

Macau Int'l Airport to build upstream cargo terminal in Hengqin

Tony Wong

The government majority-owned Macau International Airport will build an upstream cargo terminal in the Guangdong-Macau In-depth Cooperation Zone in Hengqin, construction of which is slated to get off the ground in the first quarter of next year, airport operator CAM says.

A CAM statement on Monday said that the upstream cargo terminal in Hengqin will assist the local government in enhancing Macau's aviation logistics capabilities and promoting regional economic development.

The statement did not say when the project was expected to be completed.

A ceremony marking the project's launch was held in Hengqin on Monday, according to the statement.

The statement noted that with the rapid development of e-commerce, the demand for air cargo transport has been increasing, adding that with the guidance of the Macau government and the support of the Hengqin authorities, local airport operator CAM, Macau International Airport Company Limited, started cooperation with COSCO SHIPPING Logistics & Supply Chain Management Company Limited, a subsidiary of China COSCO Shipping Corporation Limited, in September 2022.

The statement said that after an in-depth study, the two companies, namely CAM and COSCO SHIPPING Logistics & Supply Chain Management, decided to jointly invest in the establishment of a joint venture company, Guangdong Hengqin Macau International Airport Logistics Company Limited, adding that the two companies signed a strategic cooperation framework agreement in October 2023 on jointly building an upstream cargo terminal in Hengqin for the Macau International Airport.

The upcoming upstream cargo terminal project will be developed by the joint venture



This artist's rendition released on Monday by local airport operator CAM shows its future upstream cargo terminal in Hengqin.

company, namely the Guangdong Hengqin Macau International Airport Logistics.

The statement also said that several other "key" agreements aiming to enable the upstream cargo terminal project to get off the ground were signed earlier this year, adding that after its first capital injection into the joint venture, CAM also signed a "four-party" agreement with three other entities, namely the executive committee of the Guangdong-Macau In-depth Cooperation Zone, COSCO SHIPPING Logistics & Supply Chain Management, and Guangdong Hengqin Macau International Airport Logistics.

The statement said that the joint venture, namely Guangdong Hengqin Macau International Airport Logistics, successfully

bid for a 66,700-square-metre plot of land in Hengqin last month earmarked for the Macau International Airport's upstream cargo terminal project, adding that the joint venture is aiming for the project to get off the ground in the first quarter of next year.

During Monday's ceremony, according to the statement, a memorandum on construction and operation guarantee for Macau International Airport's upstream cargo terminal project in Hengqin was also signed.

The deal was signed by António Lei Chi Wai, director of the Economic Development Bureau of the in-depth cooperation zone's executive committee, Cheong Kok Kei, director of the executive committee's Urban Planning and Construction Bureau, and Lei Si

Tai, chairman of Guangdong Hengqin Macau International Airport Logistics.

The ceremony was attended by senior guests such as Chief Executive Ho Iat Seng, Secretary for Economy and Finance Lei Wai Nong, who also heads the in-depth cooperation zone's executive committee, Macau Civil Aviation Authority (AACM) President Pun Wa Kin, and Simon Chan Weng Hong, the chairman of CAM's executive committee.

According to the CAM website, the Macau Special Administrative Region (MSAR) government holds a 67.32 percent stake in the company. Former casino monopoly company STDM owns a 28.32 percent share, while the remaining shares are held by several mainland Chinese, Hong Kong and local investors. ■

Israel assuming 'worst-case scenario' with Syria bombing: analysts

Daniel Capurro

JERUSALEM – Israel's bombing of Syrian military assets and its entry into the UN-patrolled buffer zone on the Golan Heights show it fears the worst from the end of the Assad clan's rule, analysts told AFP.

"The Israeli government... is operating on a worst-case scenario with little to no nuance," said Yossi Mekelberg, a Middle East specialist at Chatham House in London.

Analysts noted that Israeli Prime

Minister Benjamin Netanyahu had long appeared to regard ousted president Bashar al-Assad's continued rule as the least bad option for Syria, despite his alliance with Israel's arch foes Iran and Lebanese militant group Hezbollah, for fear his overthrow would lead to chaos.

Now, Israeli leaders seem to fear that chaos has already arrived.

Netanyahu declared a 1974 armistice agreement with Syria void at the weekend

and ordered troops into the UN-patrolled buffer zone along the armistice line.

Key backer the United States said the incursion must be "temporary", after the United Nations said Israel was violating the 1974 armistice.

The Israeli military has since launched hundreds of air and naval strikes against Syrian military assets, targeting everything from chemical weapons stores to air defences to keep them out of rebel hands.

UN Syria envoy Geir Pedersen called for an immediate halt to the bombardment.

Analyst Danny Citrinowicz said he expected Israel to bomb Syrian targets extensively.

"Everything strategic in Syria that can fly, missiles, aeroplanes, also the [military's] scientific research centre, everything will be bombed", said Citrinowicz of the INSS think tank in Tel Aviv.

– AFP
– (More on p.10)

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The Macau Post Daily

Xi says China will continue to be biggest engine of world economic growth

President Xi Jinping said yesterday that China has full confidence to achieve this year's economic growth target and will continue to play its role as the biggest engine of world economic growth.

