

Ho vows to attract 'international' talents

Yuki Lei

The government-appointed Talents Development Committee held yesterday its secondary plenary meeting for this year, during which Chief Executive Ho Iat Seng noted that Macau approved over 460 applications under its talents scheme in the first quarter of this year, mainly involving enterprises' senior managers, professionals, teachers and researchers, thereby "achieving the expected results", while the committee's Secretary-General Chao Chong Hang told reporters after the meeting that the new phase of the scheme will focus on strengthening the admission of "international" talents.

The government launched in July last year its talent admission schemes, namely "top talents", "excellent talents", and "senior professionals". Among them, the "excellent talents scheme" requires that its applicants' presence in Macau should be conducive to its appropriate economic diversification through the development of its four key industries, such as big health, high-tech, modern finance, as well as culture and sports.

Chao noted during the top advisory Executive Council's (ExCo) regular press conference on Friday that the committee received



Talents Development Committee Secretary-General Chao Chong Hang (from left to right), Secretary for Social Affairs and Culture Elsie Ao Ieong U, Chief Executive Ho Iat Seng, Ao Ieong's Office Chief Ho Ioc San, and Policy Research and Regional Development Bureau (DSEPDR) Director Cheong Chok Man look on during the Talents Development Committee's second plenary meeting of this year at the World Trade Centre Macau (WTCM) in Nape yesterday.

over 1,000 applications under the first phase of its talent admission schemes, with about 80 percent of them from the mainland, about 10 percent from Hong Kong, and the remainder from Europe, America and elsewhere in Asia. He added that as of last Tuesday, 464 applicants had been included in the list of talents proposed by the committee to be admitted, comprising 22 top talents, 111 excellent talents and 331 senior professionals.

The second phase of the talent admission schemes are accepting applications from the three categories of talents under a total of nine schemes between May 21 and November 20.

Chaired by Ho, the about two-hour-long meeting briefed members on the talent acquisition data since the launch of the three schemes and the way forward for the next phase of enhancement.

In his opening remarks, Ho pledged that Macau will make

full use of the unique institutional advantages of its "One Country, Two Systems" principle to strengthen the development of a platform of "international" quality talents and enhance its ties and cooperation with the "international" community, thereby attracting "international" high-end talents to develop their careers in Macau, in addition to innovative and entrepreneurial talents.

He indicated that the local government would endeavour to



Talents Development Committee Secretary-General Chao Chong Hang speaks to reporters after yesterday afternoon's closed-door meeting.

create a favourable environment for the development of talents' careers in Macau, including optimising the city's infrastructural facilities and improving its public sector's service level and administrative efficiency, also promising that the government will provide greater facilitation for all talents to start up their businesses in Macau and, at the same time, make good arrangements for the education of their children.

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Suit filed in Pennsylvania to halt Musk's US\$1 million giveaways



US President Joe Biden steps out of a polling booth after casting his early-voting ballot in the 2024 general election in New Castle, Delaware, yesterday. - AFP

WASHINGTON—Philadelphia's chief prosecutor sued US business mogul Elon Musk and his pro-Donald Trump political action committee yesterday to halt his US\$1 million giveaways to registered US voters in swing states.

Musk stirred controversy after he announced the daily contest this month, prompting the Justice Department to warn that it may violate federal law which prohibits paying people to register to vote, according to reports.

The lawsuit against the SpaceX and Tesla CEO's America PAC was filed in a Pennsylvania state court by district attorney Larry Krasner, a Democrat.

"The Philadelphia district attorney is charged with protecting the public from public nuisances and unfair trade practices, including illegal lotteries," Krasner said in a statement.

Democratic President Joe Biden was asked by reporters about Musk's lottery after voting in Delaware yesterday.

"Tell him I registered, a million dollars!" Biden joked, before going on to say that he believed Musk's sweepstakes is "totally inappropriate."

Musk, 53, who also owns X, formerly Twitter, has thrown his millions, time and considerable influence into backing Republican presidential candidate Trump since endorsing him in July.

Musk, the world's richest man, has reportedly donated US\$118 million to his personal pro-Trump political action committee, an organisation which collects funds for elections.

He has also appeared on stage with Trump at a campaign rally in Pennsylvania and hosted a series of town halls on his own in the battleground state, seen as critical in the November election.

