

Ho says his decision not to seek 2nd term only due to health

Tony Wong

Outgoing Chief Executive Ho Iat Seng reaffirmed yesterday that he decided in August not to seek a second five-year term “due to my health condition, without any other reasons”, saying that it was the COVID-19 pandemic which negatively impacted his health as he was only able to sleep for three to four hours “every night” during the three-year period from early 2020 to late 2022.

Ho made the remarks during a press conference at Government Headquarters summarising his five-year administration, which started on December 20, 2019 and will end at midnight on December 19, 2024 when he will be succeeded by Sam Hou Fai who will then be sworn in as Macau’s sixth-term and fourth chief executive the next day, the 25th anniversary of Macau’s return to the motherland.

Ho held the press conference, which lasted about 45 minutes, after presenting his government’s work report for this year, including a summary of his five-year governance, and a brief proposal for next year’s budget to the Legislative Assembly (AL) yesterday afternoon. Secretary for Economy and Finance Lei Wai Nong is scheduled to present the outline of the government’s 2025 budget bill to the legislature tomorrow.

Ho announced in a statement on August 21 that he decided not to seek re-election as “my health has still not fully recovered”.



Chief Executive Ho Iat Seng addresses yesterday’s press conference at Government Headquarters about his five-year administration. – Photo: Tony Wong

According to the Macau Basic Law, Macau’s chief executive can serve no more than two consecutive five-year terms.

Ho took leave for 39 consecutive days from June 21 through July 29, during which

the government said in a statement on July 20 that Ho used his leave of absence to undergo routine physical examinations and to receive the necessary diagnosis and treatment, and that he was in good health.

Replying to a reporter’s question which asked him to elaborate on his reasons for his decision not to seek re-election as chief executive during yesterday’s press conference, Ho noted that he explained the reasons in a statement in August. Ho noted that he has lost weight over recent months, adding that it was for health reasons that he decided not to seek re-election – “without any other considerations”.

Ho, 67, said that he is no longer young, “because of which I should let somebody younger than me do the job”.

Ho said that the post of chief executive is a “very high” pressure job, particularly during the three-year pandemic, during which he and his five policy secretaries were only able to sleep for three to four hours every night. Ho also said that he and his five policy secretaries were still only able to sleep for three to four hours per night as they still could not readjust their biological clock.

Ho said that during the three-year COVID-19 pandemic, he and his policy secretaries were continually worried about the possible occurrence of COVID-19 cases in the community.

Ho said that he and his five policy secretaries have still not recovered from sleep disorders resulting from the three-year pandemic. He added that the situation has negatively impacted his health.

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US President Joe Biden (from left to right front row), Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Brazilian President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, South African President Cyril Ramaphosa, Chinese President Xi Jinping, German Chancellor Olaf Scholz (from right to left second row), French President Emmanuel Macron, Indonesian President Prabowo Subianto, and other world leaders gather for a group photo on the second day of the G20 Summit in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, yesterday. – AFP

Netanyahu says Israel offering US\$5 million reward for each Gaza hostage freed

JERUSALEM – Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said yesterday that Israel was offering a reward of US\$5 million to anybody who brings out a hostage held in Gaza.

“Anybody who brings out a hostage will find with us a secure way for them and their family to leave” Gaza, Netanyahu said in a video filmed inside the Palestinian territory, according to a statement from his office. “We will also give them a reward of US\$5 million for each hostage.” – AFP

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Xi says China insists on resolving differences with EU via dialogue

President Xi Jinping said yesterday that the EU’s tariffs on Chinese electric vehicles are drawing attention around the world, and China always insists on resolving differences through dialogue and consultation. – Story on p. 7

Afghan children struggle for a bite of bread as world celebrates Children’s Day

Despite the cessation of conflict in Afghanistan and Children’s Day being celebrated worldwide, countless Afghan children are still required to work hard and abandon school to support their families. – Story on p. 15

US envoy in Beirut says ‘real opportunity’ to end Israel-Hezbollah war

A US envoy said he was in Beirut yesterday because he saw “a real opportunity” to end the Israel-Hezbollah war, with the Lebanese group announcing then postponing a speech by its leader shortly after. – Story on p. 16

Ho says his decision not to seek 2nd term only due to health

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Ho noted that when asked by reporters early this year about the possibility of seeking re-election, he preferred not to give a clear answer because, at that time, he had already noticed that something may be wrong with his health.

Replying to another question, Ho said that when he was speaking to journalists in June, he was asked how he was feeling about his job, he merely replied that he was "very tired". Ho said during yesterday's press conference that he made the remarks at that time because he already knew that "there was some problem with my health".

