

Police bust elderly Russian with 5 kg of heroin worth 7 million patacas in his luggage

Ada Lei

The Judiciary Police (PJ) busted on Sunday a Russian man smuggling 5 kg of heroin with an estimated street value of about 7 million patacas from Thailand, according to a special press conference held yesterday.

During the press conference co-hosted by the Judiciary Police and Macau Customs Service (SA) at the PJ headquarters in Zape, PJ spokesman Cheong Sio Keong identified the drug smuggler as a 68-year-old man from Russia, surnamed Novorusev, who told the police that he's an engineer by profession.

According to Cheong, the Judiciary Police had received intelligence recently that a drug trafficking gang had hired people to smuggle drugs into Macau by air, using the city as a transit point. On Thursday, based on the intelligence, the Judiciary Police identified the suspect as Novorusev, who flew from Thailand to Macau with his luggage believed to contain drugs and

put him under surveillance.

Cheong noted that upon his arrival in Macau, Novorusev stayed in a hotel in the city centre until Sunday, when he left with his luggage, heading to the Outer Harbour Ferry Terminal, apparently to catch a ferry to Hong Kong.

PJ officers arrested the suspect at the Outer Harbour Ferry Terminal and when they searched his luggage found the heroin hidden in packets of biscuits and coffee.

Cheong noted that under questioning, Novorusev only admitted to having been hired by a cross-border drug smuggling gang that had promised him US\$500 as payment for his "services", as well as free transportation and accommodation.

The Judiciary Police transferred Novorusev to the Public Prosecutions Office (MP) yesterday, where he is facing a drug-trafficking charge, according to Cheong.

Macau's prison term for drug traffickers ranges from six to 16 years, according to Law No.10/2016. ■



Judiciary Police (PJ) officers escort the hooded Russian drug smuggling suspect to a PJ vehicle outside their headquarters in Zape after yesterday's special press conference about his case. – Photo: Ada Lei

Sam hears opinions from community reps for policy address



This handout photo released by the Government Information Bureau (GCS) last night shows Chief Executive Sam Hou Fai addressing yesterday's meeting with representatives from several community associations.

Tony Wong

The Government Information Bureau (GCS) announced in a statement late last night that Chief Executive Sam Hou Fai held a meeting yesterday to listen to opinions and suggestions raised by representatives from a number of community associations concerning the drafting of his first policy address.

In the meeting, the location of which was not identified by the statement, Sam pledged that his government will constantly promote the high-quality development of the "One Country, Two Systems" principle in compliance with expectations and instructions raised by President Xi Jinping.

According to the statement, Sam said that his government will improve its mechanism for consulting members from various sectors of civil society about policies and measures that will contribute to Macau's development and improvements in the population's well-being.

Sam's five portfolio policy secretaries attended the meeting.

The chief executive is slated to deliver his 2025 Policy Address at the Legislative Assembly sometime after the Chinese New Year. The Chinese New Year of the Snake begins on January 29. ■

Man, 75, critical with influenza A

Tony Wong

The Health Bureau (SSM) announced in a statement last night that a 75-year-old local man inflicted with chronic diseases is in a critical condition after being infected with influenza.

According to the statement, the man living in a retirement home came down with a cough on Saturday and was also coughing up phlegm, his case was then followed up by a doctor at the home.

As his symptoms worsened on Sunday when he also came down with a fever and shortness of breath, the man was rushed to the private Kiang Wu Hospital where he was hospitalised after being diagnosed with influenza A and pneumonia.

According to the statement, the man's condition worsened later that day because of which he was transferred to the intensive care unit (ICU) where he was put on a ventilator.

He was in a critical condition at the time of last night's statement.

Kiang Wu Hospital reported the case to the Health Bureau yesterday.