Musk, who previously supported Barack Obama but has become increasingly conservative in recent years, peppers his 202 million followers on X daily with messages championing Trump and denigrating his opponent, Vice President Kamala Harris. - AFP

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Xi stresses building China into cultural powerhouse by 2035

Xi Jinping, general secretary of the Communist Party of China (CPC) Central Committee, yesterday emphasized focusing efforts to build the country into a cultural powerhouse by 2035.

- Story on p. 7

Israel presses Gaza and Lebanon assaults as Egypt touts truce plan

Israeli forces launched deadly strikes on Lebanon and Gaza yesterday, pressing their offensive against militants after Egypt's president proposed a two-day truce in the Israel-Hamas war.

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Lula, Bolsonaro suffer setbacks in Brazilian municipal vote

Brazilian President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva and his arch-rival, far-right ex-leader Jair Bolsonaro both suffered disappointment on Sunday in the second round of municipal elections.

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Quintet rob gambler of HK\$468,000 in hotel guestroom

William Chan

Five men from the mainland have been arrested for robbing a casino gambler in a hotel guestroom of HK\$468,000, Judiciary Police (PJ) spokesman Ho Chan Nam said at a special press conference yesterday.

The quintet are aged between 28 and 36.

According to Ho, on Sunday the mainland victim won money gambling in a Cotai casino and contacted two of the suspects whom the victim had previously met at the casino. They struck a currency exchange deal and the victim went to quintet's hotel guestroom.

When the victim entered the room, the suspects in the room pushed the him onto a sofa, bound his hands and feet with three bathrobe belts, robbed him of HK\$468,000 in cash, and fled. The victim managed to free himself within 20 minutes and sought help from the police.

The quintet then gambled away HK\$400,000 in another casino in Cotai, with the remaining loot divided between them.

Three of the suspects were apprehended in a hotel guestroom in Taipa within two hours of the robbery being reported to the police. Ho noted that the local authorities discovered that the other two suspects had fled to the mainland. They quickly informed their mainland counterparts, leading to the duos' arrest yesterday in Hunan.

The trio caught locally were transferred to the Public Prosecutions Office (MP) yesterday, facing robbery charges. ■



Judiciary Police (PJ) officers escort the three hooded suspects caught locally to a police vehicle outside the PJ headquarters in Zape yesterday.

— Photo: William Chan

Illegal currency dealer nabbed for false accusation, theft: PJ



This undated photo provided by the Judiciary Police (PJ) yesterday shows the stolen cash.

William Chan

An illegal currency exchange dealer from the mainland stole HK\$500,000 from a local man but later accused the victim of defrauding him, Judiciary Police (PJ) spokesman Ho Chan Nam said during a press conference yesterday.

The suspect surnamed Mao is in his thirties. He told the police that he's a businessman.

According to Ho, the male victim and Mao struck a deal on October 14, according to which Mao was to transfer 1.19 million yuan to the victim, who was then supposed to pay Mao HK\$1.3 million in cash.

They met up in Mao's hotel guestroom in the city centre. When the victim went to the bathroom,

Mao stole HK\$500,000 from the victim's backpack and locked the cash in his own hotel room safe. When he came out of the bathroom, hotel security guards were in the room with Mao who alleged that the local man had defrauded him. Police later arrived at the scene and took Mao and the victim to a police station for questioning.

Based on the victim's statement, the police suspected that Mao had falsely accused the victim. Police officers later retrieved the HK\$500,000 from the safe in Mao's room.

Mao has been transferred to the Public Prosecutions Office (MP) where he faces aggravated theft and false accusation charges. ■

Ho vows to attract 'international' talents

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The third phase of the schemes is expected to commence in the first quarter of next year after the formation of Macau's new government, according to Chao, who underlined that "in the third phase, we will focus on strengthening the admission of international talents, such as those with international working experience and even those from Portuguese-speaking countries".

Chao pointed out the additional condition for the third phase, saying that in line with the central government's positioning of Macau as a "high concentration of international high-end talents", those with international working experience "may be given preferential treatment in terms of scores". However, he was quick to add that since its inception, the talent admission schemes have been open to people from all over the world, with no regional restrictions.

