



Liaison chief calls for 'opening up new horizons of development, keeping creating new glories'

Yuki Lei

The Central People's Government Liaison Office in Macau held yesterday its annual Spring Festival reception at the Forum Macao Complex in Nam Van, during which its director Zheng Xincong reaffirmed President Xi Jinping's expectations of "grasping new opportunities, opening up new horizons of development and keeping creating new glories", while Chief Executive Sam Hou Fai emphasised his philosophy of administration of "Endeavour, Solidarity, Persistence, Innovation", stating that he would push forward the in-depth reform of the public administration with special focus on enhancing the effectiveness of Macau's governance.

Yesterday's reception was attended by more than 1,200 people, including Macau's first chief executive Edmund Ho Hau Wah, who is now a vice-chairman of the National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC), Foreign Ministry Commissioner in Macau Liu Xianfa, Macau's second and third chief executives Fernando Chui Sai On and Ho Iat Seng, People's Liberation Army (PLA) Macau Garrison Commander Yu Changjiang and Political Commissar Lin Qinghua, Court of Final Appeal



Liaison Office of the Central People's Government in the Macau Special Administrative Region (MSAR) Director Zheng Xincong (left) and Chief Executive Sam Hou Fai deliver speeches during yesterday's Spring Festival reception at the Complex for Commercial and Trade Cooperation Platform for China and Portuguese-speaking Countries (aka Forum Macao Complex) in Nam Van. - Photos courtesy of Liaison Office

(TUI) President Song Man Lei and Legislative Assembly (AL) President Kou Hoi In, as well as senior local government officials, Executive Council members, lawmakers, foreign consuls accredited to Macau, local business and community leaders, and senior media representatives.

'Four efforts'

On behalf of Xia Baolong, who heads both the Hong Kong and Macao Work Office of the Communist Party of China (CPC) Central Committee and the State Council's Hong Kong and Macao Affairs Office (HKMAO) and the Macau-based Liaison Office,

Zheng wished Macau compatriots a Happy New Year and thanked them for supporting the work of the HKMAO and the Liaison Office for so many years.

Zheng continued his speech by pointing out that "the year of 2025 marks the beginning of the implementation of the spirit of



President Xi Jinping's important speeches during his visit to Macau... Macau, after 25 years of continuous endeavour, has reached a relatively high starting point for development". Based on Xi's important speeches during his inspection visit to Macau on December 18-20, 2024, Zheng put forward four "efforts" for the city to "open up new horizons of development and keep creating new glories": promoting high quality development; realising efficient governance; making valuable contributions; and maintaining the highest level of security practices.

Continued on p.2

At least US\$10 billion needed to rebuild Gaza health system: WHO

GENEVA – At least US\$10 billion will likely be needed to rebuild Gaza's devastated health system over the next five to seven years, according an initial World Health Organisation (WHO) assessment yesterday.

"The needs are massive," the UN health agency's representative in the Palestinian territories, Rik Peeperkorn, told reporters.

With a ceasefire finally

looming, humanitarians are calling for a dramatic scaling up of humanitarian aid into war-ravaged Gaza, amid efforts to determine the size of the towering needs.

Peeperkorn said his team's initial estimate of the cost to rebuild just the health sector was "even more than US\$3 billion for the first 1.5 years and then actually US\$10 billion for the five to seven years".

"In Gaza, we all know the

destruction is so massive. I have never seen that anywhere else in my life," he said.

WHO chief Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus meanwhile said "less than half of Gaza hospitals are functional".

He hailed Wednesday's announcement from mediators that Israel and Hamas had finally reached a truce as "just about the best news".

He voiced hope that "this

agreement marks the end of the darkest chapter in the history of the relationship between the Israelis and the Palestinians".

"We welcome this news with great relief, but also with sorrow that it has come too late for those who have died in the conflict," he said.

He also voiced "caution, given that we have had false dawns before, and the deal has not yet been confirmed".

While the mediators said the deal was due to take effect on Sunday, Tedros urged the sides not to wait.

"If both sides are committed to a ceasefire, it should start immediately," he said. "The best medicine is peace".

"So, let the healing begin, not just for Gaza, but for Israel as well. This is in everyone's best interest."

