



UM new campus in Hengqin to open in 2028

Ginnie Liang

University of Macau (UM) Rector Song Yonghua said yesterday he expected the UM's new campus in the Guangdong-Macau In-Depth Cooperation Zone in Hengqin to come into operation in 2028, with a capacity for about 10,000 students, adding that together with its current campus, there would be a total of 25,000 students in UM.

The construction of the UM's second campus in Hengqin got off the ground last month. Geographically, both campuses are located in Hengqin, but the first one is under Macau's jurisdiction on a plot of land leased from the mainland.

Song made the remarks at the opening ceremony of the UM Open Day yesterday. UM's Macau campus and its Zhuhai UM Science & Technology Research Institute in Hengqin both held their Open Day activities yesterday, with the aim of allowing members of the public to learn about their educational approach, learning environment, academic offerings, and other developments in recent years.

More than 200 activities took place throughout the day, and the live streaming of the event reached a total of over 250,000 views across UM's various social media platforms, according to a statement by the public university yesterday.

Song noted that the university plans to offer postgraduate programmes in Visual Communication Design, Fire Safety and Disaster Rescue, and Cognitive Neuroscience in the upcoming academic



University of Macau (UM) Rector Song Yonghua (centre) and other representatives applaud at the opening ceremony of the UM Open Day yesterday on the campus. — Photo: Ginnie Liang

year of 2025/2026, in order to further support the appropriate diversification of Macau's economy.

Song underlined that the university is committed to producing creative and socially responsible graduates with a global mindset and international competitiveness, adding that it will continue to enhance its strategic research layout, set up high-level scientific research and innovation platforms,

promote the transformation of scientific and technological achievements, and support Macau's economic diversification.

Foreign students' views

Meury Ferreira, a master's degree student, studying Public Health, from Angola at the UM, spoke with the *Post* about her experience at the university, saying that she decided to continue her studies after completing

her undergraduate programme, praising the university's extensive online learning resources. "It really helps me study and saves money on buying textbooks," she said, highlighting how these resources support her academic journey. She also noted that UM has strong connections with various foreign countries and cities in mainland China, which will be beneficial for her job search.

Continued on p.8

Chinese scientists make progress in lithium metal battery research

BEIJING — A Chinese research team has successfully constructed an ideal solid electrolyte interphase on the surface of lithium metal anodes, with their findings published in the academic journal *Nature*.

This interphase features high electronic insulation, high ionic conductivity, and high chemical stability, thereby enhancing the performance and safety of lithium metal batteries, according to Yan Keyou with South China University of Technology, leader of the research.

The achievement is expected to provide new key technologies for the development and

manufacturing of next-generation high-performance lithium batteries. It could be used to foster advancements in fields such as new energy vehicles and photovoltaic-storage integration.

Lithium metal batteries are considered one of the most promising candidates for next-generation batteries, with the potential to double the energy density of existing lithium-ion batteries. However, current commercial electrolytes fail to form a stable solid electrolyte interphase on the surface of lithium metal anodes, which is incompatible

with lithium metal batteries.

The team used monoclinic m-Li₂ZrF₆ nanoparticles as additives to successfully construct a solid electrolyte interphase with excellent electrochemical properties on the surface of lithium metal anodes. This enables lithium metal batteries maintain 80 percent of their capacity after 3,000 cycles at a 2C charging rate, achieving the highest level in the same category.

The synthesis process of m-Li₂ZrF₆ nanoparticles is simple and scalable, providing a solution for the widespread application of lithium metal batteries. — *Xinhua*



Shoppers browse for Chinese Lunar New Year decorations at a fair in Nanning, capital of the southern Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region, yesterday. — *Xinhua*

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Thai murder suspect says he acted out of 'gratitude'

A Thai man accused of killing a former Cambodian opposition lawmaker in Bangkok said he committed the crime to repay someone who helped him during a tough period in his life, police told AFP yesterday. — *Story on p. 8*

Netanyahu orders top officials to Qatar for Gaza hostage talks

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu sent a delegation of senior officials to Qatar for negotiations on a hostage release and Gaza ceasefire deal, his office said on Saturday. — *Story on p. 11*

Trump bashes California leaders over fire response

US President-elect Donald Trump yesterday sharpened his criticism of California's handling of the wildfires roaring around Los Angeles, as the state's governor urged him to come witness the damage in person. — *Story on p. 12*

Xia urges Macau & HK to fully grasp advantages of 'One Country, Two Systems'



Xia Baolong, Beijing's point man for Hong Kong and Macau affairs, has urged the two special administrative regions to fully grasp the advantages that the "One Country, Two Systems" principle is offering them and to focus on their governance on both high-level security and high-quality development.

Xia, who paid a fact-finding visit to Macau last September, heads both the Hong Kong and Macau Work Office (HKMWO) of the Communist Party of China (CPC) Central Committee and the Hong Kong and Macau Affairs Office (HKMAO) of the State Council. He made the remarks in Beijing on Thursday while addressing a seminar held by the Chinese Association and Hong Kong and Macau Studies (CAHKMS), an influential thinktank. The aim of the one-day seminar was to study and implement the spirit of President Xi Jinping's important speeches during his inspection visit to Macau on December 18-20, 2024, which marked the 25th Anniversary of Macau's return to the motherland and the swearing-in of the principal officials of the sixth government of the Macau Special Administrative Region (MSAR) and its chief public prosecutor.

The seminar was simultaneously held by video link in Macau and Hong Kong, whose chief executives, Sam Hou Fai and John Lee Ka-chiu, accompanied by the senior government, lawmakers and civic leaders, attended it in the MSAR and HKSAR respectively.

During his visit to Macau, President Xi delivered two important speeches, a "toast" on December 19 at the welcoming dinner hosted by the local government, in which he stressed that "whoever supports 'One Country, Two Systems' and loves Macau as his home is a native who drank water from the Lilau spring* and a positive force contributing to Macau's development", and an "address" at a solemn gathering on December 20 that celebrated the 25th Anniversary of the establishment of the MSAR and the inaugural ceremony of its sixth-term government.

