

TIMMSS 2023 results show Macau's P4 students do well in maths, science

Ranking 6th in mathematics, 12th in science globally

Rui Pastorin

The Education and Youth Development Bureau (DSEDJ) said in a statement yesterday that the results in the Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS) 2023 showed that Macau's Primary Four (P4) students performed well in maths and science, with the average scores being 582 in maths and 536 in science, respectively ranking them at 6th and 12th among the participating countries and regions in the study.

Singapore took the top spots in both subjects.

The statement said that TIMSS, a study by the Amsterdam-based International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA), has been held every four years since 1995, with 2023 marking the first time that Macau entered its primary four students.

The statement noted that the bureau had organised over 5,500 P4 students from 59 local schools to participate in the 2023 study, adding that among the over 60 participating countries and regions, the average score of Macau's students in both subjects was "significantly higher

Rank	Country or region	Mathematics average score	95% confidence interval for average	Country or region	Science average score	95% confidence interval for average
1	Singapore	615 (2.9)	609-620	Singapore	607 (2.8)	602 - 613
2	Taiwan (China)	607 (1.7)	604-610	Korea, Rep. of	583 (2.5)	578 - 588
3	Korea, Rep. of	594 (2.6)	589-600	Taiwan (China)	573 (1.7)	569 - 576
4	Hong Kong (China)	594 (4.0)	586-602	Türkiye	570 (3.4)	563 - 577
5	Japan	591 (2.3)	586-595	England	556 (2.6)	551 - 561
6	Macao (China)	582 (1.0)	580-584	Japan	555 (2.4)	550 - 560
7	Lithuania	561 (2.9)	555-566	Poland	550 (2.2)	545 - 554
8	Türkiye	553 (4.1)	545-561	Australia	550 (2.3)	545 - 554
9	England	552 (2.7)	547-557	Hong Kong (China)	545 (3.8)	538 - 553
10	Poland	546 (2.0)	542-550	Finland	542 (2.9)	536 - 548
11	Ireland	546 (2.9)	540-551	Lithuania	537 (2.9)	531 - 543
12	Romania	542 (4.8)	532-551	Macao (China)	536 (1.4)	533-539
	International average	503 (0.4)	502-504	International average	494 (0.4)	493 - 495

This image provided by the Education and Youth Development Bureau (DSEDJ) yesterday shows the results of the Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS) 2023.

than the international medians (503 in mathematics and 494 in science)".

Moreover, the statement said that according to the results, the local government has "provided high-quality and equitable education to its students". The statement added that "the score gaps in mathematics and science between the two groups of students from high and

low socioeconomic backgrounds in Macau (59 points for both mathematics and science) were lower than the international averages (85 and 91 points for mathematics and science respectively)", with the gaps being "the narrowest among the high-performing countries or regions", the statement said.

This shows that the local

education system has remained "high-quality and equitable", according to the statement.

The statement added that the percentages of local students reaching all four International Benchmarks were "significantly higher than the international medians". The statement added that 68 percent of local students reached

the Advanced or High International Benchmark in Mathematics, while 45 percent reached the Advanced or High International Benchmark in Science, with both percentages being higher than the international medians of 42 and 38 percent respectively.

Meanwhile, the statement said that the results also showed that Macau's school campus environment is "generally safe, orderly and with good discipline". It also highlighted that family support students receive has "an important impact on their future physical and mental development and academic achievements", with the bureau noting that parents should therefore be more involved in their children's educational activities by participating in them to help promote their child's overall development.

The bureau, according to the statement, will conduct an in-depth review of Macau's results and hold activities such as explanatory sessions for schools and study results sessions to let the education sector understand them and "explore ways to improve students' mathematics and science abilities". ■

UNESCO inscribes Spring Festival on intangible cultural heritage list

ASUNCIÓN – The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) yesterday inscribed the Spring Festival, social practices of the Chinese people in celebration of the traditional new year, on the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity.

The decision was made during the 19th session of the Intergovernmental Committee for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage, taking place in Paraguay this week. The committee recognized the festival

for its wide array of rituals and unique cultural elements that engage all of Chinese society.

UNESCO highlighted that the Spring Festival, marking the start of the traditional Chinese Lunar New Year, involves various social practices, including prayers for good fortune and family reunions. It also features activities planned by the elderly and festive public events organized by communities.

