

Lawmakers pass outline of 2025 budget bill, govt expects 7.7 billion pataca surplus

Tony Wong

The Legislative Assembly (AL) yesterday unanimously passed the outline of the government's 2025 budget bill, the second one with a budget surplus after Macau's post-pandemic economic recovery.

Introducing the outline of the 2025 budget bill during yesterday's plenary session, Secretary for Economy and Finance Lei Wai Nong noted that next year would be the second time that the government was able to achieve a formally balanced budget without having to allocate money from its financial reserves, after Macau's economic recovery from the adverse impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

After yesterday's passage of its outline, the 2025 budget bill will be passed to one of the legislature's standing committees for an article-by-article review, after which it will be resubmitted to another plenary session for its second and final debate and article-by-article vote, which must be carried out before the end of next month.

The government's 2025 budget must be promulgated in the Official Gazette (BO) by the end of this year for its implementation from

the first day of next year.

The 2024 budget bill presented in 2023 expected the government to run a budget surplus again this year, after the government recorded a budget deficit for four consecutive years from 2020 to 2023. The COVID-19 pandemic affected Macau for three years from early 2020 through 2022, which severely impacted the city's economy, which started its post-pandemic gradual recovery early last year.

This year's budget surplus was expected to amount to 1.17 billion patacas.

Different to the three years of 2020, 2021 and 2022 when the government recorded a large budget deficit every year, its budget deficit in 2023 was relatively small as Macau's gross gaming revenue (GGR), the government's main source of its taxation income, began to steadily recover early last year.

Lei noted during yesterday's plenary session that government revenues have been gradually improving since early 2023 when the local economy started its post-COVID-19 gradual recovery. The policy secretary said that the government expects Macau's



Secretary for Economy and Finance Lei Wai Nong addresses yesterday's plenary session in the Legislative Assembly's (AL) hemicycle. – Photo courtesy of TDM

economic recovery to continue in 2025 resulting in continuous improvements in government revenues next year.

Consequently, Lei said, the government now expects next year's GGR to reach 240 billion patacas, which he pointed out is a sum that constitutes the main source

of budgeted government revenues proposed by the 2025 budget bill.

Because of the expected GGR of 240 billion patacas next year, according to the 2025 budget bill, the government's 2025 direct gaming tax revenue is expected to amount to 84 billion patacas, i.e., 35 percent of the GGR.



Join the fight against Dengue Fever
Vases or saucers under potted plants should be scrubbed, cleaned and have water changed at least once a week
MSARG Dengue Fever Prevention Working Group

Macau's gaming operators pay 35 percent of their gross gaming receipts as direct tax to the government, apart from another five percent as levies for a wide range of public causes.

Lei said that according to its 2025 budget bill, the government expects its revenues to reach 121.09 billion patacas next year, while its expenditure next year is expected to amount to 113.38 billion patacas.

Consequently, according to the bill, the government expects to enjoy a budget surplus of 7.7 billion patacas next year.

Continued on p.5

Gaetz withdraws as Trump's attorney general pick



WASHINGTON – Scandal-plagued Matt Gaetz, who was nominated by President-elect Donald Trump to be US attorney general, yesterday pulled out of the confirmation process in an early setback for the incoming administration.

Gaetz was one of Trump's several eye-catching selections, including Fox News host Pete Hegseth as defence secretary, vaccine sceptic Robert F. Kennedy Jr. as health secretary and billionaire

Elon Musk to head a government cost-cutting unit.

A congressional panel had been investigating alleged illegal activity by Gaetz, including sexual misconduct with a 17-year-old girl – which he denies – as well as drug use and misappropriating campaign funds.

He was facing an uphill battle to win confirmation in the Senate for the top legal role of attorney general due to widespread opposition, including from within

his own Republican Party.

"I had excellent meetings with Senators yesterday. I appreciate their thoughtful feedback – and the incredible support of so many," Gaetz said on X.

"While the momentum was strong, it is clear that my confirmation was unfairly becoming a distraction to the critical work of the Trump/Vance Transition."

Gaetz was first elected to the US House of Representatives in 2016

and won re-election this month, but he resigned as a congressman shortly after Trump picked him to be attorney general.

"Matt has a wonderful future, and I look forward to watching all of the great things he will do," Trump said in response to his withdrawal.

Several of Trump's nominations have triggered criticism, and the latest transition turmoil came as new lurid details emerged about nominee Hegseth.