Ho said yesterday that his health has gradually improved over recent months.

Meanwhile, Ho said that the three-year COVID-19 pandemic had impacted him most during his five-year tenure. Ho noted that soon after he took office on December 20, 2019, his administration had to start tackling the pandemic.

Macau recorded its first COVID-19 case on January 22, 2020.

Ho said that during his five-year term, his administration had to fight the pandemic

for three years, but that the government was, nevertheless, able to continue with its effort to promote Macau's development in various aspects during the period.

Ho also underlined that while the three-year pandemic adversely impacted Macau to a great deal in various aspects at that time, his administration has managed to "basically" achieve all its goals and objectives listed in his 2019 election manifesto.

Meanwhile, Ho also said that the government believes that Macau will be able to generate gross gaming revenue (GGR) of 240 billion patacas next year.

He also pointed out that when he took office in late 2019, Macau's financial reserves stood at 579 billion patacas, while now they amount to over 600 billion patacas, despite a four-year-long budget deficit, i.e., from 2020 through 2023. Ho, a former president of the local legislature, business community leader and member of the elite Standing Committee of the National People's Congress (NPC), said the fact that Macau's financial reserves have continued to grow despite the pandemic and budget deficit was the result of "good investment performance". ■



Chief Executive Ho Iat Seng (left) shakes hands with Legislative Assembly (AL) President Kou Hoi In after presenting his government's work report for this year, including a summary of his five-year governance, and a brief proposal for next year's budget to lawmakers during yesterday's plenary session in the legislature's hemicycle, where he announced that the government's 2025 budget proposes the continuation of its annual cash handout scheme with the amount to remain unchanged at 10,000 patacas for each permanent resident and 6,000 patacas for each non-permanent residents. — Photo: GCS

Ho highlights gaming industry's role in diversifying economy

William Chan

Chief Executive Ho Iat Seng said yesterday that the contributions by the gaming industry to non-gaming attractions in Macau are becoming increasingly important, highlighting the determination of both the industry and the government to diversify the local economy beyond gaming. He noted that overreliance on the gaming sector at the expense of other industries is unsustainable for Macau's overall development.

Ho made the remarks during a press conference at Government Headquarters, summarising his administration's work over the past five years. He noted the challenging negotiations a few years ago with gaming operators for their concession renewals, the outcome of which required operators to invest a total of 110 billion patacas in non-gaming development, a significant endeavour, Ho said, especially when considering the substantial losses incurred by the industry during the three-year COVID-19 pandemic.

Nonetheless, Ho emphasised that this collaborative effort is geared towards bolstering Macau's long-term growth by expanding beyond the gaming sector. He underlined the government's proactive approach in response to the changing tourism demographics, which now prioritises individual travellers, young people, and families, while witnessing a decline in the number of group tours in the aftermath of the pandemic. This shift aligns well with Macau's identity as a "City of Performing Arts" and the ongoing efforts to introduce innovative forms of entertainment.

The change in the profile of visitors engaging in gaming activities, Ho noted, has provided gaming operators with a notable increase in non-gaming revenue such as from concerts in the past year. He anticipated that this year's number of visitor arrivals will reach 34 million.

In pre-pandemic 2019, Macau recorded 39.4 million visitor arrivals, according to official statistics.



Chief Executive Ho Iat Seng poses for press photographers at the start of his press conference at Government Headquarters yesterday afternoon. — Photo: William Chan

The chief executive expressed gratitude to the six gaming operators for their commitment to the new contractual requirements set by the local government, which greatly supports its economic diversification efforts. To address the operators' lack of land for large outdoor events, Ho said the government has invested in an open-air venue for hosting large-scale performances on a large plot next to the Lisboeta Macau resort in Cotai.

While previous reports noted that the open-air venue could host concerts and other performances for up to 50,000 spectators, Ho said during the press conference that the venue could have a maximum capacity of even 80,000. The first trial event is scheduled to be held on December 28, aiming to attract interest from non-local artists for next year's venue bookings.

Hong Kong, Macau

When asked about potential competition with Hong Kong in hosting large-scale events, Ho described Hong Kong as the "elder brother," emphasising its larger scale and international influence as a model for Macau to learn from. He underlined that Macau should not be concerned but instead jointly promote co-development by the two special administrative regions (SARs). Ho also said the close relationship between Macau and

Hong Kong will continue, adding he believes that Macau's incoming government will further strengthen cooperation with Hong Kong in various fields, including tourism and cultural events, leveraging the advantages of both cities for stronger development momentum.