According to UNESCO's documentation, the traditional knowledge and customs associated with the Spring Festival are passed down informally within

families and communities, as well as formally through the education system. Craftsmanship and artistic skills related to the festival are transmitted through apprenticeships, promoting family values, social cohesion, and peace, while providing a sense of cultural identity.

The committee also emphasized that the festival embodies the harmony between humans and nature and contributes to sustainable development in areas such as food security and education. It also plays a key role in raising environmental awareness.

China's Vice Minister of Culture and Tourism, Rao Quan, who led the Chinese delegation at the UNESCO session, expressed gratitude for the recognition. He stressed that the Spring Festival is China's most important traditional holiday, symbolizing the Chinese people's hopes for a better life, strong ties to family and country, and the values of harmony between humans and nature.

Rao further explained that the festival, passed down through generations, has provided lasting spiritual strength to the Chinese people. It has played a significant

role in promoting family and social harmony, driving economic development, protecting the environment, and fostering global cultural exchange.

He added that the inclusion of the Spring Festival on the UNESCO list will help promote universal values of peace and harmony and highlight the important role of intangible cultural heritage in sustainable development.

With this addition, China now has 44 cultural elements or practices recognized by UNESCO as Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity. – Xinhua

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The Macau Post Daily

Marathon craze boosts China's public health, consumption

As temperatures cool, the passion for marathons remains hot. More than 30 marathons and other road-running events were held across China between Nov. 2 and 3 alone, drawing approximately 400,000 participants, according to incomplete statistics.

– Story on p. 6

Trump's nominee to run Pentagon hangs by a thread

US President-elect Donald Trump's controversial nomination of TV host Pete Hegseth to run the Defence Department was teetering yesterday as Republican senators raised questions over his fitness for the powerful role.

– Story on p. 11

Drought hits food access for 26 million in southern Africa, incl Mozambique & Angola: UN

A historic drought across southern Africa has jeopardised access to food for 26 million people, the United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) warned yesterday, calling for urgent funding.

– Story on p. 12

Tourism chief expresses confidence in Christmas tourism

Yuki Lei

Macau's summer holiday visitor arrivals hit a monthly record high of 3.65 million in August this year, slightly higher than the same period in pre-pandemic 2019 of 3.62 million, and Macau Government Tourism Office (MGTO) Director Maria Helena de Senna Fernandes told reporters in Hong Kong yesterday that she did not expect the same hotel occupancy and other visitor-related figures for the Christmas holiday, but she still hoped that this month's figures would be close to those of 2019, stressing that MGTO "will continue to work hard to do the rest of the job [for this year] well".

In August this year, Macau's 144 hotels recorded 1.26 million guests, or 99.7 percent of the figure reached in August 2019. The average hotel occupancy rate stood at 91.3 percent in August this year, compared to 93.0 percent in the same month of 2019, according to official statistics.

Speaking to reporters yesterday at Shun Tak Centre in Hong Kong, the tourism chief briefed reporters on the festive season's activities and promotion campaigns, including the month-long "Fancy Treats at Your Fingertips" promotional webpage limelight offering 450 special offers by the city's six integrated resort (IR) operators and small- and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in celebration of the 25th Anniversary of Macau's return to the motherland; as well as the annual highlight of the year – the 80-odd-day "Light Up Macao" promotion taking place from this Saturday through February 28 next year, with the aim of leading tourists and residents alike to visit



SJM Managing Director Daisy Ho Chiu Fung, who is also an executive director and the deputy managing director of Shun Tak-China Travel Ship Management Limited, addresses yesterday's kick-off ceremony for the months-long "Hang Out in Macau with Snoopy @ Grand Lisboa Palace" themed event, at Shun Tak Centre in Hong Kong.

different local neighbourhoods and participate in different large-scale light installations and interactive games.

She also said: "Late this month, the government, in addition to the preparations being made for the first performance on December 28 at a brand-new outdoor concert venue in Cotai, MGTO will also hold a fireworks display on the evening of December 25, i.e., Christmas Day."