He was investigated for sexual assault after a complaint from an unnamed woman at a 2017 conference in California.

The New York Times reported details from the police investigation, which was closed without Hegseth being charged.

The married woman told officers that she suffered from memory loss and thought her drink might have been spiked, while Hegseth said the encounter was consensual. – AFP

ICC issues arrest warrants for Netanyahu, Gallant, Deif

The International Criminal Court (ICC) yesterday issued arrest warrants for Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and his former defence minister, as well as Hamas's military chief Mohammed Deif. – *Story on p. 10*

Banana taped to a wall sells for US\$6.2 million in US

A fresh banana taped to a wall – a provocative work of conceptual art by Italian artist Maurizio Cattelan – was bought for US\$6.2 million on Wednesday by a cryptocurrency entrepreneur at a New York auction, Sotheby's announced in a statement. – *Story on p. 11*

China, Brazil elevate ties to forge shared future

President Xi Jinping and Brazilian President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva on Wednesday announced an elevation of bilateral ties to a "community with a shared future for a more just world and a more sustainable planet." – *Story on p. 12*

Fai Chi Kei-Lam Mau Tong skywalk opens



This handout photo released by the Public Works Bureau (DSOP) last week shows a section of the newly opened elevated walkway system in Lam Mau Tong, directly linking the podium areas of the La Magnificence (信譽灣畔) residential estate and the Le Jade (泉福翡翠) residential estate on Avenida Marginal do Lam Mau (林茂海邊大馬路).



This handout photo released by the Public Works Bureau (DSOP) last week shows a corridor open to members of the public along the podium areas of the Leisure Garden (信愉花園) and San Cheung Seng Garden (新駿成花園) residential estates in Lam Mau Tong.

Tony Wong

The elevated walkway system linking podium areas of various residential estates in the Lam Mau Tong neighbourhood and its adjacent southern Fai Chi Kei district has finally been fully connected and opened to pedestrians, according to a recent statement by the Public Works Bureau (DSOP).

The walking system comprises footbridges crossing roads and streets, and walkways linking podium areas of different

residential estates in the area.

After the elevated walkway system's different sections had been fully connected, with a total length of 980 metres, pedestrians are now able to walk between the Fai Chi Kei Health Centre and the temporary recreational area in Lam Mau Tong all the way on the skyway, i.e., without having to go back down to the street, according to the statement.

The Fai Chi Kei Health Centre is located near the now-defunct greyhound racetrack (Yat Yuen

Canidrome), while the temporary recreational area in Lam Mau Tong is the one with a children's playground featuring the Macau peninsula's first outdoor sandpit.

Different sections of the elevated walkway system, on public corridors along podium areas of various residential estates, were completed at different times previously, but they still could not open to pedestrians previously due to different reasons. A DSOP statement last Friday said that "the

government's work on coordinating the opening of the respective buildings' elevated public corridors has been completed because of which the skywalk system has now been fully connected".

As part of the elevated walkway system, two new government-built footbridges crossing Avenida Marginal do Lam Mau (林茂海邊大馬路) opened to pedestrians earlier this year, after their construction was completed in March and June this year respectively.

Moreover, a footbridge is being constructed at the junction of Avenida Marginal do Lam Mau, Avenida Marginal do Patane (沙梨頭海邊大馬路) and Rua Sul do Patane (沙梨頭南街), which will also link with the podium areas of two residential estates after its completion, namely Van Sion Son Chun (運順新邨) and Trust Leisure Garden (信步閑庭). The footbridge project, which got off the ground in June, is scheduled to be completed in September next year. ■

Man tries to shield wife over DUI charges: police

Ginnie Liang

The Public Security Police (PSP) busted a drunk-driving (DUI) case in which five people were injured early yesterday morning and the female driver and her husband,

who allegedly attempted to shield her, were arrested.

Five people were injured by the car accident, all of whom are local residents aged between 26 and 64.

Among the five that were

injured, one refused to be taken to hospital, and the remainder were rushed either to the private Kiang Wu Hospital or the public Conde de São Januário Hospital Centre with slight injuries, although a 38-year-old female motorcyclist sustained a right ankle laceration and suspected fracture.

The female driver is in her thirties, while her husband is in his forties.

According to the Public Security Police, the woman was driving against the flow of traffic on Avenida da Amizade (友誼大馬路) early yesterday morning, and collided with three motorcycles but continued to drive until she crashed into a taxi.