Portugal, Macau

Regarding relations with other places, Ho noted that during his term, he led a delegation to Portugal, further deepening the friendly ties between the two sides and jointly promoting exchanges and cooperation in various fields, further highlighting Macau's role as a service platform for commercial and trade cooperation between China and Portuguese-speaking countries (PSCs).

When asked by a reporter whether there had been any changes to the "One Country, Two Systems" and "Macau people administering Macau" with a "high degree of autonomy" during his administration, which ends at midnight on December 19, Ho insisted that in Macau these principles have remained unchanged, and that these three guidelines promised by the Central People's Government have not been altered, adding he believes that the future Macau SAR government will continue to uphold these principles. ■

Macau makes new progress in 2024 for economic diversification: Ho

Chief Executive Ho Iat Seng said yesterday that the local government made new progress for Macau's appropriate economic diversification this year thanks to the central government's support while speaking at a plenary session of the Legislative Assembly.

Ho made the remarks in summarising the government's work done this year, while introducing the 2025 budget bill and reviewing the work of the Macau Special Administrative Region's (MSAR) fifth-term government.

He said that in 2024, the local government seized the opportunity presented by the addition of mainland cities to the Individual Visit Scheme for Hong Kong and Macau. It took advantage of

the implementation of various immigration policies designed to facilitate travel for individuals and businesses while launching multiple channels for tourism consumption incentives, which successfully promoted a continuous recovery in the number of visitors from the mainland and abroad.

He added that the government has orderly implemented development plans for Macau's appropriate economic diversification until 2028, while a framework for the city's new "1+4" industrial structure was now largely established.

Ho also said that in the past year, his government systematically improved the legal framework for safeguarding national security, enhanced enforcement mechanisms,

strengthened the social and political foundation of patriotism, and continued to advance urban security system development.

His summary also addressed other issues, including improving people's livelihoods, deepening administrative management reform, strengthening infrastructure construction and better integrating Macau into national development.

Ho said he had a thorough discussion with Sam Hou Fai, the incoming chief executive, and in accordance with the Basic Law of the MSAR, the fifth-term SAR government has prepared the fiscal budget to ensure Macau's stability and development as well as the normal functioning of the public sector.

— Xinhua, MPD

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

TEMPERATURE FALLING SLIGHTLY. CLOUDY. PERIODS OF RAIN. FORCE 4 TO 5 NORTH TO NORTHEASTERLY WINDS WITH GUSTS. RELATIVE HUMIDITY WILL RANGE BETWEEN 75% AND 98%.



16°C~19°C

Source: SMG

Key Indicators of Economic and Social Development of the Macao Special Administrative Region from 2019 to 2024

Economy	Indicator		2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	Q1-Q3 2024	Growth rate in 2023 compared to 2019
	Size of economy	Gross domestic product (million patacas)		444,540	202,471	247,926	201,623	369,328	300,972*
Per capita GDP (patacas)		660,045	297,162	362,915	297,379	544,530	—	-21.2% (In real terms)	
Public finance	Fiscal reserve (billion patacas)		579.40	616.12	643.17	557.97	580.47	617.03*	0.2%
	Foreign exchange reserve (billion patacas)		178.25	200.79	214.17	208.57	223.56	230.58	25.4%
Consumer prices	Inflation rate (%)		2.75	0.81	0.03	1.04	0.94	0.89	-1.81 percentage points
Employment	Unemployment rate	Overall unemployment rate (%)	1.7	2.5	2.9	3.7	2.7	1.7 ^{note 1}	1.0 percentage points
		Local resident unemployment rate (%)	2.3	3.6	3.9	4.8	3.4	2.3 ^{note 1}	1.1 percentage points
	Median Monthly Income of Employed Residents (in patacas)		20,000	20,000	20,000	19,000	20,000	20,500 ^{note 1}	Unchanged
Tourism	Total number of visitors (persons)		39,406,181	5,896,848	7,705,943	5,700,339	28,213,003	25,920,914	-28.4%
	Avg. expenditure per visitor (patacas) ^{Note 4}		1,626	2,025	3,173	3,187	2,525	2,168*	55.3%
	Avg. room occupancy rate in hotels (%)		90.8	28.6	50.1	38.4	81.5	85.4	-9.3 percentage points
	Total number of rooms (units)		38,272	35,132	38,737	37,698	46,664	44,163	21.9%
Gaming	Avg. length of stay for hotel guests (nights)		1.5	1.7	1.8	1.8	1.7	1.7	0.2 nights
	Gross revenue from casino gaming (billion patacas)		292.46	60.44	86.86	42.20	183.06	169.36	-37.4%