Summarising the closed-door meeting to the media yesterday at the World Trade Centre Macau (WTCM) in Nape, Chao said that 464 applicants from the first phase of the schemes had already been considered

for inclusion in the talent list, with 24 from the second phase so far, so that more than 600 of their family members would move to Macau.

In terms of their expected income, Chao said that the average annual income of excellent talents stood at over four million patacas, while the average annual income for senior professionals amounted to over one million patacas.

There would be stringent vetting of academic qualifications, working experience, salaries and annual income, Chao stressed.

Meanwhile, Ho also said in his opening remarks during yesterday's meeting that apart from bringing in outside talents, the government also attaches great importance to the nurturing and use of local talents, adding that the government would also put in place a more comprehensive talent selection mechanism to enable local talents to play a greater role in Macau's key industries and critical areas.

The media were allowed to cover Ho's remarks, after which the meeting was held behind closed doors. ■

Off-duty cop nabbed for drunk driving

William Chan

An off-duty police officer from the Unitary Police Service (SPU) was caught drunk driving and crashing into concrete step barriers, Public Security Police (PSP) spokeswoman Lai In Hong said during a press conference yesterday.

The male suspect surnamed Wong is in his thirties.

During a vehicle inspection operation on Saturday at 4 a.m., the police discovered a car on Avenida da Amizade (友誼大馬路) that had collided with railings and crashed into concrete step barriers.

The driver, Wong, was reeking of alcohol, and a breathalyser test showed his blood alcohol content of 1.91 grams per litre of blood.

Wong has been transferred to the Public Prosecutions Office (MP), facing a drunk-driving charge, according to Lai. ■

IAM works to prevent pest infestation on Chinese Banyan Trees



These undated handout photos provided by the Municipal Affairs Bureau (IAM) show the Phauda flammans and its larvae.

Rui Pastorin

The Municipal Affairs Bureau (IAM) said in a statement yesterday that work will be carried out in phases from this week through next month to control and prevent infestations by the Phauda flammans moth species on Chinese Banyan trees.

The bureau's tree maintenance staff have recently discovered that Chinese Banyan trees in multiple districts have been affected by the seasonal pest, causing sparse leaves on tree crowns, according to the statement.

Preventive and treatment

medication to suppress infestations were implemented at once, while notices have been displayed on trees where pesticides were applied.

The statement noted that the insects breed around two to three times a year, with their larvae feeding on leaves of trees in the Ficus genus such as Chinese Banyan trees, Mountain Fig trees and Common Red-stem Fig Trees.

Infestations had previously occurred in the summer, the statement said, with the affected trees having been treated and made a recovery. But as autumn has arrived, infestations are occurring again.

Prevention and control work will be carried out in areas surrounding Avenida Panorâmica do Lago Sai Van (西灣湖景大馬路), Avenida da Praia Grande (南灣大馬路), Avenida dos Jardins do Oceano (海洋花園大馬路), Avenida dos Jogos da Ásia Oriental (東亞運大馬路) and Avenida do Aeroporto (機場大馬路), among others.

Members of the public are urged not to enter the pest control areas.

If one notices tree abnormalities, the bureau can be contacted via "IAM Connect" or on 2833 7676, the statement noted. ■

Published since Aug 2004

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



Macau Weather

MAINLY CLOUDY.
FORCE 3 TO 4 NORTH TO NORTHEASTERLY WINDS.
RELATIVE HUMIDITY WILL RANGE BETWEEN 60% AND 80%.



22°C~27°C

Source: SMG

Lawmakers pass outline of bill on family dispute mediation

Ginnie Liang

The Legislative Assembly (AL) yesterday passed the outline of a government-initiated bill proposing a compulsory mediation process by the Social Welfare Bureau (IAS) in specific family rows, especially involving litigated divorce, to “resolve family disputes in a more harmonious way”, Cheong said.

Secretary for Administration and Justice André Cheong Weng Chon introduced the outline of the bill during yesterday’s plenary session of the legislature, noting that the bill specifies the range of family cases, including divorce proceedings, exercise of parental rights, provision of alimony, and housing issues.

According to the bill, considering that family disputes involve the characteristics of kinship ethics and family settlements, which are inherently different to the confrontational characteristics of general civil disputes.

The bill also provides for a pre-litigation mediation system, in which family mediators intervene, so as to resolve family disputes in a more harmonious way.