PSP officers went to the scene to investigate, during which the woman's husband rushed to the scene by taxi and attempted to shield his wife from any blame.

PSP officers found that the woman's breathalyser tests showed an alcohol concentration of 1.51 grams of alcohol per litre of blood, which is a drunk-driving concentration.

The duo have been transferred to the Public Prosecutions Office (MP), with the woman facing charges of drunk-driving, dangerous driving, evading responsibility and causing harm by negligence, while her husband faces a charge of aiding and abetting the perpetrator of an offence. ■



A crashed white car being towed yesterday on Avenida da Amizade (友誼大馬路). - Photo courtesy of TDM

HK woman uses another's ID to redeem guest rooms & resell them

Ginnie Liang

A 46-year-old Hong Kong woman was arrested on Tuesday for entering a casino in Cotai using another person's ID card, and staying in the hotel guestroom that she had obtained using her gaming points, and also earned money by renting the redeemed rooms to others, a Public Security Police (PSP) spokesperson said in regular press conference yesterday.

According to the spokesperson, the Hong Kong woman surnamed Un told the police that she is jobless. The police also confirmed that she had been barred from casino gambling.

According to the spokesperson, Un borrowed the ID card from a mainland female friend surnamed Yang in April, and used her friend's card to apply for a casino bonus point card that she used to obtain hotel rooms, after which rented them out for profit.

In a routine check, PSP officers discovered that a woman surnamed Yang had no valid stay permit in Macau but still appeared to be staying in hotel rooms in Cotai. In the course of the investigation, they also discovered that Un had used Yang's identification documents and counterfeit stay permits at least six times.

PSP officers arrested Un in a hotel guestroom in Cotai on Tuesday. According to the spokesperson, she confessed that she bought fake stay permits so that she could remain in Macau and enter casinos by using Yang's identification document. Un told police that each forged document cost 400 yuan.

Un has been transferred to the Public Prosecutions Office (MP), facing charges of document forgery and use of other people's identity documents, the spokesperson said. ■



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

Published since Aug 2004

- Director & Chief Editor - Harald Brüning
- Office Manager - Sally Cheong
- Marketing Manager - Kevin Cheung King Lok
- Managing Editor - Maria Cheang Ut Meng
- Editors - Lesley Wells, Johnny Un
- Senior Reporter - Tony Wong
- Reporters - Rui Pastorin, Yuki Lei, Ginnie Liang, William Chan
- Chief Graphic Designer - Simon Wang
- Graphic Designer - Colin Zhong
- Administrative Assistants - Ester Mak, Carl Leong
- Printed by Tipografia Welfare Lda., 82-86 Rua dos Pescadores
- Wire services - AFP, Xinhua



Macau Weather

FINE APART FROM CLOUDY PERIODS. FORCE 3 TO 4 NORTH TO NORTHEASTERLY WINDS. RELATIVE HUMIDITY WILL RANGE BETWEEN 50% AND 90%.



17°C~25°C

Source: SMG

Visitors rise 13.7 pct in Oct to 3.1 million

Staff Reporter

Macau visitor arrivals rose by 13.7 percent year on year to 3.13 million last month, recovering to 97.7 percent of the level in the same month of pre-pandemic 2019, the Statistics and Census Bureau (DSEC) announced yesterday.

Month-on-month, the number of visitor arrivals was up 24 percent.

October included the mainland's National Day "Golden Week" holiday.

Macau's daily average of visitor arrivals stood at 101,140 in October, corresponding to about 15 percent of the local population.

Same-day visitors (1.79 million) and overnight visitors (1.34 million) rose by 23.2 percent and 3.1 percent year on year respectively.

Visitors' average length of stay fell by 0.1 day year on year to 1.1 days, with that of overnight visitors remaining unchanged at 2.3 days.

Mainlanders accounted for 72.2 percent of all visitor arrivals last month. Visitors from the nine Pearl River Delta cities in the Greater Bay Area (GBA) increased by 21.8 percent to 1.15 million.

Visitors from China's Taiwan region rose by 28 percent to 68,701 in October, while those from Hong Kong dipped by 0.2 percent to 590,930.

Foreign visitors rose by 31.2 percent to 212,284, or 6.8 percent of the total number of visitor arrivals, back to 98.8 percent of the October 2019 level. Most foreign visitors came from South Korea (47,069), the Philippines (38,924), Malaysia (15,926), and Indonesia (13,625).