In response to concerns about the carrying capacity of Macau's tourism, Senna Fernandes said that compared to 2019, Macau now has more hotel guestrooms than in the pre-pandemic level – according to the latest MGTO statistics. At the end of October this year, the total number of hotels in Macau stood at 146 with a total number of

around 44,000 guestrooms, most of them in 5- and 4-star hotels. At the same time, according to Senna Fernandes, other ancillary facilities such as event venues and tourist attractions have also increased, because of which, she said she remained confident about Macau's current tourism carrying capacity.

However, Macau's tourism chief was quick to admit that the key issues of Macau's tourism capacity are the surge in visitor arrivals during peak seasons and the over-concentration of tourists at particular tourist attractions, underlining that the government has already started to solve or improve some of the capacity problems, including a raft of arrangements involving the Transport Bureau (DSAT) as well as bus, taxi and other operators in the run-up to the holidays, "so we all believe that we are all well equipped for receiving our tourists".

With the gradual return of foreign visitor arrivals to the pre-epidemic level, even exceeding the authorities' estimate at the beginning of this year of two million, according to Senna Fernandes, MGTO has launched a chat robot named "Macau Smart Tourism Service" on its website and the "Experience Macau" mobile app



Charlie Brown and Snoopy, iconic characters from the Peanuts comic book, show up at Grand Lisboa Palace in Cotai yesterday.

earlier this year to respond to the lack of foreign language tour guides in Macau with text input enquiry functions, apart from traditional and simplified Chinese characters, also in English, Korean and Thai: "In fact, in our past practice, we have always allowed travel agencies to formally apply to the government to import tour guides speaking certain languages, but we have been very cautious in approving these applications".

Senna Fernandes made the remarks after yesterday's kick-off ceremony of the months-long "Hang Out in Macau with Snoopy @ Grand Lisboa Palace" themed event.

According to official statistics, Macau's foreign visitor arrivals, i.e., those not from the Chinese mainland, the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) and China's Taiwan region, surged by 85 percent to 1.88 million in the first 10 months of this year, recovering to 73.1 percent of the level in the first 10 months of 2019.

GLP & Snoopy join forces to offer visitors 'unforgettable' winter holiday

Meanwhile, jointly organised by SJM Resorts and TurboJET, the Snoopy-themed event at the Grand Lisboa Palace (GLP)

integrated resort in Cotai, which runs through February 12, aims to provide local and visitors alike with an unforgettable winter holiday through a raft of themed attractions, culinary delights and enjoyable drinks, limited-edition souvenirs, workshops and accommodation packages featuring the iconic characters from the Peanuts comic book, according to a SJM statement, which added that Snoopy will also accompany TurboJET passengers travelling to and from Hong Kong and Macau during the event.

Both Senna Fernandes and SJM Managing Director Daisy Ho Chiu Fung, who is also an executive director and the deputy managing director of Shun Tak-China Travel Ship Management Limited, said in their respective speeches they believed that the event would attract more tourists to treat themselves in different parts of Macau, while, at the same time, the event was also demonstrating SJM's advantage in having integrated resources at its disposal and its ongoing efforts to promote regional tourism cooperation.

In addition, a nine-metre-tall Snoopy is on display on top of the Macau Tower Convention and Entertainment Centre façade in Nam Van. ■



Macau Government Tourism Office (MGTO) Director Maria Helena de Senna Fernandes speaks to reporters at Shun Tak Centre in Hong Kong yesterday. – Photos: Yuki Lei

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Macau Weather

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Special-version Macau Pass cards can be used on public transport across mainland: local govt

Tony Wong

The Macau Transport Bureau (DSAT) announced yesterday that Macau has joined the mainland's China T-Union public transport card system where Macau Pass has now issued a new version of its contactless smartcards, known as Macau Pass – China T-Union mCard, enabling their holders to take public transport across the mainland, in addition to, as holders of normal Macau Pass cards, paying for public transport rides and shopping in Macau.

An DSAT statement yesterday said that Macau has been able to join the system after the bureau's communication and coordination with the Ministry of Transport (MOT) in Beijing.

The general version of the Macau Pass is also known as mCard.

In addition to public buses, ticket gates of Macau's Light Rapid Transit (LRT) also accept Macau Pass.

The mainland's China T-Union is a nationwide public transport card system, enabling its card holders to take urban public transport, namely public buses, urban rail systems, and ferry services in over 300 different cities in the mainland.