The statement said that the patient had not received a seasonal flu jab. ■

Xi meets Grenadian PM, calls for advancing bilateral ties

President Xi Jinping said yesterday that China is willing to provide assistance for Grenada's economic and social development within the framework of South-South cooperation. – Story on p. 7

Relative of Jack the Ripper victim demands new inquest

A descendant of one of Jack the Ripper's victims has demanded a new inquest into one of history's most notorious serial killers, after DNA evidence suggested the murderer was a Polish barber. – Story on p. 11

Amado Vaz appointed as new PM of São Tomé and Príncipe

Ilza dos Santos Amado Vaz has been appointed as the new prime minister of São Tomé and Príncipe, following a presidential decree issued on Thursday. – Story on p. 12

Impact of negative emotions on youngsters' mental health shouldn't be ignored: school principal

Yuki Lei

In recent years, there has been increasing concern about students' mental health, with the findings of a survey showing that 90 percent of local students were facing different degrees of pressure from schoolwork – and in a phone interview with the *Post* yesterday, The Chinese Educators Association of Macau Vice President Vong Kuoc Ieng listed the main sources of students' psychological stress such as the excessive use of social media during the three-year COVID-19 pandemic (January 2020-December 2022), as well as the lack of face-to-face communication in general and parents' companionship.

The findings of the survey conducted by the General Association of Chinese Students of Macau on June 6 to 16 last year, which were released last November, show that among 1,769 secondary school students, 90 percent said they were facing different degrees of pressure from schoolwork, with 34 percent of them saying they felt "very much" under pressure from their homework arrangements, while only about 10 percent said that they felt "almost no" pressure from their respective school's homework arrangements.

Excessive use of electronic products

Vong, principal of Choi Nong Chi Tai ("Farmer Children's") School,



This undated file photo provided by The Chinese Educators Association of Macau Vice President Vong Kuoc Ieng, principal of Choi Nong Chi Tai School, shows him posing in his office.

said that the impact of social media on young people's mental health should not be ignored, adding that students were generally immature, and with the "negative" impact of electronic gadgets such as mobile phones, students would quietly undergo emotional changes, which "are secretive and dangerous", especially when their previous social interaction was face-to-face with their peers, teachers, and parents.

As early as 2015, the UK's Department of Health and Social Care pointed out that children's excessive use of electronic gadgets and spending too much time on the internet could lead to mental

health problems, such as loneliness, loss and anxiety, among them, the risk of these problems is greater for children who spend time on screens for more than four hours a day. Vong said that with the popularity of electronic gadgets, online communication "may not all be positive information", coupled with the influence of their peers, the negative impact of electronic gadgets on students' social emotions and cognition was growing.

Lack of parental companionship

Students' mental health problems are the result of accumulation

over time. Among them, students' negative emotions, apart from the influence of electronic gadgets, are also related to the local working environment, according to Vong, who underlined that parental "companionship" is essential when negative emotions arise.

However, he admitted that in Macau, as a society operating 24 hours a day, with many parents working shifts, the time they spent on their children's education was in fact "very insufficient", which could be seen from the increase in tutorial centres that have sprung up especially since the pandemic: "Parents do not seem to be paying enough attention to academic matters".

Physical education activities versus static activities

Among the current school education modules, Vong said he believed that there was no better option that could exert a positive influence on the psychological growth of students than physical education activities, saying that physical activities could, in fact, benefit students, of which aerobic exercises, from a psychological viewpoint, were a way to allow them to release their emotions: "Sometimes they fall down and get hurt, and sometimes they fail, so that students can learn from their failures and grow up with a better outlook".

However, he was quick to add that due to the lack of activity facilities in Macau, it seemed that local schools could mainly only offer relatively static activities regarding science and technology, reading and musical instruments, while, in terms of youngsters' overall activities, sports activities "have not been greatly popularised".

"Negative emotions can be as contagious as the COVID-19 virus", said Vong, who underlined that such "contagion" could not be prevented through injections or medicines, but the students should instead be cared for and understood through an overall cooperative atmosphere. Vong called for the creation of more platforms for youngsters to deal with the frustration of failure, instead of only enjoying success.

In view of the psychological problems that exist in the current student population, Vong said that both the education sector and the government should continue to pay close attention to the issue of students' mental health in the future, strengthen the training of teachers in tackling students' mental health problems and implement education sector reforms, increasing the number of courses on mental health education, while also encouraging students to attend mental health courses and counselling sessions. ■

Taipa-Zhongshan ferry link to start tomorrow

Ginnie Liang

The Marine and Water Bureau (DSAMA) announced in a statement yesterday that a new ferry route between Macau's Taipa Ferry Terminal in Pac On and Zhongshan Passenger Port will start operating from tomorrow, providing two round-trip ferry services per day.