Some lawmakers raised their concern about the qualification and the workload of the bureau’s mediators, while others questioned why the family dispute mediators must be designated by the bureau, rather than by lawyers or psychologists who “can also handle the cases after [specific] training”.

Cheong said that regarding the credibility of mediation and the need to facilitate staff management, the bill specifies that family mediators should be public administrators in the social work sector designated by the bureau, or civil social workers holding a certificate of registration as a social worker and possessing appropriate experience.

Cheong explained that in the past family disputes, especially litigated divorces, were mediated and concluded by prosecutors, and he acknowledged that some prosecutors are not as experienced as social workers who are experienced in handling family disputes.

Cheong also said that, according to the bill, even though mediation is

mandatory, it will not be mandatorily have to result in a successful outcome. He also said the original intention was to reduce conflicts and maintain family harmony.

Cheong acknowledged that the introduction of the pre-trial mediation system will lengthen the time it takes for a divorce to get through, but as the legislative spirit of the bill was not to speed up the process, it was hoped that through mediation, both parties in a divorce would be able to “rethink their situation”.

Cheong added that the government will consider whether there is a need to expand the scope of eligibility of family mediators.

During yesterday’s plenary session, IAS President Wilson Hon Wai noted that the bureau and non-governmental organisations handle over 5,000 family disputes each year, adding that currently there are 14 social workers who often handle severe family disputes and have professional family counselling skills and abilities, adding that there are about 120 social workers in 30 local family and community service centres who meet the professional requirements, a number which was “sufficient” right now.

The bill will now be submitted to one of the legislature’s standing committees for article-by-article review and possible revisions. Finally, the bill will be submitted for an article-by-article vote to another plenary session. ■



This screenshot captured from a livestream of Macau’s public broadcaster TDM yesterday shows Secretary for Administration and Justice André Cheong Weng Chon addressing yesterday’s plenary session in the Legislative Assembly’s (AL) hemicycle.

Public hospital sets up endoscopy centre



Health Bureau (SSM) Director Alvis Lo Iek Long (from left to right), Secretariat for Social Affairs and Culture Office Chief Ho Ioc San and Secretary for Social Affairs and Culture Elsie Ao Ieong U, as well as Wan Sucheng, director of the Department of Publicity and Culture of the Liaison Office of the Central People’s Government in Macau, and Health Bureau Deputy Director Kuok Cheong U officiate at yesterday’s plaque-unveiling ceremony of the public Conde de São Januário Hospital Centre’s new Endoscopy Centre. – Photo: SSM

Yuki Lei

The public Conde de São Januário Hospital Centre opened yesterday its new Endoscopy Centre, marking an important milestone in the development of Macau’s healthcare system.

The centre, adjacent to the hospital’s emergency department on Estrada do Visconde de S. Januário (若憲馬路), offers endoscopic examinations in gastroenterology, pulmonology, ear, nose and throat, urology and other specialties under the same roof, allowing patients to register, sign up, receive endoscopic diagnosis, treatment and post-test recovery observation, and even make payments, all in one place.

“The establishment of the Endoscopy Centre is an important milestone in the development of Macau’s healthcare system,”

Health Bureau (SSM) Director Alvis Lo Iek Long said in a speech during yesterday’s unveiling ceremony, pointing out the centre’s three main features, namely the integration of the endoscopes from different specialties under one roof; the provision of a one-stop service; and the application of technological innovation and new equipment.

According to an SSM statement, the centre was formed through the optimisation and integration of the former endoscopy area, focusing care on the patients’ individual needs.

The statement noted that in order to enhance the patients’ overall experience, the centre has strengthened the deployment of ancillary technologies and equipment such as analgesia and anaesthesia, optimised the waiting

environment and set up additional post-operative observation areas.

Through the sharing of resources, according to the statement, the centre will be able to provide more convenient endoscopic and minimally invasive treatment services to the Emergency Department, in addition to more user-friendly facilities such as X-ray equipment, a computed tomography (CT) scanner and angiography* suite, so as to enhance the safety of the treatment through the matching of the medical resources. ■

* Angiography is a medical imaging technique in which an X-ray image is taken to visualise the inside of blood vessels and organs of the body, with particular focus on the arteries, veins, and the heart chambers.