China T-Union is a contactless smartcard used for public transport issued by different cities in the mainland but with a "China T-Union" ("交通联合") logo on it, enabling its holders to take public transport in other cities in addition to their respective own cities.

Hong Kong joined the China T-Union system earlier this year



This image released by the Transport Bureau (DSAT) yesterday shows the front and back of the new Macau Pass – China T-Union mCard.

when its contactless smartcard operator Octopus started issuing its Octopus – China T-Union Card.

Yesterday's DSAT statement also announced that public buses in Macau now also accept China T-Union cards issued in the mainland or in Hong Kong.

The statement noted that people-to-people exchanges and ties between Macau and the mainland are getting increasingly closer as Macau residents now travel to the mainland for work or sightseeing more often than previously while the number of visitors to Macau from the mainland has been increasing.

The statement said that Macau joining the China T-Union system aims to make it more convenient for Macau residents to take public transport in the mainland and for visitors from the mainland to use public transport in Macau.

The DSAT statement said that

Macau Pass yesterday started issuing a new version of its smartcards, i.e., ones with a "China T-Union" logo on it, adding that their holders can not only take public transport in Macau – also with a discounted fare – but also take public transport in different cities in the mainland.

The statement also said that public buses in Macau yesterday started accepting China T-Union cards issued in the mainland or in Hong Kong, i.e., ones with a "China T-Union" logo on it. However, the statement said, for the time being holders of China T-Union cards not issued in Macau do not enjoy discounted fares when taking public buses here, meaning that they have to pay the full fares.

How to use China T-Union mCard

Meanwhile, Macau Pass released details about its newly



Passengers get on a No. 101X bus on Avenida de Almeida Ribeiro, the city's main thoroughfare, yesterday. – Photo: Tony Wong

issued Macau Pass – China T-Union mCard on its website yesterday, pointing out that in Macau, card holders can take public transport as well as shopping and dining at outlets that accept mCards, while they can take public transport in various cities in the mainland.

The same as the normal mCards, the Macau Pass – China T-Union mCards are sold at Macau Pass's customer service centres as well as other outlets designated by the contactless smartcard operator.

A normal mCard is sold at 130 patacas comprising 30 patacas as the cost of the card proper and 100 patacas as the card's balance used for payments.

According to the website, a China T-Union mCard proper is sold at 68 patacas which will not become part of the card's balance used for payments.

According to the website, a

China T-Union mCard comprises an e-pataca wallet and an e-yuan wallet. When taking public transport or shopping in Macau, the payments will be made from the e-pataca wallet's remaining balance, while when taking public transport in the mainland, the payments will be made from the e-yuan wallet's remaining balance.

A normal mCard can have a maximum balance of 3,000 patacas.

According to the details released on Macau Pass's website yesterday, the e-pataca wallet of a China T-Union mCard can have a maximum balance of 3,000 patacas, while its e-yuan wallet can have a maximum balance of 1,000 yuan.

Details in both Chinese and English about the China T-Union mCard can be checked on: https://www.macaupass.com/news_detail/943 ■

Man scams female gambler with fake watch

William Chan

A man from the mainland has been arrested for using a fake watch as collateral to borrow HK\$100,000 from a mainland woman, Judiciary Police (PJ) spokesman Ho Wai Lok said during a regular press conference yesterday.

The 32-year-old suspect surnamed Li told the police he's the owner of a car repair shop.

According to Ho, last month Li met the woman at a Cotai

casino and they became friends. Later while gambling together, Li told the woman that he had gambled away all his money and asked her to lend him HK\$50,000 for gambling, which the woman did.

After losing all the money again, he gave a watch to the woman as collateral, claiming that the watch was worth HK\$100,000, and requested an additional HK\$50,000 for gambling. Believing it to be genuine, the woman lent him money again.

The woman lost contact with Li a few days later. She then had the watch checked at a local pawnshop which confirmed that it was only worth a few hundred patacas, leading her to report the case to the police.

Li was arrested when he re-entered Macau through the Hengqin Port checkpoint on Tuesday. He refused to assist the police in their investigation.