According to the statement, the first ferry will depart from Taipa at 10:30 a.m. and the second at 6:30 p.m., with the voyage taking about 60 minutes. The return trips from Zhongshan Passenger Port will leave at 9:15 a.m. and 5 p.m.

Zhongshan lies some 40 kilometres northwest of Macau.

According to the statement, the new ferry route will be run by the locally registered Yuet Tung Shipping Company Limited which was established in 1962.

The statement said that the bureau has all along been supporting the development of the marine passenger transport sector and encouraging shipping companies to provide more diversified marine passenger transport services to the public.

The statement underlined that the bureau has assisted the shipping company in carrying out the preparatory work, including sea and berthing trials and inspections of the route's vessels. ■

Winners of Admirable Signum Nativity contest receive prizes: ACCM

Rui Pastorin

The winning Catholic schools that took part in the 2024 Admirable Signum Nativity Competition were awarded during a prize-giving ceremony on Saturday at the Macao Catholic Culture Association (ACCM) office on Rua Formosa (美麗街), the association said in a statement on the same day.

"Admirable signum", as reported by the *Post* on January 11, 2023, is Latin for a "admirable sign". It is the title of an Apostolic Letter by Pope Francis, dated December 1, 2019, on the meaning and importance of the nativity scene.

Aimed at promoting the Christmas tradition, the statement said that the competition had 16 Catholic schools participating, with

Escola São Paulo emerging as the champion. It was presented with the Judges' Award, while the first and second runner up were Colégio Diocesano de São José 5 and Escola da Sagrada Família respectively.

Escola Dom João Paulino, Escola de Santa Madalena, and Colégio Mateus Ricci took home Honourable Mentions, while the statement added that Colégio Diocesano de São José 6 garnered the Creative Theme Award. Instituto Salesiano, meanwhile, received the Best Environmental Award.

Moreover, Colégio de Santa Rosa de Lima – Chinese section received the Best Group Collaboration Award, while Escola São João de Brito – English section garnered the Internet Popularity Award after gaining 608 likes

and loves out of 3,566 votes on Facebook from December 13 to 27.

Bishop Stephen Lee Bun-sang said in his speech during Saturday's event he hoped that the contest would inspire schools to promote the message of Christmas love and peace. Lee also noted that this year marks the Jubilee Year of the Catholic Church – a period centred on the message of "hope," filled with mercy and grace. He encouraged all to embrace the Jubilee Year's values.

The statement said that the competition has "enjoyed enthusiastic participation" from local schools over the years. The 2025 edition will be expanded into an inter-school competition open to all local primary and secondary schools, according to the statement. ■



This photo provided by the Macao Catholic Culture Association (ACCM) shows Bishop Stephen Lee Bun-sang (3rd row, 7th from left), students from the Catholic schools that won awards in the recent 2024 Admirable Signum Nativity Competition, along with other guests, posing for a group photo at the ACCM office on Rua Formosa (美麗街) on Saturday.

Published since Aug 2004

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- Printed by Tipografia Welfare Lda., 82-86 Rua dos Pescadores
- Wire services – AFP, Xinhua



Macau Weather

MAINLY CLOUDY.
A FEW LIGHT RAIN PATCHES.
FORCE 3 TO 4 EAST TO
NORTHEASTERLY WINDS,
BECOMING NORTHERLIES.
RELATIVE HUMIDITY WILL
RANGE BETWEEN
55% AND 85%.



14°C~19°C

Source: SMG

PSG Macau Youth GBA Tournament slated for next month

Yuki Lei

The PSG Macau Youth GBA Tournament is slated to take place at the Macau Worker's Stadium from February 7 to 9 – and Yannick Ngassa, CEO of the Paris Saint-Germain (PSG) Academy Hong Kong & Macau, said yesterday he hoped to make the tournament for players aged between nine and 15 an annual event as a platform for the development of local youth football.