– Story on p. 7

Suspect charged with US insurance chief's murder

A 26-year-old man has been arrested and charged with murder in the targeted killing of a health insurance executive on the streets of New York, along with other violations.

– Story on p. 11

'Huge demand': Portugal dreams of becoming medical cannabis hub

"We should be the new El Dorado of medical cannabis production," said agronomist José Martins as dozens of workers harvested marijuana in bright sunshine at a farm in southeastern Portugal.

– Story on p. 12

Observatory forecasts mercury to drop to 10°C this weekend

Ginnie Liang

The Meteorological and Geophysical Bureau (SMG) said in a statement yesterday that it expects the temperature to significantly drop this weekend, to 12°C or even 10°C.

According to the observatory, driven by the warming effects of the El Niño* phenomenon, the average Earth surface temperature from January to September this year was about 1.54°C (±0.13°C) higher than pre-industrial averages. As a result, 2024 is poised to become one of the hottest years on record, following 2023.

As December ushers in winter, this weekend is forecast to bring the first significant chill of the season, adding that last Sunday Macau recorded its lowest temperature since the onset of winter at 13.6 degrees, which, while chilly, did not reach levels deemed cold, the weather station said.

The bureau forecast indicates that a northeast monsoon will strengthen later this week, leading to a noticeable drop in temperatures across southern China, including Macau.

The mercury is predicted to rise slightly today, with sunny weather making it feel warmer during the daytime. However, starting tomorrow, the northeast monsoon will

intensify again, causing temperatures in Macau to decline once more, with cold and dry conditions forecast for the beginning of next week.

Residents are advised to stay updated with the latest weather forecasts and alerts from the government and to prepare for potential temperature fluctuations, the bureau said, adding that special attention should be paid to the health of the elderly, children, and those with underlying health conditions during this cold spell. ■

*According to the UK Met Office website, the name 'El Niño' is widely used to describe the warming of sea surface temperature that occurs every few years, typically concentrated in the central-east equatorial Pacific.

El Niño is declared by meteorologists when sea temperatures in the tropical eastern Pacific rise 0.5 °C above the long-term average. El Niño is felt strongly in the tropical eastern Pacific with warmer than average weather.

The effects of El Niño often peak during December; its name "the boy" is thought to have originated as "El Niño de Navidad" centuries ago when Peruvian fishermen named the weather phenomenon after the newborn Christ.

Ho inaugurates MPU Academic Building

William Chan

The Macao Polytechnic University (MPU) held a ceremony yesterday morning in Zape to mark the inauguration of its new Academic Building (教研樓).

MPU Rector Marcus Im Sio Kei highlighted that the 13-story building, covering an area of approximately 37,000 square metres, will host teaching and research facilities, such as an auditorium, multi-purpose activity rooms, laboratories, a research centre and simultaneous interpretation rooms. "These facilities aim to foster talent development, technological innovation, and social service initiatives," he said.

Chief Executive Ho Iat Seng, Secretary for Social Affairs and Culture Elsie Ao Ieong U, among other officials from the central and local governments, attended the ceremony.

Following the ceremony, Acting Head of the MPU Campus Maintenance and Development Office, José Lázaro das Dores, informed reporters that the new building can accommodate up to 1,000 students. However,



Chief Executive Ho Iat Seng (right) and Secretary for Social Affairs and Culture Elsie Ao Ieong U pose after unveiling the inauguration plaque of the MPU Academic Building in Zape yesterday. - Photo: William Chan

the university currently has no immediate plans to increase student enrolment, he said.

Lázaro das Dores mentioned that MPU presently has around 7,000 students. He added, "In addition to various interpretation rooms, we have established examination and certification centres to offer both domestic and international examination certifications, along

with laboratory facilities."

He emphasised that the completion of the new teaching building is primarily geared towards fulfilling educational requirements in artificial intelligence (AI), advanced technology, health sciences, and translation studies. Nonetheless, there is currently no set date for its full operational launch, Lázaro das Dores noted. ■

Police nab 3 local males for drunk driving

William Chan

Three local men have separately been arrested for drunk driving, Public Security Police (PSP) spokesman Wong Chi Weng said at a press conference yesterday.

In the first case, the local suspect surnamed Leong is in his twenties. He works as an estate agent.

At around 8 a.m. on Friday, the police found Leong sleeping in his car with the engine running in the Areia Preta district, with the front of his car damaged. A breathalyser test showed that his alcohol concentration was 1.19 grams of alcohol per litre of blood.

Police later discovered that Leong had crashed into a roadside steel pillar on Estrada do Canal dos Patos (鴨涌馬路) and then left the scene.

Under questioning, he confessed to having consumed alcohol in the mainland, returned to Macau in the early morning, drove his vehicle, collided with the pillar, and drove away due to "not knowing what to do".

In the second and third instances, the suspects surnamed Lei and Chu, both in their thirties, were arrested on Friday for drunk driving. Chu, a salesman, and Lei, who claimed to be a businessman, had alcohol concentrations of 1.49 and 1.65 grams per litre of blood, respectively, as indicated by breathalyser tests.