Li has been transferred to the Public Prosecutions Office (MP), facing a fraud charge, Ho said. ■



Judiciary Police (PJ) spokesman Ho Wai Lok looks on during yesterday's regular press conference. – Photo: William Chan

3rd MGM Chef Nic Gastronomusic Fest draws 7,000 attendees

Rui Pastorin

The third edition of the MGM Chef Nic Gastronomusic Fest took place over the weekend, drawing 7,000 locals and tourists throughout its run, according to a statement by integrated resort (IR) operator MGM earlier this week.

The statement noted that the large-scale food and music festival, which is organised by MGM in conjunction with Nicholas "Chef Nic" Tse Ting-fung, took place at MGM COTAI's Roof Terrace and featured 10 chefs from both MGM and Chef Nic's team to present over 20 "culinary creations of the world's cuisines".

Moreover, the two-day event featured Keng Eng Kee (KEK) Seafood from Singapore, which the statement said was ranked on 2021's Asia's "50 Best Restaurants – Essence of Asia" list and was featured nine times in the Michelin Guide. Thailand's popular dessert parlour "After You" was also featured.

The statement added that Tse, in addition to preparing dishes, was also among the performers at the festival. Other performers featured were South Korean actress and singer-songwriter Jessica Jung, Thai pop duo



This undated handout photo provided by integrated resort operator MGM earlier this week shows Nicholas "Chef Nic" Tse Ting-fung performing during the third MGM Chef Nic Gastronomusic Fest, which took place during this past weekend.

SCRUBB, Hong Kong stars Gin Lee (李幸倪), Yan Ting, Jeffrey Ngai (魏浚笙), Jace Chan (陳凱詠), Tyson Yoshi (程浚彦), Alex Fong Lik-sun, Cloud Wan Ho-ying, and new girl group VIVA, the statement said.

MGM China Holdings Limited President and Chief Operating Officer Hubert Wang Zhiqi was quoted by the statement as saying: "Through this multi-sensorial IP of culinary and musical flair, we hope to engage our audiences and

promote cultural exchanges with novel experiences, highlighting Macau's vitality as a 'Creative City of Gastronomy' and a 'City of Performing Arts'."

Tse was also quoted as saying that he always looked forward to the event as it's his chance to "get together with my skilled chef and singer friends at a spacious outdoor music and food venue, sharing our passion and creativity in culinary arts and music with all our amazing fans". ■

2 former local civil servants speak about working at UN

William Chan

Tiffany Chui Lok I and Florence Ho Ho Ching, two local residents and previously civil servants currently holding positions at the United Nations (UN), spoke about their work at the UN in an online interview with local reporters recently.

Chui currently serves at the UN-Habitat Programme Management Office in Kenya, whereas Ho, a Junior Professional Officer at the UN Secretariat, is set to transition to a new role as a Human Resources Project Manager at the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) in Vienna starting next January.

Chui worked in the Macao Government Tourism Office (MGTO) before seizing the opportunity to work at the UN, driven by her aspiration to engage with an international organisation and broaden her global perspective. Recently, she has transitioned from a junior professional officer to an official staff member. Chui noted that the transition had posed significant challenges for her due to intense competition within the UN, but was fortunate enough to be able to overcome the difficulties with meticulous planning, and finally got the official staff member position.

“In the United Nations, networking and self-promotion across departments are crucial for successful career development. We frequently engage with others, learning from them during informal coffee breaks, and strive to leave a positive impression. This culture of interaction is integral to our work here.” Through persistent efforts, Chui successfully secured her current position and expressed gratitude to the Chinese team at the United Nations for their invaluable assistance.

Adapting to the dynamic and diverse environment of the United Nations, which starkly contrasts with her experiences in Macao, Chui emphasised the importance of active engagement and the wealth of perspectives derived from diverse cultures. She highlighted the collaborative nature of amalgamating various viewpoints into unified strategies as both enlightening and fulfilling, underscoring the valuable lessons she has learned throughout this process.

Similarly, Ho stressed the unique approach of the UN towards addressing different issues, focusing not solely on outcomes but also on understanding the root causes of problems. She underscored the significance of fostering communication, welcoming diverse ideas, and considering multiple perspectives to arrive at effective solutions.

Reflecting on the role of China within the UN, Chui commended the country’s leadership in economic and social development, serving as an example for other countries striving to overcome poverty. She expressed pride in witnessing China’s influential presence on the global stage and acknowledged the opportunities it has provided for personal growth.