According to Ngassa, outstanding players will be selected, through a total of nine matches, to join the PSG Academy for professional training and may participate

in the PSG World Cup in Paris.

Ngassa made the remarks in an interview with the *Post* at the Macau Worker's Stadium near the Barrier Gate checkpoint after a meeting with Sports Bureau (ID) President Luis Gomes yesterday morning.

Expressing enthusiasm for organising regular tournaments in Macau in the future, Ngassa said: "In the future we're going to be having this [tournament] every year and every year we're going to keep extending [it] to more teams. This time we're going to be in the GBA and, possibly next year, we want to attract even people from outside

the GBA, possibly even Europe. So, we're going to start this year as a second try again, but going forward we're going to make it as one of the biggest events," adding he believed that Macau football needs breakthrough players to reach a higher level and inspire the nation.

Commenting on Macau's strengths, he pointed out that despite the city's ability to host grand events like the NBA and its annual Macau Grand Prix (MGP), there was still a lack of opportunities for local youths to get involved in sport, making the Macau Youth GBA Tournament a valuable addition.

The tournament has invited 28 youth football teams from the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macau Greater Bay Area (GBA) to participate, and is expected to attract tens of thousands of football "elites" and fans from both local and neighbouring regions, according to the organisers.

Joseph Jessel, general manager of the PSG Academy Hong Kong & Macau, reminded the tournament players that the event's primary goal was to allow them to have fun and enjoy the experience, focusing on the development of friendships and memories rather than just competition. He said: "It's not only about the competitive aspect or who will win, who will lose. For us it's very important for the kids to get it [fun] and get amazing moments they will not forget, they will never forget".

Jessel also said that Macau has the potential to compete with other regions, citing the high level of involvement and training among local kids: "Macau has a very huge community in football with what we have seen so far. So, it's important for us to help this community to grow up with this kind of events".

This will be the second time the tournament will be taking place in Macau; the first time was a trial run last year. The presence of Pedro Miguel Pauleta, the second all-time top scorer for Portugal with 47 goals, will be one of the features of next month's tournament.

Paris Saint-Germain Football Club, commonly referred to as Paris Saint-Germain or simply PSG, is a professional football club based in Paris. They compete in Ligue 1, the top division of French football. ■



PSG Academy Hong Kong & Macau CEO Yannick Ngassa (left) and PSG Academy Hong Kong & Macau General Manager Joseph Jessel pose after yesterday's interview with the *Post*. – Photos: Yuki Lei



This poster provided by the Paris Saint-Germain (PSG) Academy Hong Kong & Macau shows details of its Macau Youth GBA Tournament slated for next month.

Man fights supermarket staff in attempt to steal cigarettes

Ginnie Liang

A local man in his fifties was arrested for forcibly taking a pack of cigarettes that he had not paid for in full out of a supermarket and injuring three shop assistants, a Public Security Police spokesperson said in a regular press conference yesterday.

The spokesperson said the incident occurred at a supermarket in Fai Chi Kei at about 2 p.m. The man only paid 50 patacas because he 'didn't have enough money with

him' but tried to take the pack of cigarettes worth 55 patacas out of the supermarket, and when a male and two female supermarket staff members stopped him, they were injured when the thief beat them.

According to the spokesperson, the three staff members suffered bruises on the chest and contusions on their hands, but were conscious and in stable condition when they were taken to hospital for outpatient treatment. ■



A Public Security Police (PSP) spokesperson reports during yesterday's regular press conference at the Judiciary Police (PJ) headquarters. – Photo: Ginnie Liang

Pindar by Manuport Logistics team wins Macao Match Cup



This undated handout photo provided by the Sports Bureau (ID) yesterday shows "World Match Racing Tour – Macao Match Cup" champion Pindar by Manuport Logistics team led by Ian Williams.

Rui Pastorin

The 2025 MGM Macao International Regatta concluded on Sunday, with the UK's Ian Williams leading his Pindar by Manuport Logistics team to victory in the inaugural "World Match Racing Tour – Macao Match Cup", which had its finals on Sunday, according to a statement by the Sports Bureau (ID) on the same day.