US visitors increased by 20.8 percent to 13,022.

In the first 10 months of the year, visitor arrivals grew by 28.1 percent to 29.05 million, back to 87 percent of the figure in the same period in 2019. ■



This photo taken late last month shows tourists exploring the shops in Rua do Cunha. - Photo: Rui Pastorin

Fighters to go head-to-head at UFC Fight Night Macau



Professional mixed martial fighters Yan Xiaonan (left), Petr Yan (second from left), Deiveson Figueiredo (second from right) and Tabatha Ricci answer (right) questions during yesterday's press conference while the emcee (centre) looks on at the Galaxy International Convention Centre (GICC). - Photo: Rui Pastorin

Rui Pastorin

The Ultimate Fighting Championship (UFC) marks its return to Macau with tomorrow's "UFC Fight Night Macau", with fighters to go head-to-head at the 16,000-seat Galaxy Arena in Cotai.

Marking the fourth UFC event in Macau, with the last being in 2014, and seventh in Greater China, tomorrow's fight event is headlined by a bout between No.3 UFC bantamweight and former UFC bantamweight champion Petr Yan (17-5) from Russia and Brazil's Deiveson Figueiredo (24-3-1), who is the No. 5 UFC bantamweight and former UFC flyweight champion. The co-main event, meanwhile, will see a clash between No.2 UFC women's strawweight Yan Xiaonan (17-4) from the mainland, and No. 10 in UFC women's strawweight Tabatha Ricci (11-2) from Brazil.

Ricci (11-2) from Brazil.

The fight night is presented by Galaxy Macau in partnership with UFC. During yesterday's press conference at the Galaxy International Convention Centre (GICC) in Cotai, Senior Vice President and Head of Asia at the UFC Kevin Chang said in his speech: "We've had an overwhelming response from our fans, with tickets for this event selling incredibly quickly, showing how high the demand is for live UFC events. The state-of-the-art Galaxy Arena will set the scene for an incredible night of mixed martial arts action".

Saturday will also see a lineup including fighters from the mainland, India, Mongolia, South Korea and Vietnam go toe to toe with each other.

Moreover, Galaxy Entertainment

Group (GEG) Chief Operating Officer Kevin Kelley highlighted in his speech that the integrated resort (IR) operator was proud to bring the fight event back to Macau. "In recent months, we've hosted many world-class events, entertainment and sports. But our partnership with the UFC, the world's premier martial arts MMA organisation raises the bar even further".

Kelley added: "Under the tourism sports development strategy set up by Macau's SAR government, Macau has successfully built a reputation as a city of sports. And this time, the return of UFC Fight Night is a showcase for our ability and commitment to promoting the integrated development of sports and tourism in Macau, as well as attracting enthusiasts and visitors from all over the world". ■

MotoSurf World Championship makes Macau debut

Rui Pastorin

The "2024 UIM Macao Grand Prix MotoSurf World Championship Finale" takes place at Hac Sa Beach from today through

Sunday, marking the first time that the event is being held in Macau and brings together 120 racers from 22 countries and regions, according to Melco Resorts & Entertainment statement yesterday.

The free-admission event, for which a launch ceremony was held at City of Dreams in Cotai yesterday, is hosted by the integrated resort operator in conjunction with Macau MotoSurf Association (MMSA), and is co-presented by the Monaco-based Union Internationale Motonautique (UIM), which is the international governing body of powerboating, and Wuling Technology Ltd.

The statement quoted Melco Board Director Clarence Chung Yuk Man as saying: "Melco continues to be dedicated to promoting Macau's cultural and sports industries, hence we are honoured to be bringing the esteemed MotoSurf World Championship to the city for the first time".

Macau Motosurf Association Chairman Irene Nga Ieng Ho was also quoted as saying that the new event highlights "the exciting possibilities of motosurfing and Macau's capability to host premier

water sports events" and aims to raise awareness for Macau as "a unique destination for water sports on the international stage."

Moreover, MotoSurf World Championship Director Martin Jančálek said: "The UIM Macau GP will also deliver the first ever World Games qualified athlete for MotoSurf which will be an exceptional moment for the whole sport".

The statement added that the champion of the women's category in this Macau qualifying event will be the first official qualifier for the 12th edition of The World Games in Chengdu in August 2025, which will have MotoSurf represent the UIM for the first time and will mark powerboating's debut in the games.