The three suspects have been transferred to the Public Prosecutions Office (MP). Lei and Chu face drunk-driving charges,



Public Security Police (PSP) spokesman Wong Chi Weng looks on during yesterday's regular press conference. - Photo: William Chan

while Leong faces a charge of evasion of responsibility, according to Wong. ■

6 more local firms scammed by 'schools', lose 730,000 patacas

William Chan

Judiciary Police (PJ) spokesman Lei Chi Hou said during a regular press conference yesterday that six local companies have been deceived into ordering bed frames and mattresses for a purported local school, losing a total of 730,000 patacas.

The six companies comprise two advertising firms, an impresario, a decoration company, a design company, and a business system company.

According to Lei, last week the police were notified by representatives of these companies that they had been swindled by an individual posing as a teacher from a local school. The "teacher" initially

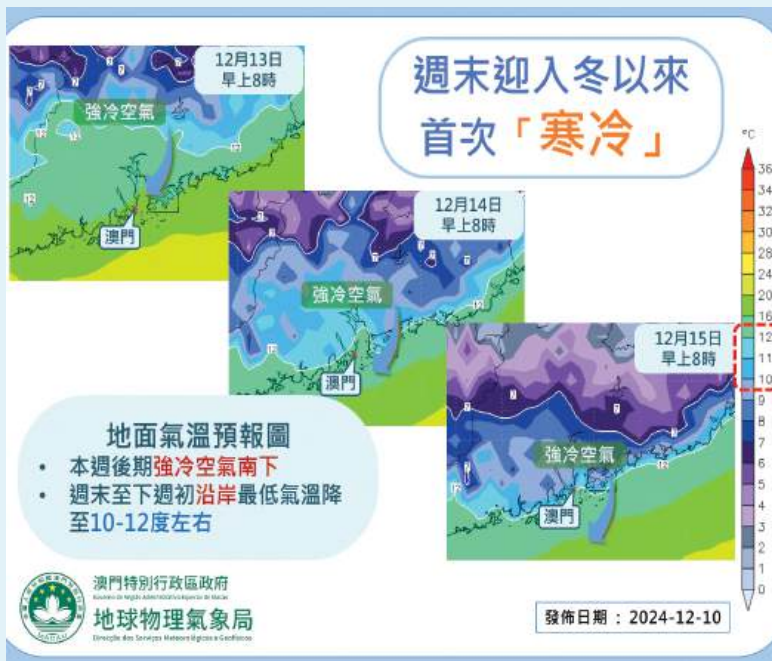
contacted the companies for various services and asked for quotations. Later, the "teacher" claimed that they did not need the services but were planning to buy bed frames and mattresses to be donated to a nursing home and a school. The impostor also alleged that the "school" was having an argument with its Hong Kong supplier and requested each company's assistance to place orders.

Upon paying a deposit to the "bed frame supplier" following the instructions of the "teacher," the companies discovered that the screenshots of the transactions provided by the "teacher" had been fabricated, and then quickly

lost contact with the scammer. Subsequently, they contacted the police, losing between HK\$10,000 to HK\$310,000 each. ■



Judiciary Police (PJ) spokesman Lei Chi Hou looks on during yesterday's regular press conference. - Photo: William Chan



This graphic released by the Meteorological and Geophysical Bureau (SMG) yesterday forecasts cold weather in the next few days.

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Macau Weather

CLOUDY APART FROM SUNNY PERIODS. HAZE DURING THE DAY. FORCE 3 NORTHEASTERLY WINDS, BECOMING FORCE 4 TO 5 NORTHERLY WINDS WITH GUSTS. RELATIVE HUMIDITY WILL RANGE BETWEEN 55% AND 90%.



17°C~25°C

Source: SMG

Katarina Jazbec wins 'Best Film of the Festival'



Grand Jury Panel Members Lúcia Lemos (right) and João Francisco Pinto (left) present the trophy with Institute of European Studies of Macau (IEEM) President Paulo Canelas de Castro in the absence of "Best Film of the Festival" winner Katarina Jazbec. — Photos: Rui Pastorin

Rui Pastorin

The 15th edition of the Macau International Short Film Festival concluded yesterday at Teatro Capitol, with Rotterdam-based visual artist and filmmaker Katarina Jazbec from Slovenia winning the "Best Film of the Festival" award in the SHORTS category for "Know Your Stones", a documentary she directed.

The film was an entry from Germany.

The free admission festival was held from December 3 to 10 at the cinema on the top floor of Capitol in the city centre, with a total of 121 short films and music videos showcased in over 30 screenings. Entries were chosen from among 5,836 submissions from over 130 countries and regions.

The synopsis of Jazbec's 21-minute documentary sees young activists, steelworkers, and a geologist teaming up "in a time-travelling space to confront climate change and its consequences", according to information provided at the festival.

The cash prize for the "Best Film of the Festival", a recent Creative Macau statement said, is 20,000 patacas. Remarking on her win at yesterday's Gala Award ceremony at the cinema, Jazbec said via video message that she felt proud, honoured and grateful, as well as that it was "really special" for the film to have won an award in Macau. She went on to say that



Visual artist and filmmaker Katarina Jazbec delivers a message via video during yesterday's Macau International Short Film Festival Gala Award Ceremony at Teatro Capitol.

she and her team had worked hard on the film, noting: "This is a really nice confirmation for our efforts".