The statement noted that the "World Match Racing Tour – Macao Match Cup" is a special event recognised by World Sailing as a World Championship-level competition and was the opener of the 2025 WMRT season. A total of 12 international match racing teams competed, with Williams, the reigning eight-time WMRT champion, emerging victorious to win the Macao Match Cup title.

The second and third place meanwhile went to New Zealand's

Nick Egnot-Johnson and Chris Poole from the US respectively.

Moreover, the "Lotus Cup Regatta" (IRC category) was won by Turkey's Ravenol Sailing Team, while Capitano from Hong Kong took home the top prize for the "Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area Cup Regatta" (IRC category). Both competitions' final rounds were held off Hac Sa Beach.

Sunday morning also saw a fleet parade by participating boats before they set off for the competition venue, according to the statement.

Meanwhile, the statement noted that those interested in joining the "2025 MGM Macao International Regatta – Photography Competition" may submit entries from January 27 to February 14, with more details available on www.macaoregatta.com/photography_competition ■



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4 Mongolians arrested for theft, one involved in drug use: police

Ginnie Liang

Four jobless Mongolian men aged 30 to 40 were arrested last Wednesday after pickpocketing 5,000 yuan from a man's crossbody bag, and they were also found to be involved in a shoplifting case at a supermarket in Zape, with one of the suspects also found to be a drug user, a Public Security Police (PSP) spokesperson said in a regular press conference yesterday.

According to the spokesperson, PSP officers received a report from a local male victim saying he suspected that the money he had withdrawn from an ATM on Avenida de Almeida Ribeiro (新馬路) last Tuesday had been stolen, as he found that 5,000 yuan in cash inside his bag had vanished, as he discovered that the zip of his crossbody bag was undone.

According to the spokesperson, the Public Security Police made use of their citywide CCTV surveillance system and discovered that the four Mongolians first deliberately approached the victim when he was walking through Largo do São Domingos (板樟堂前地) at about 1:30 p.m. last Tuesday, after which three of them kept a lookout while the fourth opened the victim's crossbody bag to remove the cash.

During the investigation, the police also discovered

that the four men had stolen two bottles of alcoholic beverage valued at 500 patacas each from a shop in Zape earlier that day, the spokesperson said.

PSP officers identified the suspects and arrested them in a massage parlour in Zape the next day, the spokesperson said.

The foursome denied pickpocketing the male victim's crossbody bag but admitted to shoplifting two bottles of alcoholic beverage from a supermarket, after which the police recovered the stolen goods from the room in the massage parlour where the suspects were intercepted, the spokesperson said.