Yesterday's launch ceremony was officiated by guests including Secretary for Social Affairs and Culture Elsie Ao Ieong U; Director of the Department of Publicity and Culture of the Liaison Office of the Central People's Government in the Macau SAR Wan Sucheng; and Macau Government Tourism Office (MGTO) Director Maria Helena de Senna Fernandes. ■




This poster provided by Melco Resorts & Entertainment yesterday promotes the 2024 UIM Macao Grand Prix MotoSurf World Championship Finale, which starts today.

IAA MACAO CHINA 中國澳門

Talk at Sunset

Macao Grand Prix: Beyond the Races

Thursday, 28th Nov 2024
18:30 – 20:00
Vasco Bar, Artyzen Grand Lapa



Eng. João Manuel Costa Antunes
Former Director of Macao Government Tourism Office

Past Coordinator of Macao Grand Prix

About the Talk

Eng. João Manuel Costa Antunes, a big legendary figure of Macao, will share his stories and insights in an upcoming talk titled "Macao Grand Prix: Beyond the Races," highlighting how this legendary sports spectacular serves as a catalyst for Macao's global development and its impact on the region's tourism landscape.



18:00 Welcome reception
18:30 Speaker's talk
18:45 Q&A

Free for IAA members
Mop 100 for members and partners
Mop 150 for non-members


The event includes one drink per participant. Participants can enjoy 50% discount on drinks after the first drink until 20:30

R.S.V.P.: info@iaamacao.com
Book by 26th Nov 2024

Become IAA Member About IAA Macao

Partners:



Sands China donates 1.08 million patacas to 7 tertiary institutions

Rui Pastorin

Integrated resort (IR) operator Sands China said in a statement earlier this week that it has donated 1.08 million patacas to representatives of seven local higher education institutions in Macau, marking the 18th consecutive year of providing scholarships and fellowships to local tertiary institutions and bringing the total donations to over 15.7 million for tertiary scholarships and fellowships in Macau since 2006.

According to the statement, the donations have altogether benefitted over 1,800 students. This year's donations, the statement said, will be distributed among 108 students, who were chosen by the institutions based on their academic performance and financial status during the previous academic year.

The annual ceremonial cheque presentation was held at The Venetian Macao on November 5. They were presented to University of Macau (UM) Rector's Office Director Carol Wong; Macao University of Tourism (UTM) chief registrar of the Pedagogic Affairs Department Louisa Lam Pou Iok; Macao Polytechnic University (MPU) Vice Rector Vivian Lei Ngan Lin; Macao University of Science and Technology (MUST) Student Affairs Office head Remus Wong Ka Weng; University of Saint Joseph (USJ) Rector Prof. Stephen Morgan; City University of Macau Vice Rector Prof. Han Wei; and Macau Institute of Management President Prof. Samuel Tong Kai Chung.

Sands China Ltd. Executive Vice Chairman Wilfred Wong Ying-wai was quoted by the statement as saying that "Macau's youth are the future of the community and the main driving force of the city's development".

Wong added: "It is a pleasure for Sands China to help nurture young people through talent development initiatives like this, encouraging them to pursue experience while laying a foundation for their academic achievements and future careers".



This handout photo taken on November 5 and provided earlier this week shows Sands China Ltd. Executive Vice Chairman Wilfred Wong Ying-wai (second from right) presenting a ceremonial cheque to the University of Macau Rector's Office Director Carol Wong (second from left) during a presentation at The Venetian Macao.

MGM, DSEDJ organise learning festival



This handout photo recently provided by MGM shows guests and attendees of "MGM Learning Festival Launch Ceremony and Keynote Seminar on Highlights of 25 Years of Macau's Developmental Achievements".

Rui Pastorin

MGM has recently partnered with the Education and Youth Development Bureau (DSEDJ) to host the "MGM Learning Festival", which aims to enhance staff members' job skills, service mindset, and commitment to continuing education and professional certifications, according to a recent statement from the Integrated resort (IR) operator.

The festival runs from late October to early December, the statement said, which adds that it was also organised in celebration of the 75th Anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic of China (PRC) and the 25th anniversary of Macau's return to the motherland. It also aims to create a workplace that supports staff members' well-rounded growth.