Livelihood	Indicator		2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	Q1-Q3 2024	Growth rate in 2023 compared to 2019
	Education	Government expenditure on education (million patacas)		12,755.2	12,242.5	11,933.5	11,729.0	12,679.0	—
Gross enrollment rate for senior secondary school (%) ^{Note 5}		83.1	84.3	84.7	87.9	90.4	—	7.3 percentage points	
Proportion of the employed population with higher education qualifications (%)		39.5	40.7	42.8	46.3	48.6	50.2 ^{note 1}	9.1 percentage points	
Healthcare	Government expenditure on healthcare and medical services (million patacas)		8,810.0	10,435.5	12,262.5	13,946.4	10,718.1	—	21.7%
	Number of doctors per 1,000 population		2.7	2.6	2.8	2.9	2.9	—	0.2 one-tenth of a percentage point
	Number of nurses per 1,000 population		3.7	3.8	4.0	4.3	4.4	—	0.7 one-tenth of a percentage point
	Number of hospital beds per 1,000 population		3.1	3.1	3.2	3.3	3.5	—	0.4 one-tenth of a percentage point
Social security	Government expenditure on social security (million patacas) ^{Note 5}		20,751.2	26,909.2	26,716.9	46,356.6	21,165.5	—	2.0%
Population	Total Population ('0,000)		67.96	68.31	68.32	67.28	68.37	68.66*	0.6%
	Number of Households ('0,000)		19.75	19.97	20.27	20.37	20.44	—	3.5%
	Population density ('0,000 per sq. km)		2.04	2.08	2.07	2.03	2.04	—	Unchanged
	Elderly population (≥ 65) (persons)		75,100	79,700	83,200	89,400	95,600	99,200*	27.3%
	Birth rate (‰)		8.9	8.1	7.4	6.4	5.5	—	-3.4 one-tenth of a percentage point
	Average Life Expectancy (years) ^{Note 2}		83.8	84.1	84.2	83.8	83.1	—	-0.7 years ^{note 3}

Housing	Indicator		2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	Q1-Q3 2024	Growth rate in 2023 compared to 2019
	Housing	Public Housing (units) ^{Note 7}		14,269 [0]	14,269 [0]	15,037 [768]	15,547 [510]	15,547 [0]	17,548 ^{note 8} [1,590]
Home-Ownership Scheme Housing (units) ^{Note 7}		36,963 [0]	36,963 [0]	36,963 [0]	36,963 [0]	36,963 [0]	39,569 ^{note 8} [3,017]	Unchanged	
Senior Housing (units) ^{Note 7}		0 [0]	0 [0]	0 [0]	0 [0]	0 [0]	1,815 [1,815]	—	

—: No data available/ not applicable *: Provisional figures [] indicates the number of units completed in that year.

Note 1: The reference period is the third quarter of 2024.

Note 2: The reference period for average life expectancy at birth for 2019 refers to 2016 to 2019, for 2020 it is 2017 to 2020, for 2021 it is 2018 to 2021, for 2022 it is 2019 to 2022, and for 2023 it is 2020 to 2023.

Note 3: Comparison of average life expectancy between 2020 to 2023 and 2016 to 2019.

Note 4: Excluding gambling expenditure.

Note 5: The reference period for the gross enrollment rate for high school in 2019 refers to the academic year 2019/2020, for 2020 it is the academic year 2020/2021, for 2021 it is the academic year 2021/2022, for 2022 it is the academic year 2022/2023, and for 2023 it is the academic year 2023/2024.

Note 6: The significant increase in government expenditure on social security from 2020 to 2022 was due to a series of welfare measures implemented in response to the pandemic. As Macao's society and economy returned to normal in 2023, the expenditure amount decreased correspondingly.

Note 7: The relevant data refers to the number of completed units and does not include those under construction.

Note 8: In 2024, 411 Home-Ownership Scheme Housing units were converted for public housing purposes.

Key Indicators of Economic and Social Development from 2019 to 2024

Dance studio TDSM to hold 15th Anniversary show 'Come Back Home'

Interview by William Chan

The Dance Studio Macau (TDSM) is going to hold its 15th Anniversary performance "Come Back Home" at the Macau Tower Convention and Entertainment Centre on December 1, combining different street dance performances, dancer and producer Wina Tang Weng Wa (鄧詠華) told the *Post* in an online interview last week.

Since 2006, The Dance Studio Macau has been dedicated to promoting local street dance culture, striving to create dances with local characteristics, and expanding theatrical education to cultivate more local dance talents.

Tang started learning to dance at the age of eight and joined the Hou Kong Middle School dance group, where she began to explore street dance. As a founding member of The Dance Studio Macau, she noted that after graduating from Hou Kong Middle School, along with a group of schoolmates who shared her passion for dance and had lost their school platform for dancing, they came together to establish the dance studio.