(More on p.10) - AFP

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What's driving American 'TikTok refugees' to China's RedNote?

Just days before the potential enforcement of a US government ban on TikTok, American users have responded by migrating to an alternative Chinese social media app – RedNote. - Story on p. 7

Blasts in Kyiv as UK inks 'landmark' 100-year accord

British Prime Minister Keir Starmer signed a "landmark" 100-year partnership agreement with Ukraine during an unannounced visit to the war-torn country yesterday, seeking to shore up support for Kyiv before Donald Trump returns to the White House. - Story on p. 11

Daniel Chapo: from unknown to Mozambique's youngest president

Mozambique's new leader Daniel Chapo, who was inaugurated on Wednesday, faces quelling deadly protests over his election, which his rivals say was stolen, as his first political test as president. - Story on p. 12

Liaison chief calls for 'opening up new horizons of development, keeping creating new glories'

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'Promoting high quality development'

Zheng said: "I believe that everybody will certainly make good use of the series of favourable measures by the central authorities for Macau," by focusing on the development of the city's appropriate economic diversification, developing new quality productivity in accordance with local conditions, fostering new leading sectors with international competitiveness, while also realising the development of key industries, involving objectives, policies, projects and results, with the views of promoting a "high degree" of economic synergy and "in-depth" convergence of rules and standards between Hengqin and Macau.

'Realising efficient governance'

"I believe that everybody will adhere to the principle of 'One Country', make good use of the advantages of 'Two Systems', and fully implement the principle of 'patriots governing Macau'," Zheng said, adding he believed that Macau's

new government would adhere to the philosophy of people-orientated governance, identify the "entry points" and "breakthroughs" for improving people's livelihoods, and continue to enhance residents' sense of gain, happiness, and security.

'Making valuable contributions'

Zheng also said: "I believe everybody will stand tall and see far," jointly elevating the city to the next level of its "World Centre of Tourism and Leisure" development, expanding Macau's role as a China-Portuguese platform, perfecting the system and mechanism for the construction of "one base" - a base for exchange and cooperation where Chinese culture is the mainstream and diverse cultures coexist, while also developing of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macau Greater Bay Area (GBA) as well as the nation's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) through active participation. He also encouraged all those who attended yesterday afternoon's reception to capitalise on Macau's advantages of high-level openness and freedom of communication to attract foreign capital and

international talents, building Macau into a global hub for talent.

'Maintaining highest level of security practices'

Zheng also quoted Xi as saying that "the situation in Macau is generally stable, but the internal and external environment is undergoing profound changes", emphasising the need for efforts to prevent all kinds of risks and firmly safeguard the nation's security and Macau's stability: "I believe that everyone will pass on and promote the core values of patriotism and love for Macau, strengthen the education of young people on patriotism...and work together to maintain the peace and stability of Macau's society".

Sam puts emphasis on enhancing governance effectiveness

Meanwhile, Sam said in his speech that in 2025, a year full of hope

and the inaugural year of Macau's sixth-term government, based on the achievements and experience gained by the previous local governments, his administration would join hands with all walks of life to continue to strive to, among other things, advance the city's appropriate economic diversification with "greater efforts" in enhancement of coordination as well as in reforms and innovation, while also striving for new substantive progress in the development of the Guangdong-Macau In-Depth Cooperation Zone in Hengqin.

In his speech, Sam also highlighted the need to further promote public administration reform, with the emphasis on enhancing the effectiveness of the city's governance, strengthening public servants' awareness of the need for a holistic view, pragmatism, solidarity and cooperation, honesty and uprightness, "practically

transforming Macau's systemic advantages into the effectiveness of governance".

Concerning people's livelihoods, apart from emphasising the need to continue to promote patriotism and love for Macau, Sam said that he would "ensure that people's wellbeing is a top priority for the government by making sure that basic needs are met in a harmonious society, based on justice and righteousness," while supporting the young generation in pursuing and realising their dreams.

