

# Taipa Village to be pedestrianised 1<sup>st</sup> time during mainland's 5-day May Day holiday



Economic and Technological Development Bureau (DSED) Deputy Director Cheang Hio Man (centre) speaks during yesterday's press conference, flanked by Transport Bureau (DSAT) official Chan Hou Ip (from left to right), Municipal Affairs Bureau (IAM) official Au Chan Weng, Macau General Union of Neighbourhood Associations President John Chan Ka Leong, Macau Government Tourism Office (MGTO) official Liz Lam Tong Hou, Cultural Affairs Bureau (IC) official Ho Cheok Fong, and Public Security Police (PSP) senior officer Chan Kuok Lok. — Photo: Tony Wong

Tony Wong

The temporary pedestrianisation of Taipa Village will be implemented during the upcoming five-day Labour Day holiday in the mainland as the local government expects a relatively large number of tourists to visit the area during the holiday period, the Economic and Technological Development Bureau (DSED) announced yesterday.

This year, the mainland's Labour Day holiday period will be between May 1 and 5.

Labour Day is a public holiday in Macau next Thursday.

The bureau made the announcements during a press conference at its headquarters in Nam Van yesterday.

Addressing yesterday's press conference, DSED Deputy Director Cheang Hio Man noted that the temporary pedestrianisation of Taipa Village was previously implemented thrice, namely the mainland's Chinese New Year Golden Week holiday period and National Day Golden Week holiday period last

year, and this year's Chinese New Year Golden Week holiday period, pointing out that the upcoming temporary pedestrianisation of Taipa Village will be the first one to be implemented during the mainland's Labour Day holiday period.

The Taipa Village area has become one of Macau's most popular tourist attractions over recent years, including Rua do Cunha located at its central part, a pedestrianised street featuring restaurants and shops selling local snacks and souvenirs.

As previously, this time most sections of the main one-way vehicular street running throughout the Taipa Village area will be pedestrianised.

Initiated by the Economic and Technological Development Bureau, the temporary pedestrianisation of Taipa Village is implemented by the bureau in collaboration with five other public entities, namely the Transport Bureau (DSAT), the Public Security Police (PSP), the Macau Government Tourism Office

(MGTO), the Cultural Affairs Bureau (IC), and the Municipal Affairs Bureau (IAM), as well as the Macau General Union of Neighbourhood Associations (known as Kai Fong in Cantonese), and several business and community associations in the neighbourhood, aiming to create a safe and comfortable walking environment for residents and visitors alike in the Taipa Village area during festive periods expected to attract a large number of visitor arrivals.

Continued on p.5

## IMF downgrades global growth forecast to 2.8 pct in 2025 amid increased tariffs

WASHINGTON, DC — The International Monetary Fund (IMF) yesterday downgraded its global growth forecast in 2025 to 2.8 percent, a hefty 0.5 percentage point decrease from its January projection, according to the latest World Economic Outlook (WEO).

"Since the release of the January WEO Update, a series of new tariff measures by the United States and countermeasures by trading partners have been announced and implemented, ending up in near-universal US tariffs on April 2 and bringing effective tariff rates to levels not seen in a century," the report said.

Noting that the tariffs alone are a "major negative shock," the IMF said that the "unpredictability" with which these measures have unfolded negatively impacts economic activity and the outlook.

"The global economic system under which most countries have operated for the last 80 years is being reset, ushering the world into a new era. Existing rules are challenged while new ones are yet to emerge," IMF Chief Economist Pierre-Olivier Gourinchas said at a press conference.

Under the reference forecast that incorporates information as of April 4, global growth is projected

to drop to 2.8 percent in 2025 and 3.0 percent in 2026 — down from 3.3 percent for both years in the January WEO Update, and much below the historical (2000-2019) average of 3.7 percent, according to the latest WEO.

Growth in the United States is expected to slow to 1.8 percent, 0.9 percentage points lower relative to the projection in the January WEO Update due to "greater policy uncertainty, trade tensions, and softer demand momentum," the report noted.

Euro area growth is projected at 0.8 percent in 2025, 0.2 percentage points lower than the January forecast. — Xinhua

## China expresses condolences over passing of Pope Francis

BEIJING — China has expressed condolences over the passing of Pope Francis, a foreign ministry spokesperson announced yesterday.

In recent years, China and the Vatican have maintained constructive engagement and conducted useful exchanges, spokesperson Guo Jiakun told a daily news briefing.

"China stands ready to work with the Vatican for continued improvement of China-Vatican ties," said Guo.

When answering a query regarding Vatican's so-called "ties with Taiwan," Guo noted that

Taiwan is an inalienable part of China's territory, and the government of the People's Republic of China (PRC) is the sole legal government representing the whole of China.