At that time, their main intention was to continue dancing with friends, with no initial plans to turn it into a profession. "In the beginning, we had to pay the rent out of our own pockets, each contributing thousands of patacas monthly and taking on extra jobs to cover the expenses," Tang said.

Now in her thirties, Tang reminisced that in the early 2000s, Macau lacked street dance training institutions. She utilised university breaks and holidays to travel to Hong Kong and Taiwan for further training, and after saving up from her part-time jobs, she expanded her learning to places like Japan, South Korea, and the United States, continuously honing her skills in dancing.

From the days when street dance was seen as rebellious to now blossoming at entertainment venues worldwide and even having become an Olympic sport, Tang said that she is grateful for the shifting perception of street dance in Macau. This positive change has allowed children to learn this kind of dance with confidence, and said she believes that the future of street dance in Macau holds broader and deeper development prospects.

Becoming an instructor, choreographer, educator, and performer all together, Tang hopes to continue passing on the art of dance. She vividly remembers that when she first joined the dance team, her instructor told her: "Dancing is tiring. Those who persist are the ones who love dance. I don't need to select them; they choose dance." To this day, the idea of refining dancers and nurturing individuals deeply influences Tang from her time with the dance team, and as long as there are students willing to learn, she said that she will continue to teach.

200 performers, ranging from children to working adults, will showcase their talents in diverse groups on Sunday, December 1, featuring a variety of dance styles such as hip-hop and jazz. Tickets are priced at 150 patacas. For more information, visit: www.facebook.com/tdsm.adult



This file photo shows Wina Tang Weng Wa (鄧詠華) posing. - Photos provided by Tang



My friends and I (centre, third row) pose with our instructor Wina Tang reclining in front of our group, at The Dance Studio Macau (TDSM) in Nape last year.



UTM kicks off 16th UTM-UN Tourism Training Programme

Interview by Rui Pastorin

The 16th UTM-UN Tourism Training Programme kicked off yesterday with an opening ceremony at MGM COTAI, with this year's focus on "The Transformative Power of Technology and Events Industry".

The ongoing training programme, which concludes on Friday, organised by the Macau University of Tourism (UTM) in conjunction with UN Tourism and sponsored by integrated resort operator MGM, is hosted at both MGM COTAI and UTM's campus and gathers over a dozen speakers and 19 programme participants of different backgrounds from tourism government representatives to industry leaders.

A UTM statement provided at yesterday's launch ceremony added that the future of AI in meetings and events, digital marketing tools for smart destination management, digital skills for industry professionals, and the role of technology in enhancing destination sustainability are the four key areas to be explored over the next three days. Presentations will be delivered by industry



Macao University of Tourism (UTM) Rector Fanny Vong Chuk Kwan delivers a speech at MGM COTAI yesterday during the opening ceremony of the 16th UTM-UN Tourism Training Programme. — Photos: Rui Pastorin

leaders and scholars from renowned organisations, associations, and universities, the statement underlined.

UTM Rector Fanny Vong Chuk Kwan pointed out in her speech yesterday that UTM has collaborated with UN Tourism since 2016, adding that the programme has, over the years, explored a variety of topics, drawing 375 participants from different parts of

the world over its past 15 editions.

Vong pointed out that "the MICE industry is already a cornerstone of the local tourism sector. Current estimates indicate that Macau is on course to have hosted around 1,500 MICE events this year alone", while business visitors participating in MICE events in the first half of 2024 spent over twice as much as the average tourist, with the sector



UTM's Global Centre for Tourism Education and Training Director Judy Wong Wai Teng poses at MGM COTAI yesterday.

contributing the equivalent of over US\$300 million (2.4 billion patacas) to the local economy.

Elaborating on this year's edition, UTM's Global Centre for Tourism Education and Training Director Judy Wong Wai Teng told the *Post* that technology and how it can help at the operational level, engage attendees and enhance their participation experience, is the

training programme's focus, along with how it "can help improve the sustainability of the destinations".

She added that the programme is designed for participants from Asia and the Pacific and is a "platform for people", bringing them together and enabling exchanges.

Wong went on to say that though some might think that countries are operating at an advanced level, different countries may have their own needs. "So, we may need to listen to them and try to get to know what they really need".

Moreover, with the advancement of technology changing the industry, it is important for people from different countries to "get to know what is happening in different regions", with UTM inviting experts to share their expertise, as well as country representatives to talk about what is happening in their respective countries.