Meanwhile, in the VOLUME category, the "Best Music Video" award, which has a cash prize of 10,000 patacas, went to "Interstellar Love" directed by Macau's Bryan Chio and sung by Sean Pang.

A total of 17 awards were distributed during yesterday's ceremony. Director Wieke Kapteijns from the Netherlands won "Best Documentary" for "When She Is Not Here", while "Best Fiction" went to Hong Kong director So Chak Long for "Migratory Bird". Director Marta Monteiro from Portugal meanwhile bagged the "Best Animation" award for the

short animated film "Cold Soup".

Moreover, the "Macau Cultural Identity" award went to "Finding Hou Ying in...What is it?" directed by Tracy Choi Ian Sin and Xu Wei from Macau and the mainland respectively; "Best Local Entry" was won by director Chao Koi Wang for "Chuff Chuff Chuff"; while local director Si Weng Chan took home the "Audience Choice" award for "Lifelong Finale".

The other prizes awarded comprised the "Best Student Film" and a total of six SHORTS Prestigious Awards, including "Best Director" and "Best Visual Effects", as well as two VOLUME Prestigious Awards comprising "Best Song" and "Best Visual Effects". ■

AFA Autumn Salon 2024 exhibition to open at The Parisian Macao

Rui Pastorin

The AFA Autumn Salon 2024 will kick off at the Shoppes at Parisian in Cotai on Saturday, featuring 113 artists presenting over 200 artworks in a variety of mediums, while the winners of the annually presented "Orient Foundation Art Award" will also be awarded, according to a recent Art For All Society (AFA) statement.

The opening ceremony is slated for 6:30 p.m.

The upcoming exhibition is organised by AFA in conjunction with the Orient Foundation (FO), and sponsored by the Macao Cultural Development Fund, while integrated resort operator Sands China is the venue sponsor.

The statement noted that the upcoming event marks AFA Autumn Salon's 15th year with more than double the exhibits than in the previous edition. The statement added that the artworks to be showcased were chosen from

an open call for entries that ran until October 31 by a jury comprised of AFA and Orient Foundation representatives, as well as a Sands China representative.

The selected artworks, which include those created through traditional media and digital forms were created by artists who live, work and study in Macau, the statement noted, and reflects "the vibrancy of current local artistic creation". Renowned artists from Macau are also featured in the "Invited Artists List", the statement pointed out.

Moreover, the statement elaborated that the annually presented "Orient Foundation Art Award" amounts to 50,000 patacas and funds a one-month residency in Portugal to "create, exchange ideas or receive training at private or public art institutions".

The exhibition at The Parisian Macao will be on through March 25 next year. ■



This poster provided by Sands China on behalf of the organisers promotes the "AFA Autumn Salon 2024".

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Local musicians anticipate upcoming Xmas gig with European jazzers

Interview by William Chan

Zé Eduardo and the Jazz Mission Big Band will be performing the “Jazz Up for Christmas at Dom Pedro V Theatre” concert on the 21st, 22nd, 24th, and 25th of this month. Local musicians Amanda Chan (陳諾詩), Elisa Chan (陳倚俐), Lam Chak Seng (林澤誠), Chan Hon Chong (陳漢聰), and Gregory Wong (黃永豪), who are also participating in the performance, spoke about the upcoming concerts with the *Post* in online interviews.

The concerts, organised by the Cultural Affairs Bureau (IC), will feature veteran Portuguese singers Marta Garrett and Sofia Rodrigues, along with top jazz performers from Europe, to present the band and Eduardo’s unique compositions at the Dom Pedro V Theatre in Largo de Santo Agostinho.

Elisa Chan expressed excitement about her debut with a big band, eagerly anticipating the high-quality arrangements and energetic performances. She looks forward to the musical fusion and believes the audience will enjoy the experience. Elisa plans to perform a selection of Chinese pop songs in jazz styles to cater to both pop and jazz enthusiasts.

Amanda Chan, a vocalist specialising in R&B and pop, is no stranger to jazz and big band music, but this marks her first collaboration with Eduardo. One of her chosen pieces is Cole Porter’s “Anything Goes,” as she delves into its history and aims to convey her emotions to the audience. She is also featured in the big band classic “It Don’t Mean a Thing (If It Ain’t Got That Swing)”.

She noted that she feels a positive pressure, viewing this opportunity as a chance to collaborate with talented professional local and European musicians, aiming to inspire the audience during the Christmas season. “I am highly motivated as it provides a platform to represent Macau and showcase the talent of our local artistes.”

Saxophonist Lam Chak Seng* highlighted his admiration for Spanish saxophonist Perico Sambeat, who will appear in the Jazz Mission Big Band, describing him as a prominent figure in the international jazz scene and the face of jazz in Spain. He stressed Sambeat’s significant contributions to the fusion of flamenco and jazz music, expressing great enthusiasm about the opportunity to meet and perform alongside him in the upcoming shows.