I regard the address, the full text of which has been published by our newspaper in print and online, as the most important speech by the nation's head of state in Macau in the past quarter of a century. The address was intrinsically programmatic and pragmatic.

Referring to "One Country, Two Systems" – which I regard as a political *coup de maître* by late paramount leader Deng Xiaoping – Xia pointed out that a "good system is one that enables peaceful coexistence and win-win cooperation among different social systems" and that, therefore, "must be upheld for a long time". He urged his audiences in Beijing, Hong Kong and Macau to "deeply understand its spiritual essence and rich connotations". He added that "One Country, Two Systems" is "good because it conforms to the fundamental interests of Hong Kong and Macau and is wholeheartedly supported by the residents of Hong Kong and Macau, as well as the nation's 1.4 billion inhabitants as a whole."

"It conforms to the fundamental interests of the nation... and conforms to the interests of investors from all countries and is supported by the international community."

Xia also quoted President Xi as pointing out that "the values of peace, inclusiveness, openness and sharing are embodied in 'One Country, Two Systems' that belongs to both China and the whole world." Xia, a former vice-chairman of the National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Conference (CPPCC) and governor and Party secretary of Zhejiang province, stressed that the "One Country, Two Systems" formula has provided Chinese wisdom and solution for promoting global governance... and "is a major contribution to political civilisation".

Concerning the "wise" principle's "inherent" meaning of "peace," Xia singled out coexistence in harmony and the resolution of disputes and differences through consultation and dialogue. "Inclusiveness", he underlined, means the "inevitable requirement" of "embracing all rivers", i.e., respecting institutional differences and diverse characteristics. He described "openness" as the principle's "distinctive feature" of "constantly injecting new vitality into economic and social development. And, last but not least, the 72-year-old veteran politician described "sharing" as "win-win cooperation, mutual benefit and reciprocity", and the allocation of institutional dividends and develop achievements.

All this, he said, "is the result of the practice of 'One Country, Two Systems'."

As someone who has lived and worked as a journalist under the "One Country, Two Systems" policy for over 25 years, I wholeheartedly support Xia's conclusions. I should add that "One Country, Two Systems" is 100 percent "made in China" – Great Britain and Portugal had nothing to do with its creation but, thank goodness, ultimately accepted it more or less reluctantly (London) or quite readily (Lisbon) during their separate talks with Beijing that resulted in the joint declarations concerning both Chinese territories' return to the exercise of Chinese sovereignty in 1997 and 1999 respectively.

Of course, "Two Systems" is only possible within the ambit of "One Country" – and "One Country", logically, takes precedence over "Two Systems". That's where, realistically, the precept of the Central People's Government's overall jurisdiction over the nation's SARs comes in.

I am sure that the "One Country, Two Systems" principle is a long-term approach by the central authorities towards the two SARs that, consequently, transcends Article 5 of each SAR's Basic Law stating that "... the previous capitalist system and way of life shall remain unchanged for 50 years" – counted from July 1, 1997 in Hong Kong and December 20, 1999 in Macau. The only thing that, when the time comes, needs to be done is for the National People's Congress (NPC) to amend Article 5 of each Basic Law. I am mentioning this matter as I have been asked by quite a few journalists in the past few months about the 50-year "deadline". As a political realist, I am of the view that deadlines are guidelines, not absolutes, because of which they can be modified as needed, as they are, at any rate, meant to be adaptable.

Returning from the future to the present, summarising the spirit of President Xi's two speeches in Macau, Xia also said that both Hong Kong and Macau need to maintain high-level security and promote high-quality development, as both are major tasks that must be coordinated to advance the practice of "One Country, Two Systems". He said that both national security and socio-economic

development are top priorities, and that both SARs "must be unwavering in maintaining security and unwavering in focusing on development in focusing on development, as both are indispensable".

Xia also urged Hong Kong and Macau to "give full play to their unique advantages and strengthen their internal and external connections", a functional role overall that must be consolidated and enhanced to advance and enhance the practice of "One Country, Two Systems". He also exhorted both regions to "polish their international brands" and to demonstrate greater achievements on the international stage.

Within this context, I think that Macau should further strengthen its ties with the world's nine Portuguese-speaking countries, the southern African middle powers of Angola and Mozambique in particular, as well as Brazil as a major country on the international stage and founding member of BRICS, without neglecting relations with Portuguese and the other smaller member nations of Forum Macao. Macau should also strengthen its ties with the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), which is set to increase its membership to 11 once East Timor is formally welcomed into its fold. A large number of Macau's tourists comes from Southeast Asia, which, anyhow, has millennia-long relations with China.

Concerning the practice of "One Country, Two Systems", Xia also stressed that both SARs ought to "seek common ground while acknowledging differences, enhance exchanges and integration of diverse cultures, unite all forces that can be united, and form a broader unified support for 'One Country, Two Systems' at home and abroad."

Xia also underlined that while in Macau, President Xi specifically reaffirmed that the original intention of the Central People's Government's decision to develop Hengqin was based on the aim of promoting the appropriately diversified development of Macau and facilitating Macau residents' livelihoods and employment opportunities. "This positioning must be grasped well, and we must not develop anything [in Hengqin] inconsistent with this positioning", Xia said. In other words, he was adamant the Macau must ensure that Hengqin's development plans support the MSAR's economic diversification.

Looking at the issue from a realistic viewpoint, we should accept the fact that the development of the Guangdong-Macau In-depth Cooperation Zone in Hengqin – which was formally launched in September 2021 – is just leaving behind its toddlerhood (customarily defined as ranging from the first to the third year of a child). The zone has now reached its preschool age, i.e., a more mature development phase. I look at Hengqin as a medium- to long-term project that aims to help Macau play a more diverse and influential role in the Greater Bay Area (GBA) by nurturing non-gaming and non-tourism businesses, such as high-tech start-ups and the modernisation and standardisation of traditional Chinese medicine (TCM), as well as the future development of finance, such as fintech, green bonds and AI-driven data analytics and automated trading.