"This is a chance for them to get to know each other, their country's conditions and restrictions and challenges", adding that this is what she anticipates to see in the coming days. ■

Mapping bureau launches 'Atlas of Macao - 2024'

Rui Pastorin

The Mapping and Land Registry Bureau (DSCC) has recently published the trilingual (Chinese, English and Portuguese) "Atlas of Macao - 2024", which has gone on sale.

The recently launched atlas, priced at 140 patacas, features records of the city's urban development through topographic maps, as well as the current urban scenery through satellite images and aerial photography, among other surveying and mapping techniques, according to a statement from the bureau yesterday. Moreover, the statement added that by scanning QR codes, readers can also find 360° panoramic photos and "dynamic maps".

Readers can also find detailed street maps, satellite image maps, planning and zoning maps, maps of land formation at different stages, and geographical statistics, among others.

Moreover, special topics like "Roaming Along the Macao Coastline", which explores Macau's coastal routes and seaside attractions, and displays the latest topographic data of the local coastline and surrounding environment through aerial images and topographic maps captured by drones, and the "Review of Macao's



This image provided by the Mapping and Land Registry Bureau (DSCC) yesterday shows the cover of the "Atlas of Macao - 2024".

Urban Infrastructure", which delves into the local government's public construction achievements in various fields, are also added.

One can buy the atlas online via <https://eservice.dsc.gov.mo>, or purchase it at the bureau's headquarters, Macau Government Services Centres, Macau Government Services Centre in Taipa, the General Post Office (GPO), Macau Cultural Plaza, Wan Tat Bookstore, or at Seng Kwong Bookstore. ■

Health Bureau urges attention to lung function ahead of world COPD DAY

Ginnie Liang

The Health Bureau (SSM) is urging individuals over 40, those who have smoked for over 10 years, and those experiencing chronic cough with phlegm or increased breathlessness to consult a doctor regularly for lung function tests, according to the bureau's statement issued on the eve of World COPD Day today.

COPD is the official abbreviation of Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease.

This year's theme is "Know Your Lung Function," aiming to unite healthcare professionals and patient groups in raising awareness and understanding of COPD, the statement said.

COPD is a common chronic disease that poses a serious threat to human life, with one person dying from it every 10 seconds worldwide.

According to the Statistics and Census Bureau (DSEC), COPD



This poster provided by the Health Bureau (SSM) yesterday aims to raise residents' awareness of chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD).

ranked as the eighth leading cause of death in Macau in 2023, with 88.5 percent of deaths attributed to COPD among chronic lower respiratory disease fatalities.

However, COPD is often overlooked, as early symptoms such as persistent cough and shortness of breath can be subtle, leading many patients to seek medical help only

when symptoms worsen, by which time their lung function may be significantly impaired.

Quitting smoking is the most effective way to prevent and manage COPD, as over 90 percent of COPD patients have a history of smoking. The bureau encourages smokers to seek help to quit.

As winter approaches, bringing a higher incidence of respiratory infections such as influenza and COVID-19, the bureau reminded COPD patients to stay warm and get vaccinated against influenza before the peak season.

To reduce the risk of severe complications, the bureau also recommends that COPD patients get vaccinated against COVID-19 and pneumococcal infections as soon as possible.

For more information, residents can visit the bureau's Infectious Disease Information website or call 2870 0800. ■

Mainlander sexually harasses & films young woman: police

Ginnie Liang

A 40-year-old non-local resident has been arrested for sexually harassing a young woman and filming her and her younger sister, a Public Security Police (PSP) spokesperson said during a regular press conference yesterday.

The spokesperson noted that the suspect, a non-resident worker (NRW) surnamed Hun, works as a baker, while the victim, a local student, is under the age of 18.

According to the victim's report, when walking along Rua do Visconde Paço de Arcos (巴素

打爾古街) in the Inner Harbour area with her younger sister on Friday evening, a man suddenly approached and touched her chest, and he also filmed her and her younger sister with his phone.

The victim immediately reported the case to the police. Hun was arrested at 00:10 a.m. on Saturday at a bus stop near to where the offence happened.

Hun has been transferred to the Public Prosecutions Office (MP), facing a sexual harassment charge and an illegal recording charge, Cheong noted. ■



This undated handout photo provided by the Public Security Police (PSP) yesterday shows a PSP officer escorting the sexual harassment suspect to the Nam Van Police station.

STOCK MARKETS

Hang Seng Index closes 0.44 pct higher

HONG KONG — Hong Kong's stock market ended higher yesterday with the benchmark Hang Seng Index up 0.44 percent to close at 19,663.67 points.