Describing Eduardo as a master of jazz education in Europe, Lam revealed Eduardo’s pivotal role as one of his mentors. From the early stages of Lam’s decision to

pursue music, Eduardo provided invaluable guidance, ultimately recommending that he study at the Royal Conservatoire The Hague. Lam fondly recalled a jazz workshop hosted by Perico Sambeat and Eduardo in 2012, an experience that continues to inspire his journey in jazz.

Guitarist Chan Hon Chong fondly recalled the encounter with Eduardo during the 2012 Macau International Music Festival, where their mutual passion for music formed a strong bond. At that time, Eduardo acted as the tutor for Hon Chong’s band and even extended an invitation to Hon Chong to join his European band on stage. “Zé Eduardo holds significant ties to Macau, as evidenced by his participation in the inaugural Macau International Jazz Festival in 1979. Through his frequent visits to Macau, Eduardo has introduced talented jazz musicians from Europe, playing a vital role in enhancing and enriching the local jazz scene,” Chan said.

Trombonist Gregory Wong**, who has collaborated with Eduardo and serves as the conductor of the Macau Jazz Orchestra, highlighted the unique composition of the big band for this performance. He emphasised the challenges and intricacies of coordinating a large ensemble for an exceptional musical presentation, particularly when collaborating with vocalists, requiring a high level of skill, coordination, and adaptability from each musician.

Wong also highlighted the significance of the neoclassical Dom Pedro V Theatre, which was built in 1860 in commemoration of Portugal’s King, Peter V, as China’s first Western-style theatre and a distinctive landmark in Macau. “The unique setting of the theatre adds a special touch to the performance of the big band, as it is a collaboration between local musicians and European artists, which further elevates the value of Macau’s jazz music scenery,” he said.

The concert “Jazz Up for Christmas at Dom Pedro V Theatre” will be held on December 21, 22, 24, and 25 from 8 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. Tickets are priced at 250 patacas, with various discounts available. To purchase, visit: www.macauticket.com

* Chan and Lam’s exclusive interview with the *Post* in November 2022: www.macaupostdaily.com/news/15994

**Wong’s interview last January: <https://macaupostdaily.com/news/16610>



This undated file photo shows Amanda Chan singing.



Elisa Chan sings at “hush! Beach Concerts x Urban Yo-ga Wellfest 2024” at Hac Sa Beach in Coloane last month.



Guitarist Chan Hon Chong (second from left) performs with Zé Eduardo’s band during the 2012 Macau International Music Festival.



This undated photo shows saxophonist Lam Chak Seng performing with Portuguese bassist Zé Eduardo.



Trombonist Gregory Wong performs with Zé Eduardo at Orient Foundation in July 2023.

Rotary Club of Macau celebrates 25th Joy to the World

Rui Pastorin

The Rotary Club of Macau celebrated the 25th edition of its signature community service project “Joy to the World” at the Macau Tower Convention and Entertainment Centre on Saturday.

The project, according to a recent statement from the club aims to provide a platform for youngsters with special needs to “showcase their talents, affirm their potential and contribute to their integration into society”. It gathered nearly 400 people from five local associations, namely co-organisers Fuhong Society of Macau, Macau Special Olympics (MSO), the Association of Parents of the Mentally Handicapped, the Macau Down Syndrome Association and first-time participant Concórdia School for Special Education.

The statement said that the Sands China-sponsored event, entitled “Joy to the World

‘Xmas Garden’”, featured performances from its co-organisers’ service users, a magic show by local magician Stanley Lam, and Christmas carols sung by the Rotary family’s members, who also distributed gift packs at the Christmas-themed venue, according to the statement.

The event also saw its VIP guests dressed as magicians and wizards “with a touch of Christmas” in keeping with the Rotary Year’s Presidential Theme “The Magic of Rotary”.

Rotary Club of Macau President Calvin Kuang was quoted by the statement as saying that they have always upheld the “Rotary Spirit” – ‘Service Above Self’, and we will continue to create more diverse types of service projects to enhance public awareness of inclusivity, strengthen the self-worth of individuals with special needs, and pay attention to the mental health of caregivers”. ■



These photos taken on Saturday and recently provided by the Rotary Club of Macau show the “Joy to the World ‘Magic Xmas Garden’”, which featured performances from the co-organisers’ service users and Santa Clause interacting with participants, taking place at the Macau Tower Convention and Entertainment Centre.

Customs busts shop selling fake brand items worth 1.23 million patacas

Ginnie Liang

Macau Customs Service (SA) officers on Monday busted a shop suspected of selling counterfeit brand items violating intellectual property rights (IP) of the South Korean brand “WE11DONE”, involving 729 bogus items worth 1.23 million patacas in total, according to the prices that the products would have fetched if they had been genuine, an SA spokesperson said during a press conference yesterday.

A mainland female sales assistant working for the shop was arrested on Monday, according to the spokesperson, adding that the shop’s two owners, a 37-year-old mainland man and a 41-year-old South Korean woman, have operated the shop since 2022.