Xia urged Macau authorities to look at, for instance, whether, in the wake of the setting-up of the Hengqin development initiative, there have already been concrete measures and results in promoting the local economy's appropriate diversification, whether new institutional achievements have

been made in leveraging the advantages of the "Two Systems" and promoting the connection of rules and mechanisms between the two places, and whether the integration of Hengqin and Macau has been playing a pioneering role in promoting market integration in the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macau Greater Bay Area (GBA).

I find Xia's candid approach towards the challenges and opportunities that Hengqin means for Macau both realistic and refreshing. After all, the in-depth cooperation zone in Hengqin is the biggest project that Macau has ever undertaken. It is no easy task. It is a "gift" from the Central People's Government to the MSAR. Any gift, small or large, tangible or intangible, ought to be appreciated and nurtured. Both appreciation and nurturing are key to ensuring that gifts flourish and bring satisfaction and even happiness to both the giver and the receiver. I hope that all local government officials and community leaders are aware of this.

Xia also encouraged Macau and Hong Kong to make greater contributions to the development of the Greater Bay Area, of which Macau is the smallest but certainly "most special" member, by maintaining strategic determination and persisting in long-term efforts.

Finally, Xia said he hoped that the two SAR governments will bear in mind President Xi's instructions, follow the trend of the times, take the initiative to identify, respond to and seek changes, better leverage the institutional advantages of "One Country, Two Systems", strengthen mutual learning, exchanges and cooperation between Hong Kong and Macau, and constantly open up Hong Kong and Macau. He also encouraged Macau's new government to improve the efficiency of its governance and make greater efforts to ensure an efficient and effective public administration. Considering that over 34,000 people are employed by the local government, or around 9 percent of the city's workforce, I presume that the number of public servants should be sufficient to ensure a public sector that serves Macau well – provided that it is finally undergoing a thorough overhaul of its human resources management...

Our new Chief Executive Sam Hou Sai responded to the seminar by saying that Xia's remarks about President Xi's speech in Macau have provided "crucial guidance" for him and his team. He said that Xia's speech in Beijing "comprehensively, deeply and systematically elucidated the profound connotations and significance" of President Xi's important speeches during his inspection visit to Macau last month. His five portfolio policy secretaries also underlined in separate statements the useful guidance given by the seminar for their future work, pledging to follow the president's instructions.

Overall, I am optimistic that Sam, who has said that he is committed to pursuing people-orientated policies, and his team will fully grasp the advantages that the wise "One Country, Two System" principle entails.

– Harald Brüning

**The old adage "Anyone who drinks the Lilau water will never forget Macau" expresses the close link that locals have with their beloved city. Lilau is a square in the peninsula's S. Lourenço parish. The word is of Cantonese origin, meaning "profitable bay". The name has become synonymous with the spring itself and is often associated with the cultural and historical identity of Macau.*

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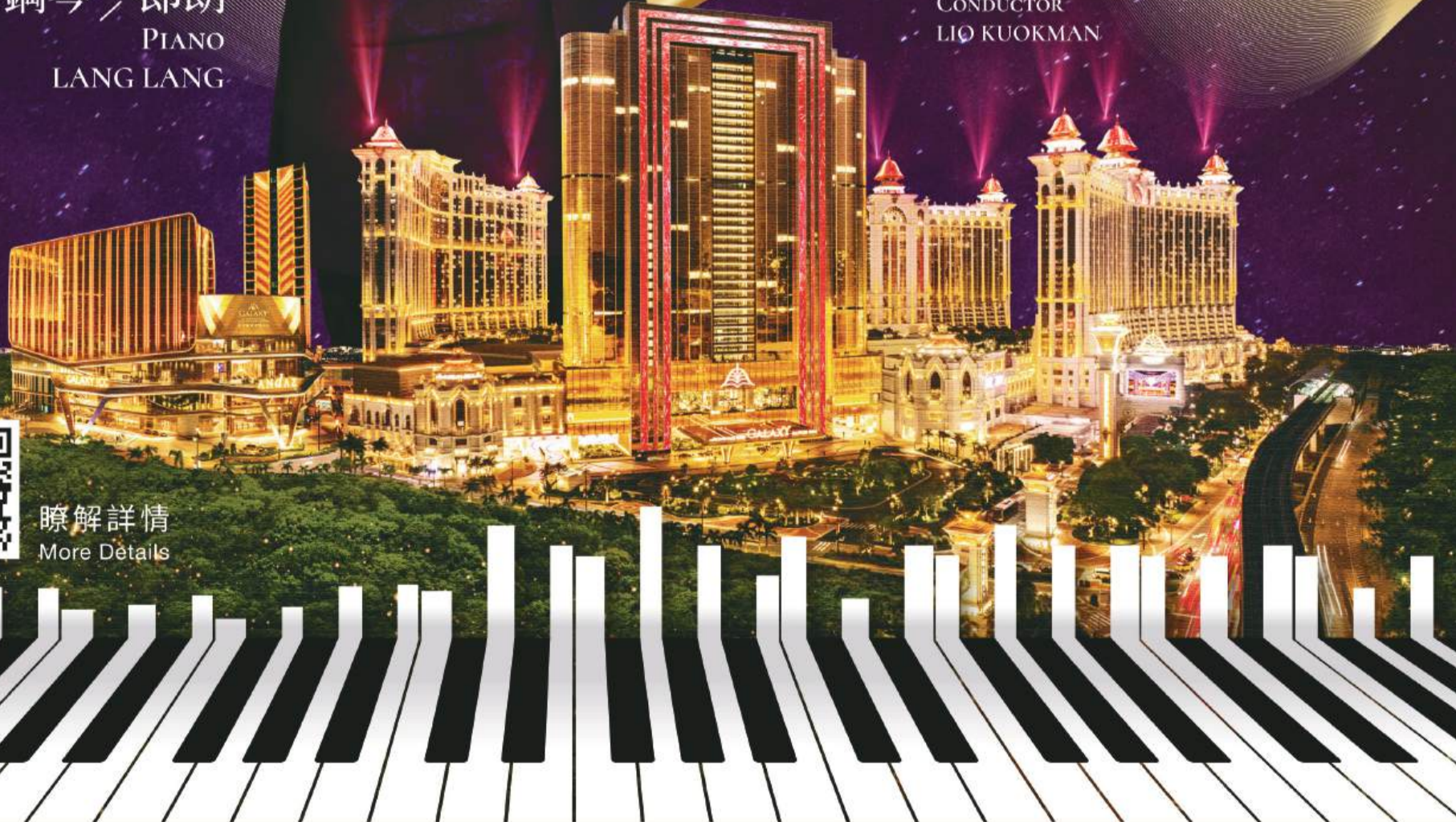


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ABOUT The Young Post

The Macau Post Daily's The Young Post will be published every Monday to present and discuss topical issues that may interest not only the younger but also all the other generations.