Among a raft of activities hosted for the festival are back-of-house roadshows hosted by MGM Academy and various renowned Greater Bay Area (GBA) universities, promoting tourism and hospitality certificate degree courses and training programmes. Government departments from the Guangdong-Macau In-Depth Cooperation Zone in Hengqin and Macau, local associations, and learning centres also promote their courses during the roadshows, while culture and art workshops are also available.

The "MGM Learning Festival Launch Ceremony and Keynote Seminar on Highlights of 25 Years of Macau's Developmental Achievements" was held on November 12 at MGM MACAU, the statement said, which also featured a seminar conducted by Davis Fong Ka Chio, professor at the University of Macau's (UM) Department of Integrated Resort and Tourism Management, and director of the public university's Institute for the Study of Commercial Gaming.

MGM President and Executive Director President and Executive Director of MGM China Holdings Limited Kenneth Feng Xiaofeng was quoted by the statement as saying that "the MGM Learning Festival goes beyond being an event — it serves as a platform to empower our employees and help them grow. We hope that this festival will inspire our team members to continue to discover the joy of learning and help them stay competitive in an ever-changing marketplace."

Hot pot festival returns to Broadway Macau

Rui Pastorin

The free-admission Broadway Macau Hot Pot Festival made its return earlier this week, with 13 restaurants in Broadway Food Street offering over 50 hot pot dishes from Macau and Asia's top food destinations, according to a recent statement by integrated resort operator Galaxy Macau.

The festival, on until February 28, features a variety of hot pot flavours, as well as exclusive dishes only available in Macau.

The statement said that among its offerings are Braised Lamb Brisket Casserole from Wui Sik Fong - Lei Ka Choi, which features succulent grass fed Chinese black lamb, slow-cooked in a clay pot over charcoal for a subtle smoky aroma and enriched with water chestnuts and carrots.

The Pork Offal Congee Hot pot at Wui Sik Fong - San Ma Lo Seng Kei Congee, which received the 2024 Dianping Must Eat List Award, is also a highlight, the statement said, and features a "velvety, richly flavoured porridge base", simmered along with hand-made pork meatballs, fresh carp belly and pork offal.

Macau exclusives, the statement noted, include the Vietnamese Hat-shaped Hot Pot at Café Hanoi, which features rich seafood and unique ingredients and three broth types, and the North-Eastern Thai Mini Hot pot at Pratumam 1982, which features ingredients like herbs, lime, chili and alpinmia galanga paired with a variety of meats, seafood and vegetables.

Apujeong by Kim's Korean Cuisine also introduces their signature Pork Rib and Potato Casserole, "a quintessential Korean dish often enjoyed as a remedy for hangovers", the statement noted.

Moreover, hotpot classics from across Asia are also available, while festivalgoers can also enjoy live band performances on Fridays, Saturdays and public holidays throughout the event period.

More details can be found by visiting www.galaxymacau.com and www.broadwaymacau.com.mo, or their respective social media pages.



This undated handout photo provided by Galaxy Macau earlier this week shows the Braised Lamb Brisket Casserole on offer during the Broadway Macau Hot Pot Festival.

SJM sponsors MSO Tennis Open Day 2024



Director of SJM and Chairman of the Staff Welfare Consultative Committee of SJM Angela Leong On Kei (right) presents a souvenir to Macau Special Olympics (MSO) Chief Executive Officer Hetzer Siu Yu Hong.

Rui Pastorin

The SJM MSO Tennis Open Day 2024 was held earlier this month, with integrated resort operator SJM Resorts title-sponsoring the event along with two tennis training workshops hosted by the Macau Special Olympics (MSO) on October 10 and November 3, according to a recent statement by the company.

The statement noted that the recently concluded open day, which aimed to provide special needs individuals with an opportunity to "engage with tennis and discover their potential", was held at Artyzen Grand Lapa Macau and attended by SJM Director and Chairwoman of the Staff Welfare Consultative Committee of SJM Angela Leong On Kei to present awards to tournament winners. The event, which drew over 100 participants, also involved the assistance of 17 SJM volunteers.

Meanwhile, the two workshops hosted by MSO at the University of Macau's tennis courts attracted over 70 participants and featured professional coaches.

"Through a variety of sporting activities, SJM aims to encourage people from all levels of the community to play tennis and develop their confidence and perseverance", the integrated resort operator said in the statement.