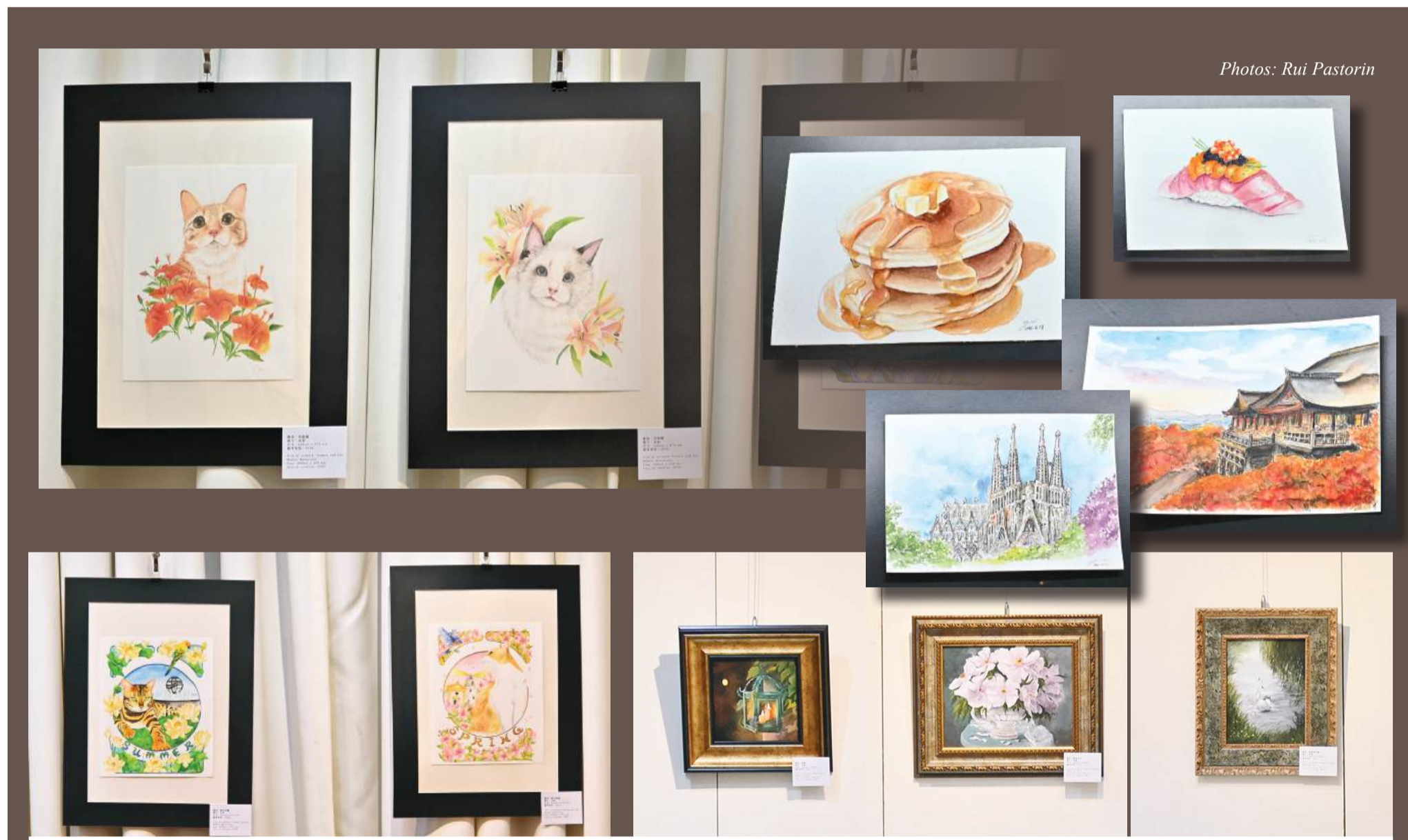
Meanwhile, PSP officers found a glass pipe with traces of powder on one of the suspects, which he claimed to have found earlier in Hong Kong and used to smoke methamphetamine – also known as ice, the spokesperson said.

The police later confirmed that the powder on the pipe was methamphetamine and the suspect tested positive for it, the spokesperson said.

The four suspects were transferred to the Public Prosecutions Office (MP) last Wednesday, facing a charge of aggravated theft, while one of them faces additional charges of drug use and possession of drug-taking paraphernalia. ■



This undated photo provided by the Public Security Police (PSP) yesterday shows PSP officers escorting the four Mongolian theft suspects to a police station.



Photos: Rui Pastorin

Artist shows mixed media works in new solo exhibition

Rui Pastorin

Animals, flowers and even food are among the subjects of local artist Naomi Chan's paintings of different mediums on display for her latest solo exhibition "Naomi Original Artwork Exhibition", which is on at the 10 Fantasia gallery until January 30.

The gallery is located on Calçada da Igreja de S. Lázaro (瘋堂斜巷) Kicking off earlier this month, the exhibition features artworks created through pencil sketches, watercolours and acrylics in varying sizes showcased across the gallery's rooms C01 & C02.

Among various works that exhibitiongoers will find are watercolours of cats in the foreground of

familiar local landmarks like Largo do Senado and the Guia Fortress, a pencil sketch of US singer-songwriter Taylor Swift, and small paintings of the Kiyomizu-dera Temple in Japan and Sagrada Família in Barcelona, both of which were created using fineliner pens and watercolours.

As an artist who likes to create art using different media, a recent statement by the gallery noted that Chan has been fond of painting and creating since she was a child, having learnt watercolour, acrylic, sketching and needlepoint pens during her studies.

The advertising and graphic design major is now engaged in art and design education, as well as freelance

design work. She also holds a master's degree in design management from Northumbria University in Newcastle, England, according to the statement.