ART EDITION



Young artist presents works in solo exhibition debut

Rui Pastorin

At the 10 Fantasia gallery on Calçada da Igreja de S. Lázaro (瘋堂斜巷), the works of young local artist Ng Nga Iam are being displayed for “Mark in My Painting”, her first solo exhibition in Macau.

The exhibition sees Ng, who was born in 2001 and graduated with a degree in Art Education from the Macao Polytechnic University's (MPU) Visual Arts Course of the Faculty of Arts and Design, present 12 works of different mediums at the gallery's room A02.

The works comprise early sketches created over the last three years. Among them are watercolours of places such as an area within the Dom Pedro V Theatre and Albergue SCM*, which were created in 2021 and 2022 respectively; portraits using Chinese painting techniques or markers, needle pens and coloured pencils; and a 2023 mixed media work entitled “Nightmare”.

Through the artworks on display, the artist hopes to share what she has learnt and her creative achievements over the years with everyone visiting the exhibition, according to a statement displayed at the gallery.

The statement added that Ng is an art instructor and has participated in several local exhibitions. She has also won the Merit Award at the Macao College Students Contemporary Art Exhibition.

Those interested in visiting the exhibition can do so until February 27. One may view the works from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. from Tuesday to Sunday during the period, while the gallery is closed on Mondays. More information can be found on the 10 Fantasia Facebook page or website.

*Albergue is Portuguese for “hospice”. SCM stands for Santa Casa da Misericórdia (“Holy House of Mercy”), Macau's oldest charitable organisation.



Photos: Rui Pastorin



Applications open for gigs at open-air venue slated for March & May

Yuki Lei

The open-air performance venue in Cotai will continue to operate on a trial basis this year, where, according to the initial schedule, one concert is slated to be held in March and the other in May, with capacity limited to 20,000 spectators in March, Cultural Affairs Bureau (IC) President Deland Leong Wai Man announced on Friday.

The government's Coordination Group for Large-Scale Performances held on Friday a press conference at the Macau Cultural Centre to wrap up its assessment of the venue's trial gig held on December 28. During the press conference, the group also called for applications for the two upcoming gigs.

According to Leong, at this stage, applications are open for concerts to be held respectively in mid- to-late-March and in mid-to-late May, with an audience capacity of 20,000 for the former, while the audience capacity for the latter will only be determined after the review of the March concert. She said: "Such an arrangement was made after two meetings with the coordination group, and after summarising its views from [last month's] concert and consulting the two core entities, namely, the Public Security Police (PSP) and the Transport Bureau (DSAT), which considered that more aspects



Cultural Affairs Bureau (IC) President Deland Leong Wai Man addresses Friday's press conference at the Macau Cultural Centre in Nape. – Photo: Yuki Lei

of stress-testing should be carefully conducted".

Leong noted that her bureau had already received, prior to the press conference, more than 10 applications to hold a concert in the open-air venue, most of which, however, were expected to reach an audience of 50,000: "The response to the call for applications has been enthusiastic". She added, however, that the organisers, who meet the new audience limited criteria, would now need to submit another application, together with the necessary materials including information on the organising, co-organising and sponsoring entities, the content of the event, the



This handout photo provided by the bureau shows the trial concert held at the open-air performance venue in Cotai on December 28.

list of performers and organisations, the target audience size, the proposed date of the event and the number of days required for setting up the stage.

According to the "Charges for the Use of Macau's Open-air Performance Venue" approved by the Secretariat for Social Affairs and Culture, the daily rental amount of the venue is based on the number of spectators, with a daily rental of 350,000 patacas for events with less than 30,000 spectators and 500,000 patacas for events with more than 30,000 spectators, while additional charges are applied to the days of rehearsals or setting up the equipment. Leong said that the

pricing of the daily rental has been made in reference to the standards of open-air venues outside Macau, as well as the complementary facilities and advantages of individual venues, based on the "average" market rate: "Depending on the proposals we receive, if there are proposals that we consider to be more advantageous, we can further negotiate [the rent]".

A further 25 percent discount is applied to the rental of the trial operation, according to the scale of fees and charges for approved uses of the open-air venue.

During the press conference, Leong underlined that future events at the open-air venue would continue to be planned in an orderly manner, with the aim of increasing audience capacity.

No further concert schedules have been planned yet, according to Leong.

'It was a smooth event': Leong

Wrapping up the group's assessment of the trial concert held on December 28 in conjunction with Hong Kong TV station TVB, Leong

said: "It was a smooth situation", with the 11,000 spectators having completely dispersed within half an hour in various directions including several Light Rail Transit (LRT) stations, nearby integrated resorts and shuttle bus stops.

According to the Transport Bureau, a total of 84 buses were deployed for last month's trial concert with a total of 3,800 passengers, of whom 2,000 travelled to the Barrier Gate checkpoint and 1,800 to Praça de Ferreira do Amaral, while the number of passengers who boarded the LRT at the Cotai East Station and East Asian Games Station amounted to 4,200.

Regarding the free rides on the LRT and buses for last month's gig, Leong said that free shuttle buses will be provided for subsequent concerts held in the open-air venue even if they are not hosted by the government, underlining that the contractor will be requested to provide free shuttle bus services for concertgoers, while in terms of the free LRT rides, reference would be made to the experience gained from last month's concert. ■

DSEDJ mulls launch courseware on mental health teaching

Yuki Lei

The Education and Youth Development Bureau (DSEDJ) has drafted a plan to launch courseware on mental health teaching to raise the community's awareness of physical and mental health.