Sam also pledged that his government would pro-actively build Macau into a "high-level talent highland", making concerted efforts to jointly build an "essential bridgehead" for the country's high-level opening-up as well as an "important window" for exchanges and mutual understanding between the Chinese and Western civilisations. ■



Senior central and local government, legislative and judicial representatives, as well as Chinese People's Liberation Army (PLA) officers from the local garrison offer a toast at yesterday's Spring Festival reception in the presence of 1,200 attendees including senior local government officials, Executive Council members, lawmakers, foreign consuls accredited to Macau, local business and community leaders, and senior media representatives. - Photo: Yuki Lei

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Man hides cleaver during row with friends over 'drinking rules'

Yuki Lei

Public Security Police (PSP) officers arrested in San Kio district on Monday night a non-resident worker (NRW) from the mainland after he "accidentally" dropped a cleaver he had hidden under his clothing during a quarrel with two friends over the "rules for drinking games".

According to regular police press conference yesterday, the suspect, surnamed Xie, was dining at a restaurant on Rua de Coelho do Amaral (連勝街) at about 8 p.m. when he got into an argument with two friends over the rules of a drinking game. Xie and his friends then left the restaurant and agreed to meet again in Rua de Tomé Pires (道咩俾利士街) after three hours "to continue the argument", a PSP spokesperson said.

The spokesperson noted that the Public Security Police

received a report from one of the two friends, another NRW (colloquially known as blue-card holders) from the mainland who works for a local construction company, about a 30-centimetre-long meat cleaver that Xie had taken from the butcher's shop where he works and hidden under his clothing during their argument, in the course of which Xie accidentally dropped the cleaver.

The spokesperson said the friend reported the case to the police as he was fearing for his safety, but, according to the police investigation into the case, the suspect did not intend to harm anyone.

However, Xie has been transferred to the Public Prosecutions Office (MP), facing a charge of possession of a prohibited weapon, according to the spokesperson. ■



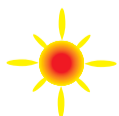
This undated handout photo released by the Public Security Police (PSP) yesterday shows the cleaver seized from the mainland suspect on Monday.

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Source: SMG

Fire breaks out in container in Coloane

Ginnie Liang

A fire broke out yesterday due to a power bank overheating in a storage container at a recycling centre near a bus stop in Ka Ho village (九澳村) in Coloane, but no one was injured, according to a Fire Services Bureau (CB) statement yesterday.

The bureau said the fire broke out at around 1 p.m. yesterday.

Upon receiving the fire alarm, firefighters rushed to the scene and put out the blaze in 10 minutes, the statement said, adding that when firefighters arrived, the container was still on fire, and smoke evacuation was required to

reduce the temperature.

Smoke evacuation refers to the process designed to remove smoke from an area, especially in emergencies like fires.

Upon inspection, a large number of miscellaneous items were burnt inside the container, including power banks, cans of paint and electrical appliances, in an area of 5.5 metres by 2 metres.

The statement said that the fire was believed to have been caused by a power bank overheating due to pressure caused by prolonged compression.

The cause of the incident is still under investigation. ■



A fireman (left) looks at a container at a recycling centre in Coloane's Ka Ho Village (九澳村) yesterday, after firefighters had extinguished a blaze inside the storage container. — Photo courtesy of TDM

IAS chief urges flu jabs for kids

Ginnie Liang

Social Welfare Bureau (IAS) President Wilson Hon Wai said yesterday that the vaccination rate in residential care homes for the elderly and residential care homes for the disabled has reached 90 percent, while the vaccination rate of young children in creches stands at only 60 percent, urging parents of young children to have them vaccinated as soon as possible.

Hon made the remarks on the sidelines of yesterday's coordination meeting at the Areia Preta Health Centre held by the bureau for various social service organisations to tackle the influenza threat, with 175 representatives from 140 social service organisations attending.

Hon said that even though he understood the various considerations of parents regarding the vaccination of their young children, he pointed out that young children are weakened once they are infected with a virus, especially as the Chinese New Year (CNY) will be close to the expected flu peak this year.

Hon said that yesterday's meeting aimed to ensure the effective implementation of the government's infection prevention measures at various institutions, adding that while masks are required for admission to residential care homes, there was no need for more stringent management measures in



Social Welfare Bureau (IAS) President Wilson Hon Wai talks to reporters on the sidelines of yesterday's coordination meeting held by IAS at the health centre building in Areia Preta. — Photo: Ginnie Liang

residential care homes yet, while plans needed to be drafted in the event of a mass infection.