Ho underlined that she is perceived as a representative not only of the Macao Special Administrative Region (MSAR) but also of China. She pointed out that it is both her duty and privilege to exemplify her best self and exhibit the finest Chinese traits to individuals at the United Nations, who similarly act as representatives of their respective nations. Ho noted that her actions shape perceptions of the Macao SAR and China, therefore underscoring the importance of demonstrating excellence and responsibility in her role within the United Nations.

Both Chui and Ho expressed gratitude for the backing provided by the Office of the Commissioner of the Office of the Commissioner of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People’s Republic of China in the Macao Special Administrative Region and the local government, acknowledging the pivotal role of representing China on the global stage. Chui said, “I am also pleasantly surprised by the fact that many of our colleagues are familiar with Macao. This recognition signifies Macao’s increasing international renown, attributed to its recent economic achievements and rich cultural heritage.”



These file photos show Florence Ho Ho Ching posing at different United Nations landmarks. – Photos provided by Ho



This undated photo shows Tiffany Chui Lok I posing with Permanent Representative of People’s Republic of China to the United Nations Fu Cong. – Photos provided by Chui

5 participants with special needs graduate from internship programme

Ginnie Liang

The third edition of the “JW Marriott Life Creation” internship programme, organised by the JW Marriott Hotel Macau at the Galaxy Macau integrated resort in Cotai in collaboration with the Special Olympics Macau, concluded today which five special needs participants successfully trained.

The graduation ceremony was held at the hotel’s conference room yesterday, with the participants expressing their joy at being able to engage in work and receiving support and encouragement from their supervisors and colleagues throughout the experience.

In the programme, participants completed pre-employment training and interviews before entering a 10-week paid internship in the hotel’s laundry and public cleaning departments.

JW Marriott Hotel Macau General Manager Nicholas Tse



JW Marriott Hotel Macau General Manager Nicholas Tse Kam Tou (third from right), Macau Special Olympics (MSO) National Director Hetzer Siu Yu Hong (second from right), Labour Affairs Bureau (DSAL) Vice Director Chan Un Tong (third, left), representatives from JW Marriott Hotel Macau and participants pose during the graduation ceremony for the third edition of the “JW Marriott Life Creation” internship programme at the hotel at the Galaxy Macau integrated resort in Cotai yesterday. – Photo: Ginnie Liang

Kam Tou emphasised the hotel’s commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion, highlighting that the internship programme was designed to provide professional skills training led by hotel staff.

Tse said that this programme aims to empower individuals with special

educational needs, helping them build confidence and integrate into the job market. He said that the hotel is dedicated to fulfilling its corporate social responsibility by offering equal employment opportunities to people with special needs, hoping to raise public awareness and create

suitable job opportunities through its collaboration with the Macau Special Olympics.

Macau Special Olympics (MSO) National Director Hetzer Siu Yu Hong remarked on the successful partnerships formed with various businesses in recent years, noting

that a total of 35 participants have been placed in jobs over the past three years, primarily targeting individuals aged 18 to 21.

Siu noted that the main objective of this programme is to assist individuals with mild intellectual disabilities or special educational needs in developing career plans. By providing valuable internship experiences, participants gain first-hand exposure to the job application process, learn essential workplace attitudes, and acquire professional hotel knowledge, Siu said.

Siu also called on all sectors of civil society to continue promoting employment opportunities for individuals with special needs, adding he hopes that increased public understanding of the significance of pre-employment guidance for those with special educational needs will help provide them with the skills and experience necessary to transition smoothly into the workforce. ■

Drunken Filipino sexually harasses student: police

William Chan

A Filipino non-resident worker (NRW) has been arrested for allegedly sexually harassing a student on the street after drinking alcohol, Public Security Police (PSP) spokeswoman Lai In Hong said during a regular press conference yesterday.

The suspect, a cleaner in his thirties, is surnamed Araneta, while the victim, a local student, is over the age of 18.

According to the victim’s report, when the victim and her female friend were walking along Rua da Ribeira do Patane (沙梨頭海邊街), Araneta suddenly approached them, bumped into the victim’s shoulder and touched her crotch.