Jobless man steals donation-box cash over 20 times: police

Ginnie Liang

The Public Security Police (PSP) caught a local man on Thursday for stealing money from a temple’s donation box on more than 20 occasions since July, a PSP spokesperson said during a regular press conference yesterday.

The spokesperson identified the suspect as a local man surnamed Leong in his forties, who told the police that he’s jobless.

According to the spokesperson, PSP officers received a report from a temple staff member in the northern district about their suspicion that a man had stolen cash from the temple’s donation box.

The officers went to the scene where they witnessed Leong entering the temple at about 1 a.m. on Thursday, and turning on a mobile phone torch the beam of which he pointed at the donation box. He then used hook to reach into the

box to pull out the cash inside. Caught red-handed he was arrested on the spot.

The suspect has been transferred to the Public Prosecutions Office (MP), facing theft charges, according to Lei.

Upon questioning, Leong admitted that because of lack of money and the fact that there are almost no people in the temple in the early hours of the morning, he had used more than 10 different hooks since mid-July to pilfer cash from the box. Police officers later found a number of similar hooks in Leong’s home in the northern district.

Leong told the police that he had stolen a total of 2,500 patacas, which he used to cover some of his living expenses.

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



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

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Photos: Rui Pastorin



Taipa Village Art Space presents ‘At the Crack of...’

Rui Pastorin

Local artist Bianca Lei Sio-Chong is showcasing works for her latest exhibition “At the Crack of...” at the Taipa Village Art Space, which takes on the theme of “breaking”.

Lei, according to information about the artist displayed at the gallery, has showcased her works at different venues worldwide. She is a full-time lecturer at the Macao Polytechnic University’s (MPU) Centre of Sino-Western Cultural Studies and a programme curator at the Macao Ox Warehouse Art Space.