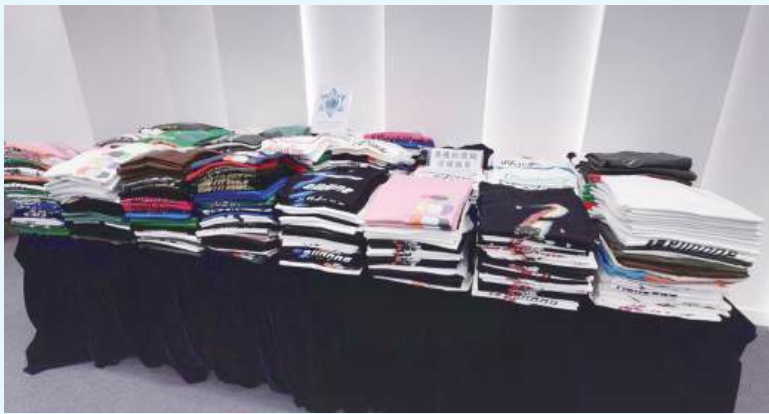
Customs officers yesterday

were still tracking down the whereabouts of the two owners.

According to the spokesperson, the Macau Customs Service has carried out spot checks on local shops recently and discovered that one shop in Nam Van district was suspected of selling copyright infringement products.

The spokesperson noted that the bogus items were sold at prices ranging from 259 to 299 patacas each, with the South Korean female owner being in charge of stocking, shipping and price setting, adding that the buyers were both locals and visitors.

The spokesperson said that the sales assistant was transferred to the Public Prosecution Office (MP) on Monday for violating Industrial Property Code Decree-Law No 97/99/M. ■



This photo provided by the Macau Customs Service (SA) yesterday shows fake brand items violating intellectual property rights (IP) of the South Korean brand “WE11DONE” seized on Monday, displayed at its headquarters in Pak On in Taipa.

A stint that lasts a lifetime: an American’s journey in a changing Macau

Guo Likun

Timothy Simpson never expected his stay in Macau would turn into such a long haul.

He arrived in 2001, thinking of it as a good stepping stone to greater adventure in Asia. Two decades later, the American from Alabama is firmly rooted in the city that has become his home.

“I came to Macau 18 months after its return to China in 1999,” Simpson recalls the days when he took up a job at the University of Macau (UM). “I thought I’d stay for just a couple of years.”

But life had other plans.

The city’s energy and growth, the university’s expanding opportunities, and the unique cultural mix kept him here for far longer than he had intended.

Simpson, now an associate professor of communications at the UM, has spent much of his career teaching classes and conducting research in Macau, focusing on topics like media, culture, communication, and the gaming industry.

When he first arrived, the university was located on its old campus, a modest space compared to the sprawling, modern facilities that UM occupies today.

“I’ve witnessed the university’s growth firsthand,” Simpson says. He’s seen the university evolve over the years, with rising academic standards and an influx of talented students from both Macau and the mainland.

“The students are incredible, bright and motivated,” Simpson says. “Actually, they’ve improved dramatically over the last two decades. Today, getting admitted to the university is very stiff competition.”

Simpson’s ties to Macau go beyond his professional role at UM. He met his wife through the Thai community in Macau, and he credits this personal connection as a major reason for making the city his home.

As an expatriate, Simpson’s experience of living in Macau has been shaped by the city’s unique blend of cultures. Centuries of Portuguese influence have left their mark, resulting in a vibrant



Timothy Simpson (center) poses after class with two students on the University of Macau (UM) campus in Hengqin. — Xinhua

multicultural atmosphere that Simpson has come to cherish.

The Lusofonia Festival, an annual event that celebrates Portuguese-speaking cultures, is one of the many expressions of Macau’s multicultural identity that Simpson enjoys. The festival features music, dance, and food from countries as diverse as Portugal, Brazil, Angola, and Mozambique.

“It’s moments like these that give me a real, vibrant sense of how diverse Macau still is today,” Simpson says. For him, Macau’s diversity isn’t just in its history – it’s alive in the present, in the people and traditions celebrated every day.

In Macau, Simpson chose not to live close to the university but in the historic center of the city, near Largo do Senado, one of the most popular tourist areas. “It’s sometimes difficult to navigate the sheer number of visitors, but these tourists have contributed to Macau’s development in the last 20 years.”

Despite his growing roots, learning the local languages has been a challenge.

“The biggest failure of my life is that I don’t speak Chinese fluently,” he admits. “I’ve taken both Mandarin and Cantonese lessons over the years, but I still struggle.”

English is widely spoken in Macau, especially among younger generations, which has made it easier for Simpson to navigate his daily life.

Despite the challenges, Simpson’s relationship with the city has only deepened over time.

“Macau’s growth has been

astounding,” Simpson says. “I happened to live here during this massive transformation of the city, the economy, and the population. It’s a place that’s constantly changing, constantly expanding.”

The city’s skyline has now exploded with towering resort complexes, and Simpson has observed a gradual yet significant shift in the economy. As the government seeks to balance the gaming industry with other emerging sectors, Macau is navigating its path toward diversification.

“It’s a big experiment,” Simpson says, noting that it will likely define the city’s future trajectory. “What’s truly fascinating is watching how the policies and strategies unfold, and seeing how these efforts can create alternative economic drivers for the city.”

Simpson’s experience as an expatriate has also shaped his teaching philosophy. Drawing on his own experiences navigating cultural differences in Asia, he teaches students about the complexities of intercultural communication.