"More and more countries have come to recognize and abide by the one-China principle. We hope relevant countries will see where the arc of history bends and come back to the right path of upholding the one-China principle," said Guo.

Pope Francis, the 266<sup>th</sup> pontiff of the Roman Catholic Church, died on Monday at the age of 88. — Xinhua (More on pages 8, 11 & 12)

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### Wang Yi calls on China, Britain to uphold international order established after WWII

Against the current backdrop of rampant unilateral bullying, China and Britain bear the responsibility to uphold the international order established after World War II (WWII), Foreign Minister Wang Yi said yesterday.

— Story on p. 7

### Hamas team heads to Cairo for Gaza talks as Israel strikes kill 26

A Hamas delegation left for Cairo to discuss "new ideas" aimed at securing a ceasefire in Gaza, an official from the group said, as rescuers reported 26 dead in Israeli air strikes yesterday.

— Story on p. 10

### East Timor mourns Pope Francis months after emotional visit

Just months after Pope Francis visited Catholic-majority East Timor, residents yesterday mourned his death with flags at half-mast, candle-lit vigils and emotional ceremonies with his trip fresh in their memory.

— Story on p. 12



# Macau promoted as 'Int'l Favourite Destination' at MATTA Fair in KL



This undated handout photo provided by the Macau Government Tourism Office (MGTO) on Saturday shows its "Experience Macao" themed booth at the Malaysian Association of Tour and Travel Agents (MATTA) Fair 2025 in Kuala Lumpur.

Rui Pastorin

The Macau Government Tourism Office (MGTO) said in a statement on Sunday that Macau was this year promoted as the "International Favourite Destination" during the Malaysian Association of Tour and Travel Agents (MATTA) Fair 2025, which was held in Kuala Lumpur between Friday and Sunday.

MATTA, according to the fair's LinkedIn page, is the largest association representing travel and tour businesses in Malaysia.

During the event, MGTO was also awarded the "Best National Tourism Organisation (NTO) Booth" prize, according to the statement, adding that Macau having been promoted during the fair served as a "good start" for MGTO's initiatives

aimed at Malaysia this year, with the Southeast Asian country being one of Macau's top 10 visitor source markets.

This year's three-day fair marked the first time that MGTO set up a booth there since the COVID-19 pandemic, the statement said, with Macau's "tourism+" offerings showcased during the event and promoting the city as an "ideal short-haul destination for Malaysians".

The MGTO booth was themed "Experience Macao" and highlighted aspects such as its East-meets-West cultural heritage, integrated resorts, events and festivals, and gastronomy. Moreover, arts and crafts workshops themed around Macau's firework shows and lion dance cultural

heritage were also held.

The booth, in conjunction with the Macau Leisure Tourism Services Innovation Association and Air Macau, also presented destination attractions and special travel tips, along with games featuring travel prizes and souvenirs.

The statement added that around 10 Malaysian travel agencies highlighted products and special packages to Macau during the fair.

All in all, the fair attracted 340 "exhibiting entities" and comprised over 1,750 booths this year. Moreover, MGTO had also attended a networking event ahead of the fair's opening, with the event attended by over 300 tourism industry representatives from Malaysia and around 30 other destinations. ■

## Police nab mainlander for theft by finding

Ada Lei

A man from the mainland was arrested on Friday for theft by finding after stealing a chip worth HK\$10,000, Public Security Police (PSP) spokesman Lei Chan Hong said during a regular press conference yesterday.

Lei identified the suspect as a man surnamed Li, who is in his forties.

According to Lei, the Public Security Police (PSP) received a report on Friday morning from a middle-aged mainland man who told the police that a HK\$10,000 chip had gone missing while he was checking in at a hotel front desk in Cotai. He searched for the

chip, but in vain. He suspected that someone had stolen his chip, and reported the case to the police.

Lei noted that thanks to the city-wide CCTV network and the casino's surveillance footage, the police identified Li as the suspect and intercepted him in a hotel lobby in Zape. The police also confiscated HK\$30,000 in cash from him.

Under questioning, Li admitted to stealing the chip and then using it to gamble at a casino, winning HK\$2,000.

Li has been transferred to the Public Prosecutions Office (MP), facing a charge of theft by finding. ■



This undated handout photo provided by the Public Security Police (PSP) yesterday shows PSP officers escorting the suspect into a police station.

## 1<sup>st</sup> Macau Forum on Emotional AI held at UM

Rui Pastorin

The University of Macau (UM) said in a statement on Thursday that its Institute of Collaborative Innovation (ICI) hosted the first Macau Forum on Emotional Artificial Intelligence last Wednesday, with the one-day event attracting around 200 attendees.