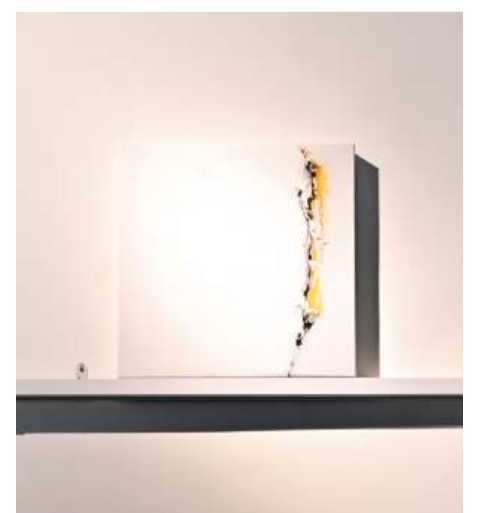
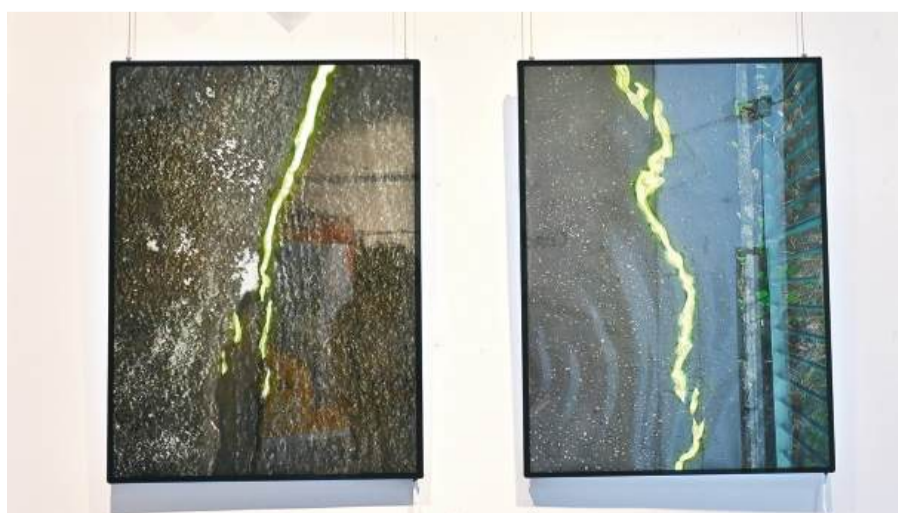
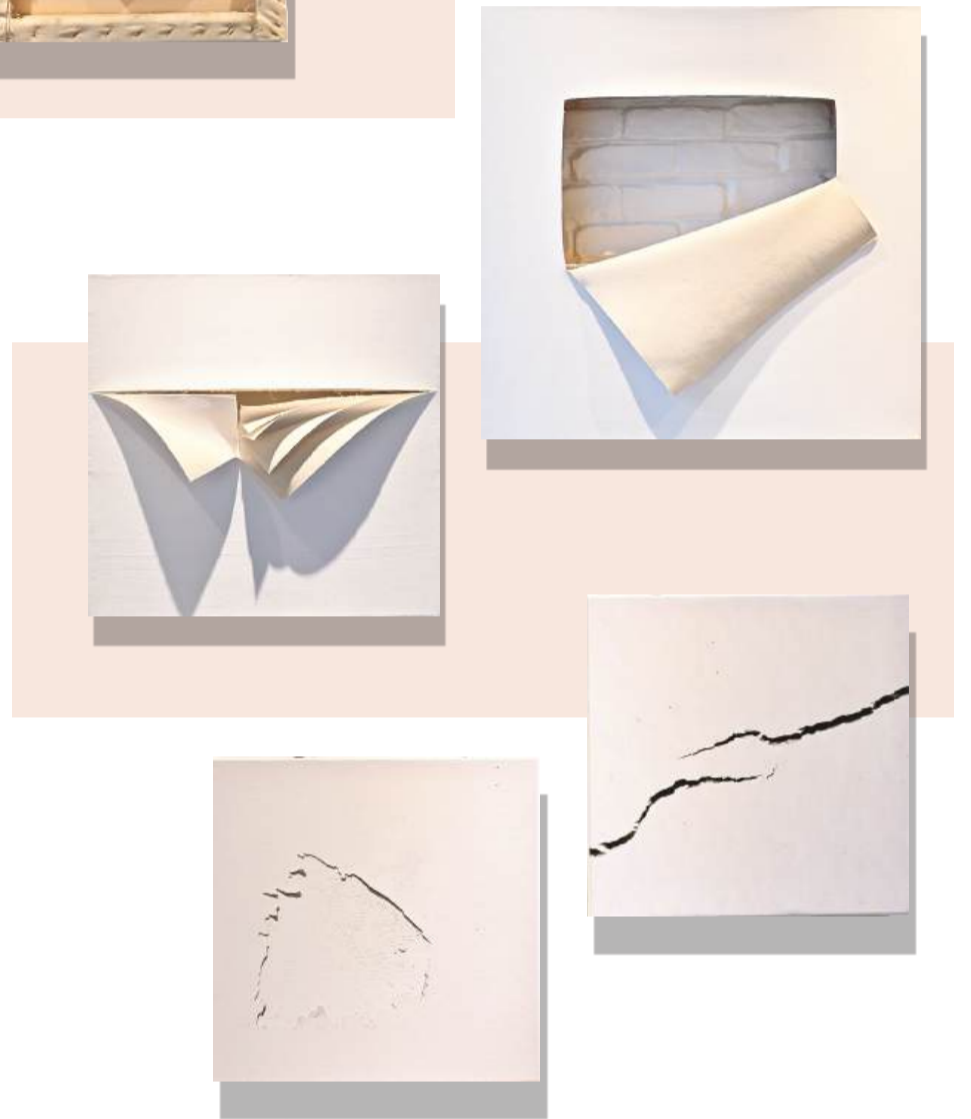
Her latest mixed-media exhibition, which is on until November 30, is site specific and uses the art space as more than just a place to display her work, with a recent statement from the Taipa Village Cultural Association noting that its architectural elements such as the walls and pavement are integrated into the exhibits.

The statement said that past and present scenes that have occurred in the art space are exhibited as graphics, photos and prints. These include cracks, marks and shadows on the walls and floor, “visual elements of the space that go unnoticed and are usually ignored”, the statement said. Installations are also among those showcased.

Elaborating on the theme, the statement quoted Lei as saying: “From encounters with people and things that have happened in recent years, the idea of ‘breaking’ has lingered more and more in my mind”.