“I often share my mistakes with students,” he explains, noting that it helps them understand the realities of adapting to new cultures, whether in Macau or elsewhere.

For Simpson, what began as a temporary stint has blossomed into a unique life in Macau.

As he looks to the future, Simpson has no plans to leave. “I’ve made Macau my home. It’s where I built my life, my career, and my family. I plan to stay here until I retire.” — Xinhua

STOCK MARKETS

Hang Seng Index closes 0.5 pct lower

HONG KONG — Hong Kong stock market ended lower yesterday with the benchmark Hang Seng Index down 0.5 percent to close at 20,311.28 points.

While the Hang Seng China Enterprises Index dipped 0.74 percent to end at 7,306.16 points, the Hang Seng Tech Index lost 1.39 percent to close at 4,591.94 points. — Xinhua

Groups to pay up to 500,000 patacas per show at Cotai open-air performance venue

Tony Wong

The government yesterday announced the fees for companies, organisations or acts to host shows in its newly-built Macau Open-Air Performance Venue in Cotai.

The fees were announced in an executive order published in the Official Gazette (BO) yesterday, which was signed by Secretary for Social Affairs and Culture Elsie Ao Leong U on Thursday last week.

Construction of the facility used for hosting large-scale performances was completed last month. It was set up on a large plot, covering 94,000 square metres, next to the Lisboa Macau resort in Cotai.

The construction cost 89.9 million patacas in total.

However, the Macau Open-Air Performance Venue will only be operated on a trial basis first, with its trial operation period to last one year, running between January 1 and December 31 next year.

The Cultural Affairs Bureau (IC) is now accepting applications from companies, organisations or acts to organise and host shows at the venue during its trial operation period. The bureau will assess the applications to determine whether to greenlight the performances, based on different factors such as the group's reputation, international clout and its positive effect on Macau's culture and tourism, an IC statement said last week.

According to yesterday's executive order, the groups will be required to

pay 500,000 patacas for a performance with 30,000 or more spectators on the day of the performance. They will be required to pay 250,000 patacas for each day they are setting up equipment or holding rehearsals in the run-up to the performance.

For a performance with an audience of fewer than 30,000, according to the order, the groups will be required to pay 350,000 patacas per performance day, while they will be required to pay 175,000 patacas per day when setting up their equipment or holding rehearsals in the run-up to the performance.

However, according to the order, the groups will enjoy a 25-percent discount during the venue's trial operation period next year.

The local government, in collaboration with a Hong Kong TV station, will organise the facility's first trial concert on December

28, in the run-up to the official commencement of the facility's trial operation period which will start on January 1. ■



This undated handout photo downloaded from the Cultural Affairs Bureau's (IC) website yesterday shows the new Macau Open-Air Performance Venue in south-east Cotai.

CPC leadership holds meeting on 2025 economic, Party conduct and anti-corruption work

BEIJING – The Political Bureau of the Communist Party of China (CPC) Central Committee on Monday held a meeting to analyze and study the economic work in 2025. A work report of the Central Commission for Discipline Inspection and the National Commission of Supervision was heard at the meeting, at which work on Party conduct and the fight against corruption in 2025 was also studied and arranged. Xi Jinping, general secretary of the CPC Central Committee, chaired the meeting.

It was emphasized at the meeting that this year is key to achieving the goals and tasks outlined in the 14th Five-Year Plan (2021-2025). The CPC Central Committee with Comrade Xi Jinping at its core has united and led the entire Party and the Chinese people of all ethnic groups to respond calmly, implement comprehensive measures, and ensure the overall stability and steady progress of the economy. China's economic strength, scientific and technological capabilities, as well as composite national strength have continued to grow. New quality productive forces have been developed steadily, reform and opening-up deepened, risks in key areas defused in an orderly and effective manner, and people's livelihood strongly and effectively safeguarded. The major goals and tasks for economic and social development in 2024 are expected to be accomplished.

It was stressed at the meeting that to do a good job in economic work next year, China must follow the guidance of Xi Jinping Thought on Socialism with Chinese Characteristics for a New Era, fully implement the guiding principles of the 20th CPC National Congress and the second and third plenary sessions of the 20th CPC Central Committee, adhere to the general principle of pursuing progress while ensuring stability, fully and accurately implement the new development philosophy, accelerate the forging of a new development dynamic, firmly promote high-quality development, and further deepen reform in an all-round way. China must also promote high-level opening up, develop a

modern industrial system, secure both development and security, implement more proactive macropolicies, expand domestic demand, and promote integrated development of scientific and technological innovation and industrial innovation, according to the meeting. Efforts must be made to secure the steady development of the real estate and stock markets, guard against and defuse risks and external shocks in key areas, and stabilize expectations and stimulate vitality, so as to promote sustained economic recovery. Work must be done to continuously improve people's living standards, maintain social harmony and stability, accomplish the goals and tasks of the 14th Five-Year Plan with high quality, and lay a solid foundation for getting the 15th Five-Year Plan off to a good start.