The statement said that the forum featured various keynote speakers and had brought together scholars from the computer science, robotics, cognitive neuroscience, linguistics, communication studies, and psychology fields, presenting the latest advancements in "affective computing and emotion-aware artificial intelligence (AI), and explored how innovative technologies can detect human emotions through verbal, non-verbal cues, and even brain signals".

UM Rector Yonghua Song, aka Song Yonghua, said during his speech at the forum that with the advancement of technology, emotional AI is playing an increasingly important role in promoting mental well-being



This handout photo taken on April 16 and released on Thursday by the University of Macau (UM) shows UM Rector Yonghua Song (aka Song Yonghua) delivering a speech during the on-campus Macau Forum on Emotional Artificial Intelligence.

by providing emotional support. Research in this area is attracting increasing attention and will have an even greater impact on social life in the future, Song, as noted by the statement, said.

The statement said that practical computational, philosophical, and ethical challenges in developing

emotion-aware AI systems to enhance human-AI interactions were addressed during the forum, with keynote speakers each presenting and tackling various topics.

Moreover, the statement said that research findings by UM scholars were also presented during the forum. ■

## Police arrest local man for drunk driving

Ada Lei

The Public Security Police (PSP) apprehended a local man on Thursday for drunk driving, with his blood alcohol concentration standing at 1.62 grams per litre, PSP spokesman Lei Chan Hong said during a regular press conference yesterday.

Lei identified the suspect as a man surnamed Chong, who is in his fifties and works as a chef.

According to Wong, the Public Security Police (PSP) set up a roadblock early Thursday morning on Avenida do Almirante Lacerda (提督馬路). During the operation, a motorcycle driven by Chong was stopped by the police. The police noted that Chong was reeking of alcohol, and a breathalyser test confirmed his blood alcohol



This undated handout photo provided by the Public Security Police (PSP) yesterday shows a PSP officer escorting the drunk-driving suspect into a police station.

concentration at 1.62 grams per litre, confirming a drunk-driving offence.

Under questioning, Chong admitted to drinking alcoholic beverages in the mainland before

driving home from the Qingmao pedestrian border checkpoint.

Chong has been transferred to the Public Prosecutions Office (MP) where he is facing a charge of drunk driving. ■

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### Macau Weather

CLOUDY APART FROM SUNNY PERIODS.  
MIST AT FIRST.  
FORCE 3 TO 4 SOUTH TO SOUTHWESTERLY WINDS.  
RELATIVE HUMIDITY WILL RANGE BETWEEN 70% AND 98%.



24°C~29°C

Source: SMG



# ‘Mobile Buddha Bathing Stand’ to be staged on May 3 & 4

Ida Cheong

The 2025 edition of the “Mobile Buddha Bathing Stand” will be held on May 3 and 4, on the eve of Buddha’s Birthday, the event’s organiser, Buddha’s Light Association Youth of Macau, announced in a press conference yesterday afternoon.

The two-day event will be held outside the Na Tcha Temple next to the Ruins of St. Paul’s.

To celebrate Buddha’s Birthday, according to yesterday’s press conference, the event aims to provide residents and visitors with an opportunity to purify their mind, pray for world peace and social stability through Buddhist rituals and cultural activities.

The event is organised by the Buddha’s Light Association Youth of Macau in collaboration with the Na Cha Temple Association, the Buddha’s Light International Association of Macau, and International Buddhist Progress Society of Macau.

The Na Cha Temple Association is the entity running Na Tcha Temple next to the Ruins of St. Paul’s landmark.

Addressing yesterday’s press conference, Lam Chi Kit, the president of the Buddha’s Light Association Youth of Macau, said that the event aims to enable residents and visitors alike to connect with the Buddha’s teachings and to cultivate compassion for others by inviting them to participate in the traditional “Bathing the Buddha”\* ritual during which fragrant water is poured over a Buddha statue.

Alongside the ritual, stalls of vegetarian food and cultural creative products for charity sales will be set up during the two-day event.

According to the press conference, the first day of the event will feature various activities starting in the evening, including a magic show, as well as Cantonese opera performed by young people attending a Cantonese opera training course run by the Macau General Union of Neighbourhood Associations (known as Kai Fong in Cantonese).

