were required to submit their quotations by Wednesday.

A total of 21 construction companies submitted their bids, which were unsealed by DSOP officials yesterday. All bids were accepted.

Yesterday's DSOP statement announced that the quotations for the project proposed by the 21 bidders range from 241 million patacas to 270 million patacas.

The tender has set a maximum

period of 975 working days for the winning bidder to complete the project.

According to the DSOP website, the construction periods proposed by the 21 bidders are 877, 878 or 879 working days.

The sports complex will be built on Plot A9, located on the northern part of Zone A.

The 1.38-square-kilometre Zone A is primarily being developed for public housing projects.

The DSOP website notes that the future sports complex on Plot A9 will be located near a future high-rise building to be used for senior care homes on Plot A8.

The bureau launched a public tender in May for the project on Plot A8, which drew also 21 bids, which were unsealed by DSOP officials in June. The A8 project is slated to get off the ground in the next quarter.



This artist's rendition downloaded from the Public Works Bureau's (DSOP) website yesterday shows the future sports complex on Plot A9 in Zone A.

Yesterday's DSOP statement said that the site where the future sports complex will be located covers about

1,930 square metres. The 44.5-metre-high building will have nine storeys plus a two-level underground carpark,

with a gross floor area of about 12,500 square metres.

The statement said that the A9 sports complex will have four sports pavilions, including a 25-metre swimming pool, six badminton courts, two basketball courts, and an area for table tennis.

Construction of a nine-storey building earmarked for a wet market and other municipal facilities in Zone A was completed in October last year. The wet market municipal complex, located on Plot B6, was the first building completed in Zone A.

In addition to wet-market facilities, senior care homes, and sports facilities, various other community facilities will be built in Zone A such as cultural facilities, schools, and a health centre, according to the government's Zone A urban development plan, which took effect in March this year. ■

Plot P to have over 3,900 parking spaces: civic leader



Northern District Community Service Consultative Council members attend yesterday's regular meeting at the Government Services Centre in Areia Preta district. — Photo courtesy of TDM

Ginnie Liang

Northern District Social Services Consultative Committee Deputy Convener Chan U Iong said yesterday that the government's Plot P residential building project in Areia Preta will provide 2,900 car parking spaces and more than 1,000 motorcycle parking spaces.

Chan made the remarks during yesterday's meeting of the government-appointed committee, with 18 committee members delivering remarks during the meeting, and many of them expressed concern about the traffic and road network around the Plot P project.

Plot P is located on the ill-fated Pearl Horizon residential project in Areia Preta district, and the project is expected to be completed at the end of this year.

Chan said he suggested the government release the completed parking facilities for public use in phases so as to alleviate the parking pressure in the busy Oriental Pearl district on the peninsula's north-eastern coast.

The Plot P estate will provide temporary housing for those affected by urban renewal projects.

During yesterday's meeting, committee member Ip Weng Hong expressed his concern about the roadworks and heavy traffic in the vicinity of Plot P, and he suggested the government improve the dissemination of information on the ongoing roadworks, including through the Transport Bureau's (DSAT) mobile app, including on-site photos or video clips, so as to help residents and businesspeople in the area keep abreast of development there. ■

Ho praises PLA on its 97th anniversary for its 'sacred mission' in Macau

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Ho also pointed out that the recently concluded Third Plenary Session of the 20th Central Committee has set forth fresh requirements and strategies for high-quality development and the strategic layout of the nation, serving as a crucial guiding force in upholding long-term stability, prosperity, and sustainable growth for Macau. He underlined that the local government remains committed to bolstering the city's proactive integration into the national development initiatives and strategies, fostering an appropriately diversified economy in line with the "1+4" model, all aimed at continuously enhancing

the well-being of Macau's population.

Attending yesterday morning's reception, PLA Macau Garrison Commander Yu Changjiang said in a speech that since the stationing of the garrison in Macau in December 1999, it has "earnestly" implemented the "One Country, Two Systems" principle and adhered to the Macau Basic Law and Garrison Law.

Yu underlined the army's progress and enhanced mission capabilities, aligning with the centenary goal of robust army building. With a renewed fighting spirit and solid work ethic, Yu pointed out that the army's aim is to usher in a new era of comprehensive development.

The reception was also attended by National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC) Vice Chairman Edmund Ho Hau Wah, Central People's Government Liaison Office in the MSAR Director Zheng Xincong and Foreign Ministry Commissioner in the MSAR Liu Xianfa, among about 200 senior local and central government officials, representatives of the legislature and judiciary, as well as community leaders.