The working group on "Walking with Love" jointly set up by the Education and Youth Development Bureau, the Health Bureau (SSM) and the Social Welfare Bureau (IAS), together with the Macau Chinese Educators Association, the Macau Catholic Schools Association and the Caritas Lifehope Hotline, held its first plenary meeting for 2025 on Friday.

A DSEDJ statement released later on Friday noted that the meeting reviewed the group's work last year and deliberated on key directions for this year, among which were organising school-sharing sessions on a regular basis, strengthening training for teachers

to cope with the physical and psychological needs of students at different stages of development, urging schools to increase students' motivation to engage in sporting activities, launching teaching materials on mental health, and strengthening young students' awareness of compliance with the law and discipline.

According to the statement, at the start of the meeting DSEDJ Director Kong Chi Meng thanked the inter-departmental collaboration entities for the effectiveness of their work, subsequently pointing out that in the light of the changes in civil society, as cited by the statement, "we will further optimise and introduce more measures that are beneficial to the physical and mental health of students, including programmes targeting low motivation learning, deviant behaviours, and students who require more attention".

On the importance attached by the community to physical and mental health, according to the statement, its targeted measures include launching a "Life Gatekeeper" course in collaboration with the Social Welfare Bureau to provide systematic training to enhance the ability of teaching staff to cope with the physical and mental needs of students at different stages of their development, as well as producing mental health teaching materials on a continuous and regular basis to encourage schools to organise psychological classes for their students to enhance their awareness, understanding and proper handling of their emotions. The statement added that parenting education resources will also be taken into consideration to raise awareness of the whole community, taking practical action to "care for ourselves, our family members and other people around us". ■



This handout photo provided by the Education and Youth Development Bureau (DSEDJ) on Friday shows representatives of the "Walking with Love" working group, including DSEDJ Director Kong Chi Meng (centre), addressing their plenary meeting, at the DSEDJ headquarters.



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Woman gets 'blue card' but works as illegal currency exchange dealer

Yuki Lei

While following up on a HK\$9.7 million fraud case detected last year, the Judiciary Police (PJ) have uncovered recently that the mainland victim had stayed in Macau as a "non-resident worker" and obtained a driving licence to facilitate her husband's engagement in an illegal currency exchange business here.

PJ spokesman Cheong Kim Fong announced details of the case at a special press conference on Friday.

On November 8 last year, the Judiciary Police received a report from a mainland woman about the loss of HK\$9.7 million in casino chips, according to Cheong, who said that PJ officers taking up the case discovered that the "victim", surnamed Ge, often drove her husband, surnamed Cui, to and from various local hotels and casinos. The officers also discovered that she had obtained a work permit (colloquially known as "blue card") in July last year to work in an eatery in the city centre. However, it emerged that she had been working with her husband since obtaining the permit to make it more convenient for her and her husband to engage in illegal currency exchange deals in Macau.

In the wee hours of Thursday, the Judiciary Police began to keep the couple under surveillance which continued until the afternoon on that day, when Ge, as usual, picked up Cui and took him to a casino in Zape, where he exchanged 280,000 yuan into gambling chips worth HK\$300,000 for two gamblers from the mainland, Cheong noted.



This undated pixelated handout photo provided by the Judiciary Police (PJ) on Friday shows PJ officers escorting the female suspect from the mainland in Cotai.

The Judiciary Police arrested the couple later that day at a flat in a residential building in Coloane, where PJ officers seized from a safe HK\$2.8 million in cash believed to be used for currency exchange, as well as the couple's car. Together with HK\$200,000 in chips recovered from the two gamblers, the police seized a total of HK\$3 million.

The Judiciary Police on that day also summoned Ge's "boss" for questioning, during which the local man surnamed Chan admitted that he had assisted Ge in obtaining a blue card through a false employment contract, insisting that he had never received any "commission" for the "arrangement" from the couple.

The Judiciary Police believe that the couple had been engaged in illegal currency exchange deals for at least two months, Cheong said, adding that the duo refused to cooperate with the police.

The trio, aged between 22 and 43, were transferred on Friday to the Public Prosecutions Office (MP) for further investigation, where they are facing charges of involvement in illegal currency exchange activities, as well as charges of involvement in arranging fake employment.

Duo caught red-handed exchanging casino chips for gambler

Meanwhile, the Judiciary Police arrested also on Thursday two mainland men in their thirties for exchanging 19,350 yuan into casino chips worth HK\$20,000 for a gambler at a casino in Cotai.

Under questioning, the duo, who were caught red-handed by PJ officers, admitted that they had been promised a "commission" of 30 yuan for every 10,000 yuan exchanged and a daily payment of 400 yuan. ■

Old Taipa may be pedestrianised again during CNY holiday

Ada Lei

The government plans to pedestrianise the "Old Taipa" area again during the Chinese New Year (CNY) holiday, which begins on January 29, with the view of enhancing public safety and improving the travel experience for residents and visitors alike, according to a statement on Friday.

The statement did not say how long the pedestrianisation was slated to last.

As the Chinese New Year approaches, the government anticipates a large flow of people

and vehicles in the "Old Taipa" area. On Friday, representatives from the Economic and Technological Development Bureau (DSED), Transport Bureau (DSAT), Public Security Police (PSP), Macau Government Tourism Bureau (MGTO), Cultural Affairs Bureau (IC), and Municipal Affairs Bureau (IAM) co-hosted a meeting with community groups to discuss the establishment of temporary pedestrian zones during the festive period, the statement noted.

During the meeting, participants addressed various topics, including transportation logistics, passenger

flow management, road signage, public health measures, and district activities, aiming to strike a balance between the needs of all participants by refining arrangements to ensure the safety of both pedestrians and vehicles, while also enriching the tourism experience and stimulating local consumption by offering various entertainment programmes during the CNY holiday, the statement said.

If the plan gets off the ground this CNY holiday, it will be the third time that the government will have pedestrianised the "Old Taipa" area, i.e., the junction of Rua de Fernão Mendes Pinto and Rua do Supico, the junction of Rua Correia da Silva and Rua Governador Tamagnini Barbosa, as well as the section between Calçada do Quartel and Avenida de Carlos da Maia.