On the second day of the event, according to the press conference, a “Plaster Painting Workshop” parent-child activity will be held in the afternoon, encouraging collaborative artistic creation and enhancing familial bonds. In the evening, starting at 6:30 p.m., Venerable Hui Lun\*\*, the deputy abbot



Lam Chi Tit, president of Buddha’s Light Association Youth of Macau, announces details of the 2025 edition of the “Mobile Buddha Bathing Stand” to be staged on May 3-4 in a press conference outside Na Tcha Temple yesterday. – Photo: Ida Cheong

of the Taiwan-based Fo Guang Shan, will share practical applications of Buddhist wisdom in daily life.

Buddha’s Birthday is a public holiday both in Hong Kong and Macau. In both special administrative regions, the event is celebrated each year on the 8<sup>th</sup> day of the 4<sup>th</sup> lunar month, May 5 this year. According to Buddhist tradition and archaeologists, Gautama Buddha was born at Lumbini in Nepal circa 623 Before the Common Era (BCE)

Macau boasts two temples dedicated to Na Tcha (Ne Zha in Mandarin Pinyin). Na Tcha is a guardian deity. Apart from the one located next to Ruins of St Paul’s, the other is located on a slope behind Ginza Plaza. The deity has gained global fame recently because of the huge commercial and cultural success of the 2025 Chinese animated fantasy action adventure film “Ne Zha 2” worldwide. ■



\*The Bathing the Buddha (浴佛) ritual is a sacred Buddhist ceremony performed to honour the birth of Siddhartha Gautama (the Buddha), traditionally celebrated during Buddha’s Birthday. – DeepSeek

\*\* Fo Guang Shan (佛光山) is a major international Buddhist monastic order based in Taiwan, founded in 1967. It is one of the largest Buddhist organisations in the world, promoting Humanistic Buddhism (人間佛教), which emphasises applying Buddhist teachings in daily life to benefit society. – DeepSeek

## The Death of His Holiness Pope Francis

His Holiness Pope Francis died on 21<sup>st</sup> April 2025 at 7:35 AM (Rome time) at his residence in the Vatican and now rests in the Lord’s embrace at the age of 88.

The Catholic Diocese of Macau has scheduled a Solemn Requiem Mass on Tuesday, 29<sup>th</sup> April 2025, at 7:00 PM at the Cathedral. Members of the public are welcome at the Cathedral to pay their respect on the same day from 9:00 AM to 6:00 PM.

With this obituary we express our mourning and prayers at the death of our beloved Holy Father Pope Francis.

Catholic Diocese of Macau

Bishop’s House in Macau, 23<sup>rd</sup> April 2025

N.B.: We respectfully decline all floral tributes, including cards, wreaths, and bouquets. Should you wish to make an offering, please donate to Caritas Macau.

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# Guilherme Ung Vai Meng presents 21 works in 'Lines • Sensation'

## Rui Pastorin

Macau's veteran artist Guilherme Ung Vai Meng continues to showcase his work with his latest exhibition "Lines • Sensation" at the Rui Cunha Foundation (FRC) gallery.

The 21 works on display, which feature new and old creations, comprise pencil sketches, with Ung depicting people, along with places from Macau to the mainland to Italy.

Moreover, Ung's pieces on display also include three works entitled "Dance", which were created using pencil, charcoal and gouache, a type of water-based paint similar to watercolour, on paper. An FRC statement on its website noted that these works were specifically created for the exhibition and depict dancers captured in the darkness of theatres and use "the human body as a central motif".

Ung, born in 1958, has presented his works in solo and collective exhibitions over the years starting in the 1980s, having also showcased them in different parts of

the world, according to information from both the Creative Macau gallery and the Cultural Affairs Bureau (IC), of which he was president from 2010 to 2017.

The FRC gallery statement noted that Ung had also served as the first director of the Macau Museum of Art (MAM) when it was inaugurated in 1999. He is now a visiting professor and doctoral mentor at the private Macau University of Science and Technology (MUST). Moreover, he is also a member of the Macau Fine Arts Association and a founding member of the CAC – Círculo dos Amigos da Cultura de Macau ("Circle of the Friends of Macau's Culture").

The exhibition kicked off last week. Ung gave a lecture in both Chinese and Portuguese the day after the opening, in which he delved into the subject of line drawings and paintings.

The works are being showcased through May 5, Buddha's Birthday, and one can visit the free-admission gallery from Monday to Friday from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. and 3 p.m. to 7 p.m. on Saturdays.





## Bid to force decoupling from China is only serving to decouple the US

*China Daily Editorial*

It is not a secret that the US administration is preparing to put pressure on other countries in tariff negotiations, asking them to limit trade with China in exchange for US tariff exemptions.

Something the previous Joe Biden administration tried to do, but failed to achieve, as it is a de facto getting something for nothing trick, since the United States cannot compensate its allies and partners for their losses should they decouple with China.