While the Hang Seng China Enterprises Index rose 0.36 percent to end at 7,082.21 points, the Hang Seng Tech Index rose 1.23 percent to end at 4,395.04 points. — Xinhua

Temporary security measures for e-wheelchairs, e-scooters & e-suitcases at checkpoints starts today

Ginnie Liang

From today until December 20, the Macau Customs Service (SA), in conjunction with the Public Security Police (PSP) and Fire Services Bureau (CB), will jointly implement temporary security control measures at the city's four checkpoints for e-wheelchair, e-scooter and e-suitcase users, according to a statement issued by the Customs Service on Monday.

With the upcoming 25th anniversary of Macau's return to the motherland on December 20, the passenger flow at all border checkpoints is expected to increase, the statement said.

Therefore, in order to ensure the smoothness and safety of Macau's four land border checkpoints, and to ensure the safety of people who use e-wheelchairs and e-scooters or carry e-suitcases during their journey, border crossers using or carrying such items should use the dedicated lanes set up for them, and various measures such as inspection of the electronic items will also take place at the checkpoints, the statement said.

The border checkpoints that will implement the measures are the Barrier Gate checkpoint, Qingmao pedestrian checkpoint, the Macau-side of the Hengqin joint checkpoint, and the Macau checkpoint of the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macau Bridge (HZMB).

Border crossers using or carrying the items are advised to cooperate with the instructions given and arrangements set by the officers on site, the statement said. ■



This poster provided by the Macau Customs Service (SA) yesterday announces the temporary security measures at the city's four checkpoints for users of e-wheelchairs, e-scooters and e-suitcases.

Xi urges a just world of common development, fair global governance amid global crises

Analysis

RIO DE JANEIRO – President Xi Jinping on Monday called for a just world of common development and a fair and equitable global governance system, as G20 leaders gathered here to seek solutions to pressing global crises, ranging from hunger and economic instability to climate change.

BUILDING JUST WORLD OF COMMON DEVELOPMENT

While addressing the summit, Xi said that China is ready to work with all parties to build a just world of common development.

He pointed out that transformation of a scale not seen in a century is accelerating across the world today, and humanity faces unprecedented opportunities and challenges.

As leaders of major countries, G20 leaders should not let their vision be blocked by fleeting clouds. Rather, they must see the world as one community with a shared future, and shoulder their responsibility for history, take historical initiative and move history forward, Xi said.

How to address the global challenge of hunger is high on the agenda of this year's G20 summit. According to the UN's State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World report, 733 million people faced hunger in 2023.

Hunger is the biological expression of social ills, said Brazilian President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva at the summit. "It is the product of political decisions that perpetuate the exclusion of a large part of humanity."

Yesterday, the G20 launched the Global Alliance against Hunger and Poverty to support the implementation of country-led, country-owned programs aiming at reducing hunger and poverty worldwide, contributing to revitalizing global partnerships for sustainable development, according to the G20 Rio de Janeiro Leaders' Declaration.

"Poverty alleviation has always been a priority and a major task I am determined to deliver," Xi said while addressing the summit.

Always concerned about impoverished regions and families in straitened circumstances, Xi has directed the country's battle against poverty in person. Under his leadership, China launched a monumental anti-poverty campaign.

In 2021, China declared a "complete victory" in eradicating absolute poverty. "We have lifted 800 million people out of poverty, and met the poverty reduction target of the UN's 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development ahead of schedule," Xi told the summit.

China's story is proof that developing countries can eliminate poverty, that a weaker bird can start early and fly high, when there is the endurance, perseverance, and striving spirit that enables water drops to penetrate rocks over time and turns blueprints into reality, he said.

Xi stressed that China will always be a member of the Global South, a reliable long-term partner of fellow developing countries, and a doer and go-getter working for the cause of global development. China will go hand in hand with fellow developing countries toward modernization, he said.

"China is sharing its development experience with other countries through its development initiatives which have helped to promote common development," said Straton Habyarimana, Rwandan economic analyst.

FAIR, EQUITABLE GLOBAL GOVERNANCE SYSTEM

During Session II of the 19th G20 Summit on Reform of the Institutions of Global Governance, Xi called for a fair and equitable global governance system.

Noting that it has been 16 years since the G20 Summit was launched, Xi said that proceeding from a new starting point, the G20 needs to build on its past achievements and continue to act as a force to improve global governance and move history forward.

G20 members should keep in mind that mankind lives in a community with a shared future, see each other's development as opportunities rather than challenges, and view each other as partners rather than rivals, Xi said at the summit. He called for building a world economy characterized by cooperation, stability, openness, innovation and eco-friendliness.

Xi's call resonated with the shared vision of G20 members. According to the G20 Rio de Janeiro Leaders' Declaration, G20 leaders reaffirmed their strong commitment to multilateralism and pledged to reform the global governance system.