Zheng and Liu are the central authorities' most senior officials posted to Macau. Edmund Ho was the first chief executive of the Macau Special Administrative Region (MSAR) between December 1999 and December 2009. ■

hush! 2024 Concerts calls for proposals

Ginnie Liang

The open call for proposals for local bands, musicians and art installation curators to participate in the hush! 2024 Concerts are slated to run from today through August 15, according to a Cultural Affairs Bureau (IC) statement yesterday.

The hush! 2024 Concerts are scheduled to take place on November 9 and 10 on Hac Sa Beach in Coloane, the statement noted. The two-day music-fest will feature concerts and thematic performances, bazaars, workshops, art installations, and networking.

The statement said that participating bands will be divided into four categories – "Hot Wave", "Upbeat Power", "Music Chill" and "hush! Kids" – based on each band's music style, type of musical instruments and band members' age. At least half of the songs and music for the performance must be original, while those for "hush! Kids" can be non-original.

Moreover, "Art Installations", a new activity featured this year, will be held on the beach and the adjacent woodland area, the statement said, enabling participants to create and



This undated handout photo provided by the Cultural Affairs Bureau (IC) yesterday shows a performance taking place during a previous edition of hush!

design outdoor art installations in line with the event's theme. Art and design curators can submit art installation proposals, jointly building the "hush!" brand image, the statement said.

Meanwhile, the "Thematic Music Development" project enables local bands, musicians and curators to "unleash their creativity and conceive unique thematic music programmes", the statement said.

The statement added that the programme's "Music Workshop"

accepts self-recommended or recommended tutors to host workshops on music-related knowledge and experience.

Regulations and application forms can be found at www.icm.gov.mo or the "HUSH FULL MUSIC" Facebook page, with selected applicants to be individually notified. More information can be found by calling the bureau on 8399 6832 (Chinese) or 8399 6824 (English and Portuguese) during office hours. ■

STOCK MARKETS

Hang Seng Index closes 0.23 pct lower

HONG KONG – Hong Kong's stock market ended lower yesterday with the benchmark Hang Seng Index down 0.23 percent to close 17,304.96 points.

While the Hang Seng China Enterprises Index fell 0.34 percent to end at 6,086.40 points, the Hang Seng Tech Index fell 1.15 percent to close at 3,476.58 points. — Xinhua

Govt to build public housing on sitting-out area in Iao Hon

Tony Wong

The Public Works Bureau (DSOP) announced on its website yesterday that the government will build a public housing high-rise on a plot in Iao Hon district, which is currently used as a temporary sitting-out area.

The plot was converted into a sitting-out area several years ago, after four dilapidated residential buildings on the plot were demolished over a decade ago.

According to the DSOP website, the plot, located at the corner of Rua Oito do Bairro Iao Hon and Avenida da Longevidade, covers 1,875 square metres, where a 30-storey public housing tower will be constructed, plus a three-level underground public carpark.

The website does not mention the type of the public housing to be built on the plot.

According to the website, the building will provide about 250 flats, with its underground carpark to comprise about 100 parking spaces for cars and motorcycles.

The public housing building will also include commercial and community facilities.



This undated handout photo downloaded from the Municipal Affairs Bureau's (IAM) website yesterday shows the sitting-out area located at the corner of Rua Oito do Bairro Iao Hon and Avenida da Longevidade in Iao Hon district.

According to the website, the project will be carried out through two separate tenders – a tender for its pile foundation and basement, and a tender for its superstructure.

According to the website, the Public Works Bureau has launched a tender by invitation when it asked five construction companies to bid for the project's pile foundation and basement work. All five companies

submitted their respective bids, which were unsealed by DSOP officials on Wednesday.

The winning bidder will be required to complete the building's pile foundation and basement within 600 working days.

The quotations proposed by the five bidders range from 119 million patacas to 183 million patacas, according to the website. ■

Various shops in Hengqin MNN to open later this month: MUR

Tony Wong

Macau Urban Renewal Limited (MUR) underlined in a statement yesterday that after a number of shops in the Macau New Neighbourhood (MNN) residential estate on Zhuhai's Hengqin island have started operating one after another since June, various other shops there are now expected to open later this month.

The MNN commercial space, covering around 5,000 square metres, comprises a few dozen shop units in total.

According to previous local media reports, the first shop in the MNN commercial space opened at the middle of June, a shop selling loose leaf teas.

Yesterday's MUR statement said that the MNN commercial space's first shop opened in June, after which a number of other shops have started operating one after another, such as a convenience store, a café, and an express courier outlet.