Hon underlined that social service organisations are expected to step up training for their staff to enable them to fully understand the transmission channels, symptoms and precautionary measures of influenza, so as to ensure that they can properly guide their service users and staff to take proper personal precautions in their daily work.

At the same time, they should strictly enforce the official notification mechanism for infectious diseases, closely monitor the health

conditions of service users and staff, promptly deal with any discomfort and implement infection control measures, Hon said.

As the risk of infectious disease transmission has increased due to the frequent activities of institutional visits and New Year visits of family members and friends in the run-up to and during the Chinese New Year holidays, Hon reminded all social service facilities to communicate with service users and their family members in advance on flu-related precautionary and control measures, and to gain their understanding so as to facilitate better implementation of the relevant work. ■

Green Day to rock Macau

Rui Pastorin

American rock band Green Day will be performing at the Galaxy Arena in Cotai on February 9 as part of "The Saviors Tour", Galaxy Macau notes on its website.

"Saviors" is the title of the bands' 14th studio album, which was released last year.

Formed in 1987, Green Day comprises lead vocalist and guitarist Billie Joe Armstrong, bassist and backing vocalist Mike Dirnt, as well as drummer Tré Cool. As of 2024, the band is among the world's best-selling music artists, having sold roughly 75 million records worldwide, Wikipedia notes.

The Galaxy Macau website adds that the band has over 10 billion listens* across various platforms. On the Swedish audio

streaming and media service provider Spotify alone, the band boasts over 31 million monthly listeners.

The upcoming concert will mark the band's first stop in Asia, according to the Galaxy Macau website. Green Day's website adds that they are set to perform in Bangkok and Jakarta after the Macau leg of the tour, which is set to end in São Paulo on September 7 this year.

Tickets, for which sales started yesterday, are priced between 580 patacas and 2,880 patacas, with more details available on the Galaxy Macau website. ■

* "Listen" can be used as a noun, similar to "streaming." In this context, it typically refers to the act of listening, particularly in relation to audio content.



This poster downloaded from Galaxy Macau's website yesterday promotes Green Day's concert in Macau next month for their "The Saviors Tour".

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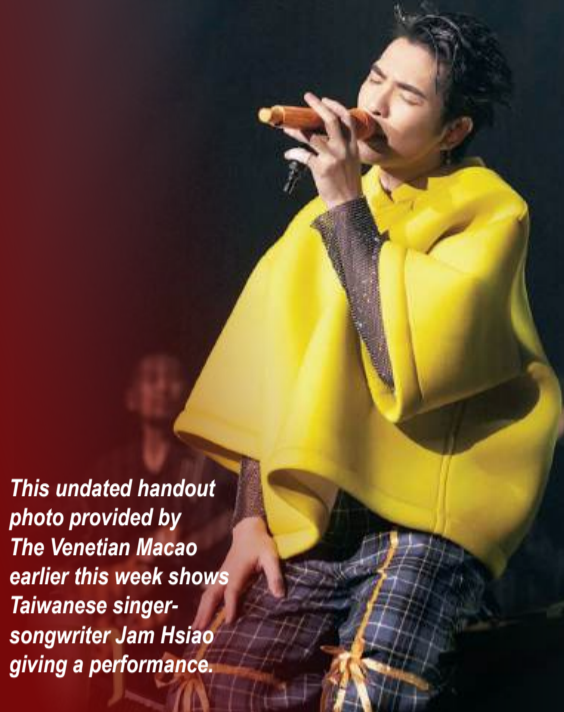
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Jam Hsiao to perform at The Venetian Arena in March



This undated handout photo provided by The Venetian Macao earlier this week shows Taiwanese singer-songwriter Jam Hsiao giving a performance.

Rui Pastorin

Integrated resort operator The Venetian Macao said in a statement earlier this week that Mandopop star Jam Hsiao Ching-teng will be performing at its recently upgraded The Venetian Arena for his “Wild / Mild World Tour-Macao”.

Slated to take place on March 29 at 8 p.m., the statement said that the tour echoes the theme of the Taiwanese singer-songwriter and actor’s album of the same name and “celebrates his awe and passion for the wonders of the living world”. The show is set to feature new costumes, dynamic stage design, state-of-the-art lighting and rich musical elements.