Chan Ka Leong, chairman of the Macau Federation of Neighbourhood Associations (commonly known as Kai Fong in Cantonese) underlined, as quoted by the statement, that the pedestrianisation zone is aimed to provide residents and visitors alike with a safe and comfortable travel environment. Chan said he also hoped that the government would further optimise supportive facilities and enhance public outreach efforts during the CNY festivities. ■



This undated file photo provided by the Economic and Technological Development Bureau (DSED), Transport Bureau (DSAT), Public Security Police (PSP), Macau Government Tourism Office (MGTO) and the Municipal Affairs Bureau (IAM) shows visitors walking around the "Old Taipa" pedestrian area during last year's Chinese New Year holiday.

IAM to hold sessions on cat & dog adoptions

Rui Pastorin

Sessions in Cantonese on promoting cat and dog adoptions are slated to be held once a month at the Mong Ha Eco-Centre until June, with the first to be held on January 26, according to a Friday statement from the Municipal Affairs Bureau (IAM), which co-organises the events with the Everyone Stray Dogs Macau Volunteer Group.

The Macau Municipal Kennel's adoption services, etiquette for animal interaction, veterinary care and relevant laws and regulations are among the subjects to be introduced during the free-of-charge talks, which is titled "Sharing Talks on Adoption of Dogs and Cats", along with adoption tips and how to be a responsible owner.

The other upcoming dates are February 22, March 29, April 26,

May 24 and June 21, all taking place from 10 a.m. to 11:15 a.m. Those intending to adopt animals will also be taken by veterinary surgeons to visit the municipal kennel after the talks, the statement added.

Registration can be done via the Macao One Account, with those under 18 required to be accompanied by a guardian.

Meanwhile, the statement said that one can follow the "Pet Preparatory Class" Facebook and Instagram pages, which promote the "Trap, Neuter and Adopt" (TNA) model and find long-term care for stray animals, while photos and videos of animals up for adoption are posted daily on dedicated webpages, along with common adoption terms and knowledge about veterinary care of cats and dogs. ■



This poster provided by the Municipal Affairs Bureau (IAM) on Friday promotes the upcoming "Sharing Talk on Adoption of Dogs and Cats".

Police announce 'KK Park' abductions of 5 locals

Ada Lei

In response to five local residents having been enticed abroad to participate in telecommunications network fraud between September and December last year, the Judiciary Police (PJ) strongly urged the public yesterday to stay more vigilant against "overseas job" scams and take the initiative to warn their friends and relatives who have mentioned to them that they will be going to work overseas.

Places where abductees are held to engage in scams are colloquially known as "KK Park", many of them reportedly located in Myanmar.

Recently, according to yesterday's statement, the Judiciary Police received a report about a resident who could have been trapped in such a scam. The Judiciary Police eventually assisted the victim by identifying the scam and thus he or she cancelled the upcoming trip abroad.

Among the five victims, only one successfully escaped from the fraud gang and returned to Macau safely, the statement noted.

These incidents, together with recent cases of mainland Chinese being lured to third countries for purportedly well-paid jobs, but when arriving there are reportedly abducted and forced to take part in criminal activities, highlight the need for vigilance among local residents. To avoid such incidents, the Judiciary Police have issued a warning, urging the public to be cautious about overseas job opportunities.

The Judiciary Police Anti-fraud Coordination Centre strongly advises the public to consider the following:

- 1. Be Cautious Online:** Avoid browsing recruitment information from unfamiliar sources, especially offers requiring no skills or experience for high-paying jobs abroad, to prevent financial and safety risks.
- 2. Avoid Criminal Activities:** Never engage in illegal activities, including taking risks travelling abroad for prohibited actions.
- 3. Do Not Handle Suspicious Funds:** Avoid receiving or transporting unidentified funds, and do not lend bank accounts to others, as they may be linked to criminal activities.
- 4. Seek Help if Needed:** For questions or assistance, contact the Judiciary Police Crime Prevention Investigation Hotline on 8800 7777 or the Report Hotline on 993. ■

司警局再次呼籲：
警惕被誘騙赴海外工作
避免淪為犯案工具或人身安全受險



This poster released by the Judiciary Police (PJ) on Friday warns residents of "overseas job" scams colloquially known as "KK Park".

Govt's 'Distinctive Shops' programme extended to Zape and Nape

Tony Wong

The government's "Distinctive Shops" programme, which was launched in 2020, has been extended to Zape and Nape where a total of 26 restaurants and other outlets have been added to the list, raising the total number of business outlets with such accreditation in Macau to 293.

With the programme's extension to Zape and Nape, there now are Distinctive Shops in all districts in Macau, the government says.

A ceremony marking the programme's launch in Zape and Nape was held in Comendador Ho Yin Park in Zape on Friday.

According to its website, the Distinctive Shops programme, as part of the government's campaign to support local small- and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), aims to help restaurants, other eateries and retail outlets enhance their attractiveness and visibility, with the long-term goal of encouraging local SMEs to improve their service quality, brand image and competitiveness.

Businesses that have been listed as Distinctive Shops will be provided with assistance in launching and carrying out promotional campaigns by means of multimedia and other channels, enabling them to reach more potential customers and present their distinctiveness to them, according to the website.

Distinctive Shops will also be provided with training and advice on improving their business management and operation skills.

The programme is implemented by the Economic and Technological Development Bureau (DSED) in collaboration with the respective districts' business associations.

Businesses intending to apply to become Distinctive Shops are required to be recommended by the respective districts' business associations. If the association agrees to recommend the outlet to be listed, the



Economic and Technological Development Bureau (DSED) Acting Deputy Director Chan Chou Weng delivers a speech during Friday's ceremony in Comendador Ho Yin Park in Zape. — Photos: DSED



DSED Acting Deputy Director Chan Chou Weng (centre) poses for a group photo with other guests attending Friday's ceremony such as businessman Frederico Ma Chi Ngai (seventh from left), lawmaker-cum-restaurateur Andrew Chan Chak Mo (seventh from right) and Macau Government Tourism Office (MGTO) Director Maria Helena de Senna Fernandes (sixth from right).

association will submit the outlet's application to the bureau, which will then assess its eligibility and decide whether to classify the outlet as a Distinctive Shop.