"We need to better equip the world with a reformed global governance," said the G20 leaders in the declaration, noting that the challenges the global community faces today can only be addressed through multilateral solutions for a better tomorrow and the strengthening of global governance for both present and future generations.

Xi's emphasis on improving global governance also earned praise from experts, who highlighted China's longstanding advocacy for a more just and equitable global order.

China plays an essential role within the G20 in pushing for a more just and equitable world order, said Ali Oguz Dirioz, an associate professor of international relations at Ankara's TOBB University.

"China is a very big economy and is also promoting more equitable global governance, therefore its role in this group is significant for other members," said the Turkish expert.

The G20 comprises 19 countries across five continents, along with the European Union and the recently admitted the African Union (AU). This year's summit marks the first gathering since the AU's inclusion.

China was the main proponent advocating for the AU's full membership in the G20, said Keith Bennett, an international relations consultant based in London, noting that the move has strengthened the group's representation.

"China is at the forefront of promoting the representation and voice of developing countries in the international governance system," Bennett told Xinhua.

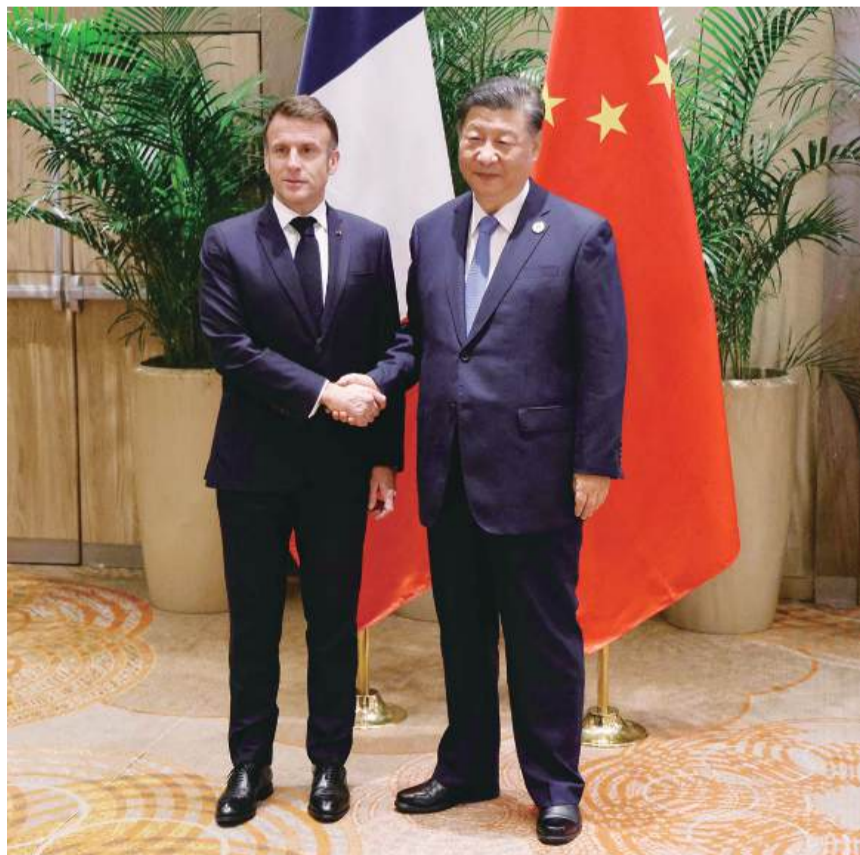
Climate change is also a key issue on the summit agenda. In the summit's declaration, G20 leaders emphasized the group's leadership role and its commitment to tackling climate change by strengthening the effective implementation of the Paris Agreement.

In his remarks, while highlighting the need for the G20 to improve global ecological governance and build a world economy characterized by eco-friendliness as part of his five-point proposal to improve global governance, Xi said that China stands ready to continue to deepen international cooperation with all sides on green infrastructure, green energy, green mining and green transport, and will provide support to developing countries to the best of its ability.

As a summit observer, John Kirton, co-author of Reconfiguring the Global Governance of Climate Change, said he still remembers what President Xi said at the G20 Hangzhou Summit: Lucid waters and lush mountains are invaluable assets.

"The message is clear: it's not about the money; put the natural environment and ecology first," he said. "It is a very impressive approach for all G20 members to follow and to come together to build a common future for mankind."

— Xinhua



President Xi Jinping (right) shakes hands with French President Emmanuel Macron during a bilateral meeting on the sidelines of the G20 summit in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, yesterday. — Xinhua