Lei added: “From relatively abstract ideas to concrete scenes, I began to pay attention and observe – and even deliberately looked for – the ‘cracks’ that appeared around me. Although cracks can easily conjure up negative impressions of natural and man-made disasters, they can also convey a positive feeling of breakthrough and the arrival of new things.”

The free-admission gallery is open from 12 noon to 8 p.m. daily, while more details on both the exhibition and artist are available on <https://www.taipavillagemacau.com/>



Direct flights between HK, Riyadh resume

HONG KONG – Cathay Pacific yesterday relaunched direct passenger flights between Hong Kong and Saudi Arabia's capital, Riyadh, with Financial Secretary Paul Chan Mo-po taking the first flight servicing the two cities since the route was suspended in 2017.

The flag carrier will operate three flights per week, as authorities push for more cooperation with Middle East countries.

Chan who was aboard flight CX647 is leading a delegation of over 100 representatives from the financial and innovation and technology sectors to Riyadh.

"This symbolises a more frequent and direct people-to-people flow and also trade and cargo flow between the two regions. Cathay Pacific will be increasing its services to this region," he said before boarding.

"[We are] opening up new markets, attracting new sources of capital, new sources of investment. This is an important move."

Cathay's chief customer and commercial officer, Lavinia Lau, said the carrier's aim was to reach

100 worldwide destinations by next year.

She said Cathay received a good response from travellers on the resumption of direct flights to Riyadh.

"The booking is pretty promising, at least for the first few flights... but going forward, we are also seeing a variety of travellers on our flights," Lau said.

"Some of them originating from Hong Kong, a lot actually coming back from the other side, Saudi Arabia, to Hong Kong to visit, or going via Hong Kong to places like Japan to visit. We also see good traffic flows from Southeast Asia, via Hong Kong to Riyadh."

Another passenger on the flight to Riyadh was Nelson. The startup worker said flying direct was much more convenient.

"Last time, I think we had to change in Qatar, so this is really convenient for us. It's a direct flight. The difference is, first of all, time, and also it's more convenient for business," he told RTHK.

– RTHK, MPD

Fast payments to mainland banks possible in 2025: HKMA

HONG KONG – The Hong Kong Monetary Authority (HKMA) said yesterday that locals will soon be able to transfer small amounts of money to mainland accounts through a scheme similar to the Faster Payment System (FPS).

HKMA Chief Executive Eddie Yue Wai-man said officials were working with their mainland counterparts on the details, and a trial scheme could kick off in the middle of next year.

On the sidelines of the Hong Kong Fintech Week, Yue told reporters that cross-border transfers could be done around the clock and could be made to an account that is linked with a mainland phone number, much like how FPS operates.

Separately, Hong Kong's Securities and Futures Commission (SFC) said it will consult the trade early next year in creating the roadmap for a new regulatory regime for virtual asset trading platforms.

Currently, three such licences

have been approved, with the commission saying it is processing more applications.

The SFC's intermediaries executive director, Eric Yip, said all licensees will be invited to take part in the consultative panel.

"We expect the panel deliberation will result in a comprehensive virtual assets white paper that outlines the development roadmap for products and services, as well as potential enhancement in compliance and risk management," he said in his speech at Fintech Week.

"Next is our work to piece the rest of the regulatory regime puzzle. To establish a comprehensive framework for virtual assets, we should make reference to how trading, settlement, and custody work in the traditional securities market."

Yip added that the commission will step up investor education regarding virtual assets, as well as its monitoring of suspicious platforms and alerting investors of potential harm. – RTHK, MPD

Govt launches subsidy for employers' payments of 14-day maternity leave

Tony Wong

The government has launched a new round of its scheme subsidising eligible employers' payments of 14 days of maternity leave.

The subsidy's application period starts today when the scheme's administrative regulation takes effect, after its promulgation in the Official Gazette (BO) yesterday.

Government-drafted administrative regulations, informally known as by-laws, do not require the legislature's approval.

Macau's number of days for statutory paid maternity leave in the private sector was raised to 70 days from the previous 56 days on May 26, 2020 when the amended version of the Labour Relations Law took effect.

The Labour Relations Law regulates the private sector's employment. The public sector has its own employment regulations that are much more generous than those of its private counterpart.