A DSED statement on Friday noted that since its launch in 2020, the programme has gradually been extended to different districts in the city. It was launched for outlets on and around Rua de Cinco de Outubro (十月初五日街) in the peninsula first, after which it was extended to the peninsula's central, southern and northern districts as well as Taipa and Coloane.

The statement also noted that after the programme was upgraded early last year, all Distinctive Shops must be ones that have been awarded "Certified Shops" by the government's Consumer Council (CC).

According to the programme's website, most of the officially listed Distinctive Shops across the city are restaurants and other eateries, while the others are shops selling

goods, including locally designed cultural and creative products.

All Distinctive Shops in Zape and Nape are restaurants and other kinds of eateries.

Delivering a speech during Friday's ceremony, DSED Acting Deputy Director Chan Chou Weng noted that with the programme's extension to Zape and Nape, there are now Distinctive Shops in all districts in Macau.

Chan said that "in addition to well-known tourist attractions and fantastic entertainment options, there is an abundant and diverse gastronomic culture in Zape and Nape. We aim for the Distinctive Shops programme to attract residents and visitors alike to Zape and Nape where they can explore and dine in the outlets".

The statement urged operators of the city's Distinctive Shops to grasp opportunities, make good use of the central government's

favourable policies and measures for boosting Macau's tourism sector, innovate by making good use of technology, improve their service quality, and explore new business opportunities, with the aim of injecting new impetus into Macau's economy.

According to its website, Distinctive Shops listed in the programme are defined as those offering unique products or quality services, being innovative, and having a good reputation.

In addition to being required to be listed as Certified Shops by the Consumer Council, businesses must have been operating for at least one year and must accept e-payments for them to be eligible to apply to be listed as Distinctive Shops by the Economic and Technological Development Bureau.

During Friday's ceremony, representatives of the 26 new Distinctive Shops were presented with their certificates. ■

Over 100 participants join CPR/AED training session



This handout photo taken and provided yesterday by the Rotary International District 3450 shows Health Bureau (SSM) Director Alvis Lo Iek Long (7th from left) and Rotary International District 3450 Assistant Governor Elvo Sou (6th from left), among other guest, posing for a group photo during the CPR/AED training session at the Pou Tai Senior Citizen Support Services Complex in Taipa.

Rui Pastorin

Over 100 participants took part in yesterday's CPR/AED training session at the Pou Tai Senior Citizen Support Services Complex in Taipa, according to a statement by the Rotary International District 3450.

CPR stands for cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR), while AED stands for automated external defibrillator.

The session was organised by the district in conjunction with the Rotary Club of Oriental Pearl Macau and St. John Ambulance Hong Kong. It comprised participants from local clubs and service organisations.

The statement said that a full-day

certificate course is offered by the Hong Kong St. John Ambulance, with the over 100 participants to receive "the Hong Kong St. John Ambulance Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation and Automated External Defibrillator Certificate" after its completion.

The certificate is valid for three years, the statement said.

During yesterday's opening ceremony, the statement said that Health Bureau (SSM) Director Alvis Lo Iek Long praised the project and noted it would help improve the community's health. He also stressed the importance of spreading knowledge about CPR and automated external defibrillators to save lives. ■

IAM, Gongbei Customs ink deal, allowing mainland to re-export foreign fruit to Macau

Tony Wong

The Macau Municipal Affairs Bureau (IAM) has announced that it has signed a deal with Gongbei Customs in Zhuhai enabling the mainland to supply Macau with fruit that it has imported from foreign countries.

The bureau made the announcement in a statement on Friday, when the new deal took effect.

Xinhua noted in a report on Friday that before the new deal's implementation, the mainland could only supply domestically grown fruit to Macau. Fruit importers in Macau could only primarily rely on Hong Kong for the delivery of fruit from foreign countries because of which the delivery cost was relatively high while choices of the fruit imported into Macau were relatively limited.

According to Friday's IAM statement, the deal was signed in Guangzhou on Thursday by IAM President Chao Wai Ieng and Zhan Shaotong, who heads Gongbei Customs.

The statement said that thanks to the support by the central government's General Administration of Customs, the Municipal Affairs Bureau and Gongbei Customs have been able to further strengthen cooperation on the inspection and quarantine of food and animal and plant products.

The statement said that previously fruit imported from foreign countries into the Chinese mainland could not be re-exported to Macau,

whereas thanks to the new agreement the mainland can now re-export such fruit to Macau.

The statement said that with the signing of the agreement, Guangdong and Macau have jointly established a liaison mechanism for ensuring the implementation of the mainland's re-export of fruit to Macau. The statement said that through meetings, exchanges and joint assessments between both sides, their respective regulatory resources can be integrated to strengthen supervisory cooperation on product packaging, transportation, and documentation, enabling fruit imported from foreign countries into the mainland that have passed its inspection and quarantine procedures to be supplied to Macau. ■



Two Municipal Affairs Bureau (IAM) inspectors check foreign fruit re-exported by the mainland to Macau, upon their delivery to here on Friday. — Photo: IAM

UM new campus in Hengqin to open in 2028

Continued from p.1

Lina, an exchange student from Russia, studying International Relations, expressed her appreciation for the university's teaching methods. "The lectures are so professionally conducted, making it easy for me to grasp the main points," she said. She also values the detailed lecture materials and feels well-supported by her classmates, and she also enjoys the university's excellent facilities, especially the clean environment.

Another Russian exchange student, Sofia, also studying International Relations, said that the English instruction at UM had played a significant role in her decision to study there. Sofia said she finds her professors skilled at engaging students and making the courses interesting. "Having dorms and faculties on campus really shortens my commute, plus I get to practise my Mandarin with local students," she added, appreciating the opportunities to immerse herself in the language.

Josh, an exchange student from the US studying Chinese History at UM, looks forward to experiencing a



Meury Ferreira, a master's degree student, studying Public Health, from Angola at the UM.