The statement said that through the exhibition, the artist hopes to show "her love for traditional art through artistic painting creation with different media". Moreover, the exhibition aims to get members of the public become interested in, and have a deeper understanding of traditional art.

Those interested may go and view the works from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. from Tuesday to Sunday during the period. More information can also be found on the 10 Fantasia Facebook page or website.

Chip curbs show that for Washington it's a case of devil take the hindmost

China Daily Editorial

To further strangle the development of China's high-tech industry, especially in the artificial intelligence (AI) sector, the Joe Biden administration has announced plans to impose a range of additional restrictions on China so as to cut the country off from the world's most advanced technologies, no matter the collateral damage done.

The move, which represents "the strongest controls ever enacted by the US" to dent China's ability to make advanced chips, not only bans the sale of advanced chips and semiconductor-making machinery to China, but also places more than 100 Chinese companies on a restricted Entity List. All on the pretext of safeguarding the national security of the United States.

The restrictions, which serve as another example of the Biden administration's abuse of export controls against China, are built on measures the administration had already issued over the past several years to crack down on China's chip industry. They belie Biden's previous statements that the US does not seek to contain China's development. They also pose "a significant threat" to the stability of global industry and supply chains, the disruption of which has been repeatedly cited by the International Monetary Fund as a major factor affecting global economic growth.

Given its absurdity and preposterous nature, even some US high-tech companies have criticized the restrictive policy of the outgoing administration, with industry leader Nvidia – which controls 90 percent of the AI chip market – pointing out last week that the "last-minute policy" will not achieve its claimed purpose of safeguarding US national security but only push countries to develop alternative technologies.

The restrictions are reported to be conducted in tiers, with the harshest ban to be imposed on China while granting the US' allies continued access to AI chips and imposing limits on much of the Middle East and Africa. Nvidia and other tech companies have argued that the rules could backfire by driving buyers in the Middle East, Southeast Asia and elsewhere to Chinese companies such as Huawei.

"We would encourage President Biden to not preempt incoming President Trump by enacting a policy that will only harm the US economy, set America back, and play into the

hands of US adversaries," Nvidia Vice-President Ned Finkle said in a statement. The policy "will be criticized by US industry and the global community" because it will disrupt the availability of standard computing technologies across the globe without meaningfully advancing national security, he added.

The remarks reflect growing dissatisfaction within the industry over Washington's ideologically driven anti-China chip policy, with abuse of regulatory measures that not only undermine market rules and the international economic and trade order, but also pose a threat to the stability of the global industry and supply chains. Given that the semiconductor industry is already highly globalized, the tightening of sanctions on China's high-tech sector will also hinder global technological development and, as a result, lead to damage that will be inflicted on the global semiconductor industry including US companies.

For years, China hawks in Washington have overstretched the concept of national security, depicting China as "the most consequential threat" to US national security while abusing state power to suppress the development of Chinese high-tech companies. Yet, as the world's sole superpower, the US is arguably the most secure power in history. All its moves have done is sown the seeds of conflict.

More worrying is the fact that the US is stepping up pressure on China on all fronts, including the military. In a speech on Friday, the US deputy secretary of defense, Kathleen Hicks, again harped on the old string of a "China challenge". Although she said competition does not mean conflict – given no one should desire the global devastation such a war would bring, she pledged to "do our utmost to out-think, out-maneuver, and out-strategize them [China]".

Such misguided and bellicose remarks will do nothing to help build mutual understanding between the two countries, but instead risk placing the two countries on a collision course. If they really want to out-think, out-maneuver, and out-strategize China, then the political circle in Washington might want to give a little more thought to how to promote global peace and stability as China has done with the global initiatives it has proposed for development, security and civilizational dialogue.

– Courtesy of China Daily

Govt to offer subsidy to eateries to buy smart kitchen equipment



Long Nin Fai (from left to right), acting chief of the Economic and Technological Development Bureau's (DSED) Technology Department, United Association of Food and Beverage Merchants of Macau President Lei U Weng, Macau Productivity and Technology Transfer Centre (CPTTM) Director General Victoria Alexa Kuan Chan, and Terence Liem Tao, a senior CPTTM manager, look on during yesterday's press conference. – Photos: Tony Wong

Tony Wong

The government will launch a pilot programme next week offering a subsidy to small- and medium-sized restaurants and other eateries to purchase and install smart kitchen equipment, i.e., automated and robotic cooking machines.