With the aim of helping employers gradually adapt to the increased number of days for statutory paid maternity leave, a three-year transition period commenced when the law's amended version took effect, during which the respective employers could apply to the government for a subsidy of up to 14 days of maternity leave so that they were only required to pay at least 56 days

of leave out of the 70 days, while the remaining up to 14 days were paid by the government.

The three-year transition period covered female employees giving birth between May 26, 2020 (when the Labour Relations Law's amended version took effect) and May 25, 2023.

The three-year subsidy only applied to local female employees because of which the employer of a mother who is a non-resident worker (NRW) still needed to pay the whole 70-day maternity period.

After the three-year transition period ended in May last year, the government reviewed the subsidy's implementation with the aim of determining whether to continue it, after which the government announced in June this year that it had decided to launch the maternity-leave subsidy again.

On Friday last week, the government announced the launch of a new round of the 14-day maternity subsidy, the administrative regulation of which was gazetted yesterday.

New round runs until next year-end

According to the scheme's administrative regulation gazetted yesterday, the new round of the subsidy continues to be a provisional one, retroactively covering female employees giving birth between

May 26, 2023 and December 31, 2025, i.e., covering a period lasting about two years and seven months this time.

According to the regulation, eligible employers must pay mothers the whole 70-day maternity period first before filing an application to the Labour Affairs Bureau (DSAL) to receive a subsidy of 14 days of maternity leave.

The respective employers are required to submit their applications within 150 days of the respective mother giving birth, according to the regulation.

Unchanged from last time, the subsidy this time also only applies to local female employees.

Different to last time, the administrative regulation now specifically lists employers ineligible for receiving the 14-day maternity subsidy, namely publicly-funded companies, gaming and junket operators, kindergartens, schools, and higher education institutions, as well as all companies employing over 100 staff each.

The government has said that the new round of the subsidy is meant to benefit local small- and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs).

A DSAL statement yesterday underlined that the new round of the subsidy aims to help employers gradually adapt to the increased number of days for statutory paid maternity leave. ■

Govt gazettes setting-up of Hengqin MNN health station

Tony Wong

The local government yesterday gazetted the setting-up and operation of its health station in the Macau New Neighbourhood (MNN) residential estate on Zhuhai's Hengqin island.

An executive order signed by Chief Executive Ho Iat Seng was published in the Official Gazette (BO) yesterday updating the list of the Macau government-run health centres or health stations providing community healthcare services.

In addition to the current nine health centres providing community healthcare services in the Macau Special Administrative Region (MSAR), comprising six in the peninsula, two in Taipa and one in Coloane, yesterday's executive order has added the MNN health station which will serve Macau residents living in Hengqin, officially known as Guangdong-Macau In-depth Cooperation Zone in Hengqin.

While the executive order will take effect this Friday, November 1, the Macau Health Bureau (SSM) is yet to announce the MNN health station's exact opening date.

The Macau government amended the Health Bureau's organisational structure last month, statutorily enabling the bureau to set up, manage and operate health



This artist's rendition downloaded from the Macau New Neighbourhood's (MNN) website yesterday shows the MNN health station.

stations in the Guangdong-Macau In-depth Cooperation Zone in Hengqin, serving Macau residents living there.

In addition to shops, the MNN neighbourhood also includes community facilities comprising a school, a health station, a family and community service centre, and a service centre for senior citizens.

The MNN estate's school, run by Macau's Hou Kong Middle School, started operating last month. The school is officially known as Hengqin School Affiliated to Hou Kong Middle School.

Both the family and community service centre and the senior

citizens' service centre in the MNN neighbourhood started operating in June this year, run by the Macau Women's General Association (known as Fu Luen in Cantonese) and the Macau General Union of Neighbourhood Associations (known as Kai Fong in Cantonese) respectively.

The Macau Health Bureau said last month that the MNN health station was scheduled to open in November.

The MNN health station will provide Macau residents with health services in compliance with the operation model of Macau's public health centres. ■

STOCK MARKETS

Hang Seng Index closes 0.04 pct higher

HONG KONG – Hong Kong's stock market ended higher yesterday with the benchmark Hang Seng Index up 0.04 percent to close at 20,599.36 points.

The Hang Seng China Enterprises Index rose 0.08 percent to end at 7,391.22 points, while the Hang Seng Tech Index rose 0.79 percent to end at 4,574.07 points. – Xinhua