Lina, an exchange student from Russia, studying International Relations.



Sofia, an exchange student from Russia, majoring in International Relations.



Josh, an exchange student from the US studying Chinese History at UM.

— Photos: Ginnie Liang

different teaching style than what he's used to back home. Having lived in mainland China as a child, he decided to return for his studies. "I love Chinese culture, and attending classes at the Confucius Institute helps me learn the language and connect more deeply with Chinese history," he said.

Open Days at UTM & KWNC

The Macao University of Tourism (UTM) and the Kiang Wu

Nursing College of Macau (KWNC) held their Open Days on Saturday respectively.

UTM Rector Fanny Vong Chuk Kwan said on Saturday that her university plans to enrol 20 percent more students than last year, reaching a total of 1,200 in the upcoming academic year of 2025/2026, and intends to introduce master's degrees in High-end Hospitality and Health

Service Management, Cultural and Creative Industry Management, as well as Cultural Heritage Management.

Vong noted that according to the findings of a survey of its undergraduates conducted by UTM last year, 50 percent of the undergraduates had found jobs within a few months, 30 percent of the respondents continued their studies, while the others started

their own businesses or explored different paths, representing a significant increase compared to the situation five years ago when fewer than 10 percent chose to pursue further studies.

KWNC President Florence Van Iat Kio said on Saturday that between 150 and 180 new students will be enrolled in the 2025/2026 academic year, stressing that they will be selected on merit. ■

Unapproved pharmaceutical ingredients detected in 2 topical ointments: pharma bureau

Ginnie Liang

The Pharmaceutical Supervision and Administration Bureau (ISAF) warned the public in a statement on Friday about two topical ointments that have been found to contain the unapproved pharmaceutical ingredients Mometasone furoate and Miconazole, a steroid medication typically used to treat inflammation and fungal infections,

According to the statement, the bureau has recently been warned by the Hong Kong Department of Health that two topical ointments, "Eczevandia Cream" and "Eczevandia Baby Cream", contain Mometasone furoate and Miconazole, which must be used under medical supervision.

The bureau emphasised that these products have not been approved for import or sale in the local market, the statement said, adding that in order to protect public health, the bureau urged residents to immediately stop using these products to avoid potential health risks.

Mometasone furoate can cause a range of side effects, including high blood pressure, elevated



This undated handout photo provided by the Pharmaceutical Supervision and Administration Bureau (ISAF) on Friday shows two topical ointment products that were found to contain unapproved pharmaceutical ingredients Mometasone furoate and Miconazole.

blood sugar, skin atrophy, adrenal insufficiency, and osteoporosis, the statement said, while Miconazole may lead to local skin irritation and allergic reactions, according to the statement.

The bureau vowed to closely monitor the circulation of the two

ointments in Macau. Members of the public who have purchased these products should stop using them immediately and take them to the bureau for proper disposal.

For any enquiries, members of the public can call 8598 3233 during office hours. ■

Quake response in Xizang exemplifies China's good governance

Commentary

BEIJING — The quick and efficient response to the 6.8-magnitude earthquake in the Xizang Autonomous Region* attests to China's good governance and its tenet of putting the people and their lives first.

Shortly after the quake rocked Dingri County on January 7, President Xi Jinping ordered all-out rescue efforts to save lives and minimize casualties. A meeting of the central authorities called for making utmost efforts to treat the injured, working hard to meet the basic living needs of those affected, and accelerating post-disaster recovery and reconstruction.

The mobilization of personnel and resources was done as quickly as possible to save every life and provide warm shelters for residents displaced by the quake, which left 126 people dead and 337 injured. The speed and efficiency of the rescue efforts have ensured the safety of people's lives and property to the greatest extent.

The rapid response was impressive. Within 10 minutes of the quake, rescue planes were in the sky; in less than half an hour, rescue operations were carried out in the epicenter area. Nine hours after the quake, all damaged road sections were repaired and ready for traffic, and mobile communication signals were restored.

On the first night after the earthquake, affected people were moved to tents and provided with hot meals.

The efficient relief operations reflect the huge improvements in Xizang's infrastructure,

ranging from roads, power to telecommunications, as well as the good governance in Xizang.

The region upgraded its emergency response to the highest level on the first day of the quake. Helicopters were used in transporting some injured residents. In one case, local authorities arranged for a helicopter to transfer a five-year-old girl seriously injured in the quake from Xigaze City to the regional capital Lhasa — a 237-km-long journey which took one hour and seven minutes, saving time for treatment.

Besides funds and materials allocated by multiple ministries and departments, Xizang received aid from across the country, including a medical team from Shanghai, a batch of donated platelets and 50 tonnes of Tibetan tea from neighboring Sichuan Province. A number of monasteries and temples both in and outside Xizang offered donations.

With the support of the central authorities and the whole country, Xizang has achieved remarkable achievements over the past decades, including eliminating absolute poverty. Highways, railways, and airports have linked the border region in southwest China more closely with the rest of the country, allowing help to roll in from all quarters.

With strong nationwide support, those affected by the quake will have their homes repaired or rebuilt and resume living normal lives as soon as possible. Xizang will continue its march towards modernization along with the whole nation. — Xinhua

*Formerly known as Tibet Autonomous Region

Over 5 trillion yuan of loans approved for 'white list' real estate projects

BEIJING — Loans approved for mainland China's "white list" real estate projects have exceeded 5 trillion yuan (about US\$695.5 billion), the National Financial Regulatory Administration (NFRA) said in a statement yesterday.

The risks of small and medium-sized financial institutions have been significantly reduced, and the "white list" mechanism has been

effective, the NFRA said.

Efforts will be made to speed up the reform and risk reduction of small and medium-sized financial institutions, and to deal with high-risk institutions. Work should also be done to expand the "white list" mechanism and increase its efficiency, and build a new development model of the real estate sector, said the NFRA.

Under the "white list" mechanism launched in January 2024, local authorities are recommending that financial institutions provide financial support to eligible real estate projects.

The mechanism is part of the authorities' efforts to stabilize the sector weighed by debt problems and boost industry confidence.

— Xinhua