The statement said that various other shops are being decorated, such as a fast-food restaurant, a Chinese restaurant, a bubble tea shop, a supermarket, a hair salon, and a beauty salon, adding that they are now expected to open later this month.

The statement also said that around 80 percent of the MNN commercial space's shops will be run by Macau companies.

The MNN neighbourhood consists of 27 residential towers with 19 to 26 floors each. The 27 MNN towers have a total of 4,279 flats, comprising about 4,000 units for purchase and around 200 units earmarked for highly-qualified professionals for rent only.

The MNN project, which got off the ground in 2021, was developed by MUR, which is owned by the Macau government. MNN home sales started on November 28 last year after the project had been fully completed.

As of the middle of June, over 1,200 MNN flats had been sold, according to local media reports at that time.

Yesterday's MUR statement also quoted the manager of the convenience store in the MNN commercial space as saying that the shop has been having good business since its operational start in June. ■



This undated combo photo released by Macau Urban Renewal Limited (MUR) yesterday shows the current convenience store, express courier outlet and café in the Macau New Neighbourhood (MNN) residential estate in Hengqin.



This undated MUR combo photo released yesterday shows the under-decorated fast-food restaurant, Chinese restaurant, supermarket, bubble tea shop and beauty salon.

Glass falls from building, hits bus, man injured

Ginnie Liang

Glass fell from a building on Avenida do Nordeste in Areia Preta yesterday, hitting a bus at the bus stop and a male passenger who was getting off the bus, according to a statement by the Fire Services Bureau (CB) yesterday.

The injured is a 22-year-old resident, the statement said, adding that he suffered from a cut to his left ear by pieces of the broken glass and was conscious when he was taken to the private Kiang Wu Hospital.

Firemen suspect that the glass fell from the 5th block of the Hoi

Pan Garden Building at around 6 p.m. yesterday, the statement said.

The statement did not point out the size of the fallen glass or whether it was a window pane.

As a result of the incident, traffic was jammed along Avenida do Nordeste. ■

Chinese scientists develop humanoid robots with realistic facial expressions

NANJING – Despite the summer vacation, Liu Xiaofeng, a professor at Hohai University in eastern Jiangsu Province, and his research team has remained immersed in the laboratory, focusing on developing humanoid robots with highly expressive facial features.

Eyeing on optimizing human-robot emotional interaction technology, the research team has developed a new algorithm for generating facial expressions on humanoid robots.

At its 26th annual meeting on July 2, the China Association of Science and Technology listed research on emotionally intelligent digital humans and robots at the top of the 10 major cutting-edge scientific issues of 2024.

On the same day, Liu's team published their findings – a new approach for action unit (AU) – driven facial expression disentangled synthesis – in the international journal IEEE Transactions on Robotics.

Humanoid robots often struggle to convey the intricate and authentic

facial expressions characteristic of humans, potentially hampering user engagement, Liu said.

"To address this challenge, we introduced a comprehensive two-stage methodology to empower our autonomous affective robot with the capacity to exhibit rich and natural facial expressions," he added.

Liu explained that in the first stage, their method generates nuanced robot facial expression images guided by AUs. In the subsequent phase, they actualize an affective robot with multifaceted degrees of freedom for facial movements, enabling it to embody the synthesized fine-grained facial expressions.

Ni Rongrong, from Changzhou University who is a co-author of the paper, said that people may be more familiar with various "digital humans" and "virtual anchors," which can generate a variety of real-time expressions.

However, humanoid robots face specific constraints, such as the size and number of motors, which make this more challenging, Ni added.

"For example, the humanoid robot we previously used had only nine micro motors beneath its facial surface, far fewer than the number of muscles in a human face."

Therefore, according to Ni, the team divided the nine motors on the humanoid robot's face into 17 AUs to enable richer expressions and smoother transitions through coordinated movements.

Liu said that the team of researchers plans to expand the number of facial AUs and endow a robot with delicate expressions autonomously.

Liu believes that as the emotional interaction capabilities of humanoid robots continue to advance, these robots – equipped with both high emotional and intellectual quotients – will become widely used in nursing homes, kindergartens, special education schools, and other settings.

"The humanoid robots will not only assist or replace humans in completing some tasks but also bring more emotional value," he said. – Xinhua



A Long March-3B carrier rocket carrying a new high-orbit internet-services satellite blasts off from the Xichang Satellite Launch Center in Sichuan Province yesterday. The satellite was launched at 9:14 p.m. aboard a Long March-3B carrier rocket and entered its preset orbit successfully. The launch marks the 529th flight mission of the Long March carrier rocket series. – Xinhua