The statement said that Hsiao first gained recognition in 2007 after taking part in the first season of the talent show “One Million Star”, which launched his music career. Wikipedia adds that the show is the “Taiwanese equivalent of American Idol”.

Hsiao has “received a plethora of awards and accolades, solidifying his status as one of the leading figures in the Mandopop scene”, according to the statement.

Tickets are priced between 488 patacas and 1,688 patacas, with more details available on www.cotaiticketing.com and www.macaoticket.com

2025 EASL Final Four to take place at Studio City



This poster provided by Melco Resorts & Entertainment yesterday on behalf of the East Asia Super League (EASL) promotes next month’s “EASL Final Four 2025”.

Rui Pastorin

Basketball’s East Asia Super League (EASL) Final Four 2025 is slated to take place at the Studio City Event Centre in Cotai, with the semi-finals to take place on March 7, while the championship game is set for March 9, according to a statement provided by integrated resort operator Melco Resorts & Entertainment on behalf of the league.

This marks the first time that the league will host the “final four” event in Macau.

The semifinals will see the top four teams vie for a chance to advance to the championship game. The losing teams from the semifinals will meanwhile face off in the third-place match, according to the statement.

A prize purse of US\$1 million is up for grabs for the EASL Champions, while the runner-up and third place team will receive US\$500,000 and US\$250,000 respectively.

EASL Chief Executive Officer Henry Kerins was quoted by the statement as saying: “This milestone reflects our deep commitment to the region and to showcasing premium basketball as a driver of economic growth, cultural vitality, and community engagement. Macau’s modern infrastructure and passionate fan base make it the perfect destination to host this high-stakes event, and we can’t wait to see the energy it will bring to the region.”

Moreover, Senior Vice President of Melco and Property General Manager of Studio City Kevin Benning was quoted as saying: “We are thrilled to be collaborating with EASL to bring such top-tier Asian basketball matchups once more to Studio City Event Centre. We look forward to continuing our support for EASL in elevating Asian basketball in the Greater Bay Area”.

Tickets will go on sale on February 7 on <https://www.studiocity-macau.com/en>.

‘SJM A-LIN Music Show’ to take place in February

Rui Pastorin

Taiwanese singer-songwriter A-Lin will be in Macau for the “SJM A-LIN Music Show”, which is slated to take place at The Grand Pavilion of Grand Lisboa Palace (GLP) in Cotai on February 2.

According to a recent statement from the integrated resort operator, A-Lin, a Golden Melody Awards* (GMA) winner, will “enchant audiences with her powerful vocals and emotive ballads to celebrate Lunar New Year”.

Moreover, on the night of the show, the integrated resort operator will also offer the “SJM A-LIN Music Show” hotel package, which the statement said includes Zone A show tickets, one-night accommodation at GLP, and breakfast for two at The Grand Buffet the following morning.

The statement said that the package starts at 4,688 patacas, with reservations available on a first come, first served basis until January 27. More information can be found on <https://www.grandlisboapalace.com/en/offers/sjm-alin-music-show-package> or by calling 8881 8000.

*The GMA is an honour awarded by the Taiwanese cultural affairs department to recognise outstanding achievement in the Mandarin, Taiwanese Hokkien, Hakka, and Formosan-languages popular and traditional music industry. They are awarded on the basis of votes by jury members, and they have been described as the equivalent to the Grammy Awards in the Chinese-speaking world. -Source: Wikipedia



This poster provided by integrated resort operator SJM Resorts earlier this week promotes the “SJM A-LIN Music Show”, slated to take place on March 2.

MGM Theatre to host ‘Black Myth: Wukong’ Symphony Concert



This poster provided by integrated resort operator MGM yesterday promotes the “Black Myth: Wukong” Symphony Concert slated to take place at MGM Theatre in MGM COTAI.

Rui Pastorin

The “Black Myth: Wukong” Symphony Concert is set to take place at the MGM Theatre in Cotai on February 1 and 2, with the event to feature a selection of music from the award-winning 2024 action role-playing game by Shenzhen-based Game Science.