The programme aims to encourage the city's small- and medium-sized restaurants to upgrade their operations by automating their dish preparing and cooking process so that they can reduce costs and improve operation efficiency, thanks to which their competitiveness can be enhanced.

The subsidy programme will be carried out by the government in collaboration with the United Association of Food and Beverage Merchants of Macau.

The pilot programme will be financed by the Industrial and Commercial Development Fund (FDIC), a public fund run by the Economic and Technological Development Bureau (DSED) which in conjunction with the association has jointly commissioned the public Macau Productivity and Technology Transfer Centre (CPTTM) to implement the programme.

CPTTM is a non-profit organisation jointly funded by the Macau government and various companies and businesspeople in the private sector.

The new subsidy programme was announced yesterday during a press conference at the CPTTM Fashion Lab, located on the 10th floor of Phase 2 of Ocean Industrial Centre (海洋工業中心) on Rua dos Pescadores (漁翁街).

Details of the programme were presented by Thomas Mak Seng Hin, a CPTTM manager.

The application period will run between Monday next week and February 14.

For companies that run more than one restaurant, each can apply to receive a subsidy to buy and install smart kitchen equipment for up to three of its restaurants.

In addition to kitchens in restaurants, the subsidy programme will also cover the purchase and installation of automated and robotic cooking machines for the respective dining companies' central kitchens, i.e., plants that prepare and cook food to be served in their respective restaurants.

For companies that operate more than one central kitchen, each can only apply to receive the subsidy for one of its central kitchens.

Only restaurants or central kitchens that employ no more than 100 employees will be eligible for the programme.

In addition to restaurants that are operating, the subsidy programme will also cover firms that are applying for licences to run restaurants.

Each restaurant will receive a subsidy equivalent to 80 percent of the cost required to buy and install automated and robotic cooking machines in its kitchen, with the subsidy amount to be capped at 50,000 patacas.

Each central kitchen will also receive a subsidy equivalent to 80 percent of the cost, but the subsidy amount to be capped at 100,000 patacas.

The subsidy will cover the purchase, delivery and installation of the equipment as well as the

maintenance services for the first year.

Beneficiaries can only purchase smart kitchen equipment for their restaurants or central kitchens from the programme's listed suppliers.

The pilot programme will offer 50 places for restaurants and 10 places for central kitchens. After the application period, a lucky draw will be held to choose the beneficiaries for the subsidy from eligible and accepted applicants. The lucky draw's results will be announced on the CPTTM website late next month.

Mak noted during the press conference that for a company that applies for the subsidy for up to three of its restaurants, each of its restaurants will have the same chance of being selected by the lucky draw.

Long Nin Fai, acting chief of the bureau's Technology Department, said during yesterday's press conference that the government decided to offer 50 places for restaurants to apply for the subsidy as the programme will be a new one to be run on a pilot basis first. "As a pilot programme, the government has concluded that 50 places will be enough", Long said, adding that the government will assess whether the pilot programme achieves the desired results before deciding whether to launch the subsidy for the second time and whether to increase the number of places next time.

Terence Liem Tao, a senior CPTTM manager, said that the programme is expected to cost up to 4.8 million patacas, comprising up to 3.5 million patacas as payments of the subsidy to the beneficiaries and the remainder to be used to run the programme. ■



Thomas Mak Seng Hin, a CPTTM manager, presents details of the subsidy programme during yesterday's press conference.

STOCK MARKETS

Hang Seng Index closes 1 pct lower

HONG KONG – Hong Kong stock market ended lower yesterday with the benchmark Hang Seng Index down 1 percent to close at 18,874.14 points.

The Hang Seng China Enterprises Index dipped 0.79 percent to end at 6,843.71 points, while the Hang Seng Tech Index dropped 0.91 percent to end at 4,221.92 points. – Xinhua



A representative shows reporters samples of smart kitchen equipment at the CPTTM Fashion Lab after yesterday's press conference.