Seeking progress while maintaining stability

It was pointed out at the meeting that next year, we will continue to seek progress while maintaining stability, promote stability through progress, uphold fundamental principles and break new ground, establish the new before abolishing the old, pay attention to integrated reforms, and strengthen coordination. We will implement a more proactive fiscal policy and moderately loose monetary policy, enrich and improve the policy toolkit, strengthen unconventional counter-cyclical adjustment, intensify the coordination of various policies, and make macro regulation more forward-looking, targeted and effective. We need to vigorously boost consumption, improve investment efficiency, and expand domestic demand on all fronts. We should use scientific and technological innovation to lead the development of new quality productive forces and build a modern industrial system. We should give full play to the leading role of economic structural reform and ensure that landmark reform measures are effectively implemented. We will further promote high-level opening up and secure the steady growth of foreign trade and foreign investment. Efforts should focus on preventing and addressing risks in key

areas to ensure that no systemic risks occur. It is essential to consolidate and expand the achievements in poverty alleviation, promote coordinated new urbanization and rural revitalization, and promote integrated urban-rural development. Regional strategies must be implemented in an intensified manner to boost regional development vitality. Efforts should also be made to reduce carbon emissions, curb pollution, expand green development, and accelerate the comprehensive green transformation of economic and social development. Furthermore, measures must be intensified to secure and improve people's wellbeing so as to boost people's sense of gain, happiness and security.

It was noted at the meeting that the Party's leadership over economic work must be strengthened to ensure that all decisions and arrangements of the Party Central Committee are implemented to the letter. It is imperative to bring into full play the enthusiasm of all sectors and fully leverage the motivation, dedication and creativity of officials. A realistic and pragmatic approach must be taken to ensure both development and security, strengthen coordination and interplay between policies, and improve expectations management and overall policy effectiveness. Various aspects of work must be done well to ensure people's livelihoods and security in order to safeguard social stability.

It was noted at the meeting that, under the strong leadership of the CPC Central Committee with Comrade Xi Jinping at its core, the CPC Central Commission for Discipline Inspection and the National Commission of Supervision as well as discipline inspection and supervision departments at all levels have further studied and implemented Xi Jinping Thought on Socialism with Chinese Characteristics for a New Era, especially General Secretary Xi's important thought on the Party's self-reform. With focus on the central tasks of the Party and the country, they have continued to strengthen political oversight, further advanced efforts to improve Party

conduct, enforce Party discipline and combat corruption, taken solid steps to conduct studies of Party discipline, made tangible progress in implementing the central Party leadership's eight-point decision on improving conduct, and focused on combating misconduct and corruption that occur at people's doorsteps. They have made intensified efforts to eradicate the breeding grounds and conditions for corruption, improved the systems for exercising full and rigorous self-governance of the Party and state supervision systems, consolidated and expanded what has been achieved in the theoretical study program, and made new progress in promoting the high-quality development of the discipline inspection and supervision work on the new journey.

'Two Affirmations' & 'Two Upholds'

The need was emphasized at the meeting for the discipline inspection and supervision departments to uphold Xi Jinping Thought on Socialism with Chinese Characteristics for a New Era as guidance, have a full understanding of the decisive significance of the "Two Affirmations"*, and resolutely act on the "Two Upholds"**. They must maintain a high-pressure stance on combating corruption, unwaveringly and relentlessly push forward the anti-corruption campaign to greater depth, and make new achievements in full and rigorous Party self-governance so as to provide strong guarantees for advancing Chinese modernization. It is necessary to intensify political supervision with focus on the "Two Upholds," strictly enforce political discipline and rules, and bring the implementation of major reforms under supervision and inspection to ensure reforms proceed smoothly through effective oversight. The results of Party discipline education campaign should be consolidated and deepened, and the role of Party discipline education as constraints, guarantees, and incentives should be fully utilized. The mechanisms for investigating and addressing instances

of both misconduct and corruption should be improved, with great efforts to promote the integrated and deepened development of upholding integrity and combating corruption. Efforts must be made to address misconduct and corruption that occur at people's doorsteps, ensuring that the fruits of reform and development are distributed more equitably to benefit the broad masses of the people. It is crucial to strengthen the political responsibility of exercising full and rigorous Party self-governance, and strict steps must be taken through to the end. Additionally, work must be done to render disciplinary inspection and supervision work standardized, institutionalized and law-based, deepen the reform of the disciplinary inspection and supervision system, and cultivate a team of inspection and supervision personnel who are loyal, upright, responsible and have the courage and capability to engage in struggle.

Previously, General Secretary Xi Jinping presided over a meeting of the Standing Committee of the Political Bureau of the CPC Central Committee, during which reports were presented on the work of the CPC Central Commission for Discipline Inspection and the National Commission of Supervision for 2024, as well as preparations for the Fourth Plenary Session of the 20th CPC Central Commission for Discipline Inspection.

The CPC central leadership decided that the Fourth Plenary Session of the 20th CPC Central Commission for Discipline Inspection will be held from January 6 to 8 next year.

Other matters were also discussed at the meeting.

– Xinhua (subheadings added by the Post)

*The "Two Affirmations" consist of the affirmation of the leadership of the CPC and the affirmation of Socialism with Chinese Characteristics.

**The "Two Upholds" consist of upholding the authority of the CPC Central Committee and upholding the Party's centralized and unified leadership. – Source: Poe