The victim screamed in shock

and attempted to stop him with her friend. Araneta quickly crossed the road and got onto a bus to flee. The victim then reported the case to the police.

Araneta was arrested on Monday in the Avenida de Horta e Costa (高士德大馬路) neighbourhood. Under questioning, Araneta admitted that that he had consumed alcoholic beverages that night and walked along Rua da Ribeira do Patane, but denied bumping and sexually harassing the victim.

However, Lai revealed that CCTV coverage of the incident was unclear.

Araneta has been transferred to the Public Prosecutions Office (MP), facing a sexual harassment charge, Lai noted. ■



This undated handout photo provided by the Public Security Police (PSP) yesterday shows PSP officers escorting the sexual harassment suspect from the Philippines to the Nam Van Police Station.

Over 1,500 local residents in S Korea now, MGTO sends safety alert

Ginnie Liang

The South Korean government imposed martial law on Tuesday night, which, however was lifted early yesterday morning. In response to the situation, Macau Government Tourism Office (MGTO) Deputy Director Cheng Wai Tong confirmed that over 1,500 Macau residents are currently in South Korea, and the bureau has sent them safety alerts via text messages through local telecommunications companies and urged them to remain vigilant regarding their personal safety.

Cheng made the remarks on the sidelines of an event yesterday, adding that upon noting the situation in South Korea, the bureau has immediately contacted local tourism operators to assess whether any Macau residents were in South Korea at the time.



Macau Government Tourism Office (MGTO) Deputy Director Cheng Wai Tong talks to reporters on the sidelines of an event that took place at Bono Cinema in YOHO Treasure Island World Hotel yesterday. – Photo Courtesy TDM

When asked if a travel warning would be issued in light of the current situation in South Korea,

Cheng indicated that the current approach would focus on reminders rather than formal warnings. He noted that the situation would continue to be monitored, and as of now, the tourism hotline has not received any enquiries or requests for assistance related to the incident.

According to a local media report, Travel Industry Council of Macau (TICM) Chairman Andy Wu Keng Kuong told reporters that after consulting with relevant travel agencies, there are currently no travel groups from Macau in Seoul.

However, he acknowledged that Seoul is a popular destination for individual travellers from Macau and urged residents to stay informed about local news. He encouraged anyone facing difficulties to reach out to the Chinese consulate in South Korea for assistance. ■

Police warn parents about popular ‘Mini Kitchen’ toy for kids

Ginnie Liang

Judiciary Police (PJ) warned parents of the potential danger of a popular toy in the mainland called “Mini Kitchen” designed for children, following a fire incident in which three children suffered from burns caused by the toy recently, according to a PJ statement released yesterday.

The “Mini Kitchen”, the selling point of which is “real cooking, real eating”, is a highly realistic toy designed for children, which has surged in popularity in mainland China recently, the statement said.

However, the gas stove of the “Mini Kitchen” has resulted in three children suffering various degrees of burns, with one girl requiring intensive treatment, including skin graft surgery, the statement said.

Preliminary investigations have shown that these widely popular toys, which simulate cooking through either open flames or induction heating, present significant safety hazards, the statement said, adding that young users are vulnerable to burns from hot cookware, and sharp components, such as toy knives, which pose a risk of cuts.

The Judiciary Police urged parents to exercise caution when purchasing and using such toys, the statement said, adding that while there are many simulation kitchen toys available on online shopping platforms, the quality can vary greatly. Therefore, parents are advised to be vigilant about the origin of these products and to choose items from reputable manufacturers to ensure safety.

Moreover, when using toys that involve open flames or electrical elements, parents should supervise their children at all times to prevent accidents, including fires and burns. ■



This image released by the Judiciary Police (PJ) yesterday warns parents of a mainland-made toy “Mini Kitchen” which simulates cooking through either open flames or induction heating that might pose danger to children.

STOCK MARKETS

Hang Seng Index closes 0.02 pct lower

HONG KONG – Hong Kong stock market ended mixed yesterday with the benchmark Hang Seng Index down 0.02 percent to close at 19,742.46 points. The Hang

Seng China Enterprises Index climbed 0.18 percent to end at 7,085.00 points, while the Hang Seng Tech Index edged down 0.32 percent to close at 4,404.04 points. – Xinhua