84-day-long 'Light up Macao 2024' to kick off on Dec 7



Macau Government Tourism Office (MGTO) Director Maria Helena de Senna Fernandes (centre), flanked by two other representatives, addresses a press conference at the World Trade Centre Macau (WTCM) yesterday. — Photo: Ginnie Liang

Ginnie Liang

Themed “Symphony of Time and Space”, “Light up Macao 2024” will take place from December 7 through February 28, showcasing six flagship installations, four art installations, 12 light installations, nine interactive installations and three mapping shows in 23 locations across the city.

Organised by Macau Government Tourism Office (MGTO), the festive event will be held in celebration of the 75th Anniversary of the founding of the People’s Republic of China (PRC) and the 25th Anniversary of the establishment of the Macau Special Administrative Region (SAR).

The total budget is 28.3 million patacas for the event, MGTO will pay 10.3 million patacas, or 27 percent less than last year, while the remainder will be paid by the city’s six integrated resort (IR) operators, MGTO Director Maria Helena de Senna Fernandes said during a

press conference at the World Trade Centre Macau (WTCM) yesterday.

Since Macau’s designation as a UNESCO Creative City of Gastronomy in 2017, MGTO endeavours to promote the development of “tourism + gastronomy”, capitalising on the UNESCO Creative Cities Network (UCCN) to foster cooperation among member cities in different creative fields and tap into the integrated development across “tourism +”, according to Senna Fernandes.

Mainland, Hong Kong and Macau artistes will join foreign teams working for the event, comprising 18 artistes and design teams, some of whom are from eight UNESCO Creative Cities of Design in the mainland and overseas, Senna Fernandes said, adding she hopes that creative talents from Macau and worldwide can jointly create an illuminative feast for the eyes across time and space, brightening Macau’s golden calling card as an



This poster provided by the Macau Government Tourism Office (MGTO) yesterday promotes the city’s annual “Light up Macao 2024” light festival event.

international metropolis.

The installations will be illuminated and open to the public from 7 p.m. to 10 p.m. during the event period, while the mapping shows will be staged every 30 minutes from 7 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. every night throughout the event period, with each mapping show spanning about five minutes.

In addition to installations and mapping shows, according to the press conference, between 8 p.m. and 9 p.m. every Saturday during the event, pop-up events will enliven designated locations, such as giant inflatable dolls, electronic keyboard performances, funny balloon shows, parent-child workshops, cartoon painting, mini bands, parent-child drumming interaction, guitar shows and electronic cello performances.

For more information, one can visit the website for Light up Macao 2024: https://lum.macaotourism.gov.mo/index_en.html and follow MGTO: MGTOweixin on WeChat. ■

Lawmakers pass outline of 2025 budget bill, govt expects 7.7 billion pataca surplus

Continued from p.1

The current administration headed by Chief Executive Ho Iat Seng will be succeeded by a new administration headed by Sam Hou Fai on December 20, 2024. The outgoing government proposes the 2025 budget bill to ensure the source for the next government’s expenditure for maintaining its normal operations.

The 2024 budget bill presented in 2023 expected this year’s GGR to reach 216 billion patacas. According to official data, Macau’s GGR amounted to 190.1 billion patacas during the first 10 months of this year.

Why GGR of 240 billion patacas in 2025?

During yesterday’s plenary session, several lawmakers asked Lei about the government’s reason for forecasting GGR of 240 billion patacas for next year.

Lei noted that during the 10 months of this year, Macau recorded GGR of 190.1 billion in total, equivalent to an average of 19 billion patacas per month. Lei noted that in 2023, the government expected 2024’s GGR to reach 216 billion patacas, equivalent to an average of 18 billion patacas per month.

Lei pointed out that if Macau records a monthly GGR of 18 billion patacas this month and next month, this year’s GGR would amount to 226 billion patacas, while if Macau records a monthly GGR of 19 billion patacas this month and next month, this year’s GGR would amount to 228 billion patacas.

Consequently, Lei said, this year’s GGR could be expected to reach between 226 billion patacas and 228 billion patacas, around five percent more than the initial forecast of 216 billion patacas.

Therefore, Lei underlined, the government expects next year’s GGR to be able to reach 240 billion patacas, representing an increase of around five or six percent from an amount of between 226 billion patacas and 228 billion patacas expected for the whole of this year.

Lei underlined that the government’s forecast of an increase of around five or six percent is a cautious one.

The policy secretary also noted that the government expects this year’s number of visitor arrivals to amount to 33 million, while next year number is expected to grow by nine percent to 36 million.