The game “embodies a deep traditional cultural heritage and showcases the richness of the Chinese tradition”, according to a statement by integrated resort operator MGM.

The show, produced by Poly Performing Arts in conjunction with “Black Myth: Wukong”, is also set to premiere three new songs, the statement said. Scenes from the game will also be played during the performances, which take place at 3 p.m. and 7:30 p.m. on the two dates.

The upcoming performance represents the concert’s “initial move towards engaging a global audience”, according to the statement, and follows on successful performances in Chinese cities such as Harbin, Nanjing, Taiyuan and Wuhan.

Showcasing the AAA game’s scenes, the statement said that MGM COTAI’s theatre is complete with a 900-square-metre 4K LED screen – the size of three tennis courts – and “is the world’s first theatre capable of offering 28-million-pixel of viewing pleasure to its audience”.

The statement added that the theatre also uses L-ISA, an “immersive sound technology that overcomes the difficulties of traditional amplification methods to create a multidimensional auditory experience”, accurately reproducing each in-game sound detail.

Tickets are priced between 180 yuan (197 patacas) and 880 yuan (963 patacas). More details can be found on <https://www.mgm.mo/en/cotai/entertainment/wukongsymphonyconcert>

*Wukong often refers to the legendary character Sun Wukong (孙悟空), also known as the Monkey King, from the Chinese classical novel Journey to the West.

Economist Lawrence Lau suggests 12-year mandatory education in mainland aiming to boost investment

Tony Wong

Hong Kong's renowned economist Lawrence Lau Juen-ye, whose main research fields includes the Chinese economy, said in Macau yesterday he suggests that the mainland create additional aggregate demand with the aim of stimulating its economic growth, such as by increasing public investment, including extending its current nine-year compulsory education to 12 years, a policy requiring the construction of "many" new school buildings which would help boost the construction sector.

Lau also said that right now it was important for the central government to boost people's relatively low expectations of the country's economic growth prospects.

Lau, 80, made the remarks while delivering a talk on "China in the Global Economy" held on the University of Macau (UM) campus and talking to reporters afterwards.

Lau was born in Guizhou province and grew up in Hong Kong where he received his school education. He received his bachelor's degrees in Physics and Economics from Stanford University in 1964, and his master's degree and doctoral degree in Economics from the University of California, Berkeley in 1966 and 1969 respectively.

Lau started to teach in Stanford University's Department of Economics in 1966 where he was promoted to professor of economics in 1976.



Hong Kong's economist Lawrence Lau Juen-ye yesterday speaks in the University of Macau (UM) and to reporters afterwards.

— Photos: Tony Wong

Lau moved back to Hong Kong in 2004 to take up the position of vice-chancellor and president of the Chinese University of Hong Kong (CUHK), which he had held until 2010, where he is currently a chair professor of economics.

In his talk lasting one and a half hours, including a Q&A session, Lau summarised and elaborated on China's economic development history since the 19th century by highlighting key facts and indicators in different historical periods and eras.

Concerning how to stimulate people's consumption in the mainland, Lau said that the level of people's expectations of the country's economic growth prospects was a key factor determining their willingness to spend money.

Lau said that people's expectations of economic prospects was a "self-fulfilling prophecy", which refers to a phenomenon

where if people believe the economy will improve, their increased spending and investment can lead to actual economic growth, while conversely if people expect economic decline, their reduced spending and investment can contribute to a slowdown.

A self-fulfilling prophecy occurs when a belief or expectation about a future event influences behaviours in such a way that it ultimately causes that event to happen.

Lau suggested that the central government roll out special measures aiming to boost people's expectations of the country's economic growth prospects.

Lau cited three previous successful examples where the central government was able to restore or raise people's expectations when the mainland was affected by pressure potentially causing an economic downturn, namely Deng

Xiaoping's famed southern tour in 1992 after the country's economic prospects were affected by the aftermath of the June 4 incident in Beijing in 1989, as well as the 1997 Asian financial crisis and the 2008 global financial crisis.

Lau, who delivered his talk in English, spoke to local English-language media afterwards, including the *Post*, noting that the aftermath of the three-year COVID-19 pandemic has negatively affected people's consumption ability and enterprises' ability to invest, because of which, he said, the additional aggregate demand to be created by the central government needed to primarily come from government-generated investment.