Lei noted that nowadays Macau’s GGR generated by mass-market gamblers accounts for 76 percent of the total while the one generated by VIP gamblers makes up 24 percent, a major change from previously when the ratio was 40 percent versus 60 percent.

Consequently, Lei said, an increase in the number of visitor arrivals can be expected to proportionately contribute to an increase of GGR.

Therefore, Lei said, the government’s forecast of an increase of around five or six percent for next year GGR is a cautious one.

Back in pre-pandemic 2019, Macau recorded 39.4 million visitor arrivals. ■

Liaison office in HK supports punishment of subversive activities

HONG KONG – The Liaison Office of the Central People’s Government in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) said yesterday that it firmly supports Hong Kong’s judicial organs in sentencing the defendants convicted of “conspiracy to subvert the state power” in accordance with the law.

Criminals led by Benny Tai Yiu-ting organized the so-called “primary election” under the guise of so-called “democracy” and “human rights” in an attempt to

seize half of the total membership of the Legislative Council (LegCo) of the HKSAR and vote against the HKSAR government’s budget and public expenditure proposals, said a spokesperson for the office.

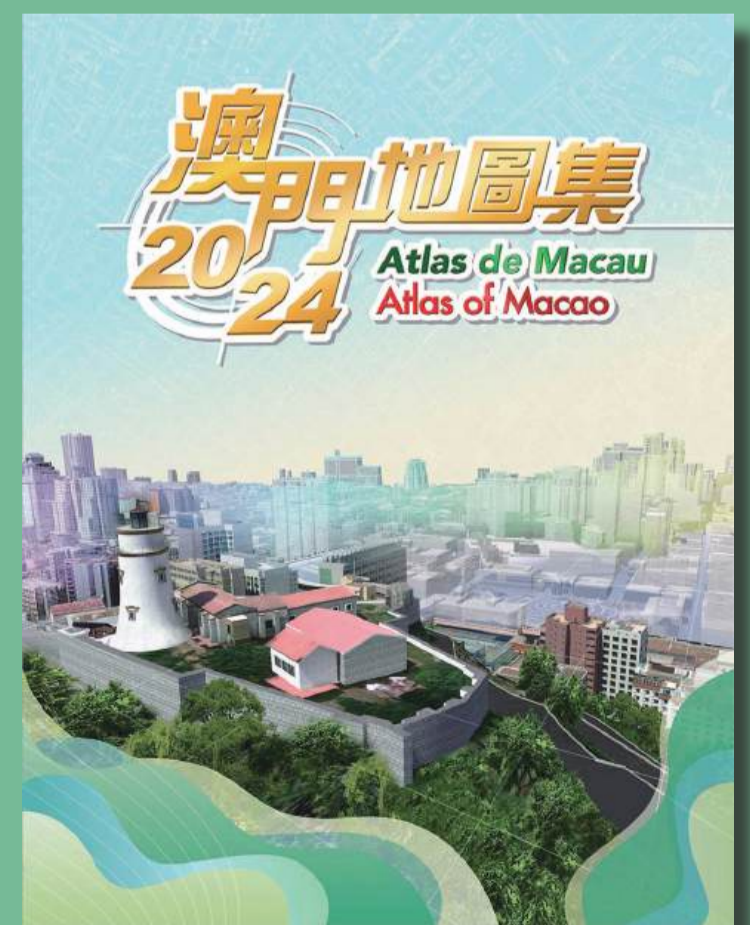
They aimed to press for the dissolution of LegCo and the resignation of the chief executive of the HKSAR so as to paralyze the HKSAR government and subvert the state power. These are felonies in any country or region and must be severely punished according to

law, said the spokesperson.

External forces spearheaded by the United States attempted to exert influence on the verdict during the judicial process in the case and wantonly slandered the rule of law in Hong Kong regardless of facts and laws, which the office firmly opposes and strongly denounces, said the spokesperson.

The spokesperson said that any plot to disrupt the judiciary of the HKSAR and sabotage the rule of law is doomed to failure. — Xinhua

The Macau Post Daily Recommends



STOCK MARKETS

Hang Seng Index closes 0.53 pct lower

HONG KONG – Hong Kong stock market ended lower yesterday with the benchmark Hang Seng Index down 0.53

percent to close at 19,601.11 points. While the Hang Seng China Enterprises Index fell 0.79 percent to end at 7,034.89

points, the Hang Seng Tech Index shed 1.24 percent to 4,358.15 points.

— Xinhua