"Extra domestic demand basically has to come, in the first instance, from investment, the government one, and not from private consumption. As you know,

due to the three-year COVID-19, households and enterprises have not been making money. What do you expect them to do? So, I think, in the first instance, the extra demand has to be government-generated," Lau said.

Lau said he suggests that the central government extend the mainland's current nine-year compulsory education to 12 years with the aim of boosting public investment-generated aggregate demand.

"I suggest the extension to 12-year mandatory education. This means you have to construct many more senior high schools, and that's the demand. You need new schools for the expanded senior high school education, and apparently quite a few. Because I think maybe a quarter to a third of the people in this age cohort right now still do not attend senior high school," Lau said.

"So, there are a lot of schools and student dormitories that will [require] construction materials, contractors and so forth," Lau said.

"This would actually replace the demand lost because of the property developers going under," he said.

Lau underlined that the major thing currently negatively affecting the mainland's economic growth is its insufficient aggregate demand, pointing out that China is an economy with surplus supply where production capacity is in excess.

"No question about it. So, [US Secretary of the Treasury] Janet Yellen was quite right," he said. ■

Reports on suspicious transactions up 13.7 pct in 2024: govt

Tony Wong

The government's Financial Intelligence Office (GIF) received 5,245 reports about suspicious transactions in 2024, a 13.7 percent increase from the 4,614 reported in 2023, according to statistics released on the office's website on Wednesday.

According to the website, the 5,245 reports last year comprised 3,837 from gaming concessionaires, 1,097 from financial institutions and insurance companies, and 311 from other entities, accounting for 73.2 percent, 20.9 percent and 5.9 percent of the total.

According to the website, the 4,614 reports in 2023 comprised

3,431 from gaming concessionaires, 887 from financial institutions and insurance companies, and 296 from other institutions, accounting for 74.4 percent, 19.2 percent and 6.4 percent of the total.

Of the 5,245 transactions reported as suspicious, 142 were passed by the office the Public Prosecutions Office (MP), 26 more than in 2023.

Apart from casino concessionaires, financial institutions and insurance companies, pawnshops, jewellery shops, real-estate firms and auction houses are also required to report any transaction amounting to 500,000 patacas or above. ■

Customs busts shop selling clothing violating copyrights worth 3.89 million patacas

Ginnie Liang

Macau Customs Service (SA) officers on Wednesday busted a shop suspected of selling fake products infringing on various brands' intellectual property rights (IP), involving 138 bogus items worth 3.89 million patacas in total, according to the prices set by the retailers, an SA spokesperson said during a press conference yesterday.

A local female shop owner aged 63, and her sister, a 67-year-old sales assistant, were arrested on Wednesday, according to the spokesperson, adding that the shop

has been in business since 2014.

According to the spokesperson, the Macau Customs Service received a tip-off early this month and discovered that a fashion outlet in the San Kio area was suspected of selling copyright infringement products.

The spokesperson did not reveal the affected brands.

The spokesperson noted that the bogus items were shoddily made and were identified as counterfeit products by a brand authenticator. The items were sold at 800 to 1,700 patacas each.

The suspects stayed mum on

the sourcing of the bogus goods, the salaries of the shop assistants, how long they had been selling the counterfeit clothes and the number of counterfeit clothes that had been sold, and the Customs officers did not rule out the possibility of more people being involved in the case, the spokesperson said.

The spokesperson said that the suspects have been transferred to the Public Prosecution Office (MP). According to the Industrial Property Code Decree-Law No 97/99/M, the suspects face a hefty fine and up to six months in jail. ■



A total of 138 bogus items of clothing seized on Wednesday are displayed at the Macau Customs Service (SA) headquarters in Barra. — Photo courtesy of TDM

STOCK MARKETS

Hang Seng Index closes 1.23 pct higher

HONG KONG — Hong Kong stock market ended higher yesterday with the benchmark Hang Seng Index up 1.23 percent to close at 19,522.89 points.

The Hang Seng China Enterprises Index rose 1.24 percent to end at 7,098.76 points, while the Hang Seng Tech Index rose 1.23 percent to end at 4,417.37 points. — *Xinhua*