So it is ridiculous of the Donald Trump administration to bet on a magic wand of tariffs since countries are well aware that under the guise of “reciprocity”, it is promoting hegemonic politics and implementing unilateral bullying in the economic and trade fields.

If the Biden administration was trying to hoodwink others to do the US’ bidding at their own cost, the Trump administration is going further to try and coerce them to foot the bill for not only countering China on the part of the US, but also bear the cost of “making America great again”.

That explains why neither the European Union nor Japan, along with other major trade partners of the US, has actually caved in to US pressure even if they are classified by the US administration as among the 70-plus economies “cooperative” to the US’ extortionist tariff policy.

Instead of cracking them one on one as it planned, the Trump administration increasingly finds a united front is emerging among its tariff victims as almost all of them have markedly intensified their respective efforts to promote not only economic and trade cooperation with each other but also with China.

For instance, while the Biden administration regarded the EU’s punitive tariffs on Chinese-made electric vehicles as a major achievement of its China-containment strategy on the economic and trade front over the past four years, the Trump administration has neared undoing it after just about three months in office. Its coercive and bullying practices have spurred the EU to resume long-stalled consultations with China in a bid to end those self-harming tariffs at an early date.

Without any concrete progress being made in its negotiations with other economies, the US economy, finance, market and society are

under growing pressure. The US administration has sought to use the tariff policy to engage in political speculation, but it has only dragged the US to the brink of an abyss.

As a Chinese Ministry of Commerce spokesperson said, appeasement will not bring peace, and compromise will not win respect in return. If a country sacrifices the interests of others in exchange for so-called immunity, it will end up harming others to no benefit to itself, as once given, the US, like any racketeer, will continue to take. China believes that all parties should stand on the side of fairness and justice, on the side of historical correctness, and should defend international economic and trade rules and the multilateral trading system. In the face of the impact of unilateralism and protectionism, no country is immune. Once international trade returns to the “law of the jungle” where the strong prey on the weak, all countries will become victims. China is willing to strengthen unity and coordination with all parties, work together to respond to the US’ coercion, and jointly resist its unilateral bullying.

At the same time, it should be pointed out that China will not sit back and remain idle should any party reach a deal with the US at the expense of China’s interests. If this happens, it will respond with appropriate countermeasures. Having said that, it is the Trump administration that has set the stage and created the opportunity for China to improve its economic ties with other economies.

The farther the US goes to practice unilateralism, protectionism and hegemony, the more efforts China is making with other like-minded partners to support multilateralism, promote free trade and safeguard a fair world trade order. The more the US tries to resort to bullying, coercion and extortion to secure selfish gains to make “America First”, the more China endeavors with other partners to use cooperation, collaboration and mutual assistance to expand their common interests for the common development of the world.

The US’ China-targeted tariff policy is intended to isolate China from the world system by rebuilding the global industry and supply chains centered on the US. But in effect, it is only serving to isolate the US.

— Courtesy of China Daily

## Visitor arrivals during Easter holiday up 28.1 pct: police

*Tony Wong*

Macau recorded 520,000 visitor arrivals during the four-day Easter holiday period from Friday to Monday, an increase of 28.1 percent from last year’s corresponding period, the Public Security Police (PSP) said in a statement yesterday.

According to the statement, visitors from the mainland accounted for 62.9 percent of the total during the period, while visitors from Hong Kong made up 28 percent of the total.

The statement said that foreign visitors accounted for about seven percent of the total. ■



This undated photo shows border crossers entering Macau from the mainland via the Barrier Gate border checkpoint during the Easter holiday. — Photo courtesy of TDM

## Taipa Village to be pedestrianised 1<sup>st</sup> time during mainland’s 5-day May Day holiday

*Continued from p.1*

As previously, the temporary pedestrianisation of Taipa Village during the upcoming five-day Labour Day holiday will be implemented between noon and 7 p.m.

Cheang underlined during yesterday’s press conference that the pedestrianisation of Taipa Village during festive periods aims to create a safe and comfortable walking environment for residents and visitors alike while boosting the business performances of the neighbourhood’s small- and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) during festive periods.

Cheang also stressed that the pedestrianisation project’s results have been widely recognised by residents since its launch.

Cheang said that the modus operandi of the pedestrianisation of Taipa Village to be implemented during the upcoming five-day Labour Day holiday will be similar to the one carried out during this year’s Chinese New Year Golden Week holiday period.

When asked during yesterday’s press conference whether the government will regularly implement the pedestrianisation of Taipa Village in the future, i.e., to implement it every time

during festive periods when a large number of visitors are expected, Cheang said that the government’s cross-departmental working group overseeing the pedestrianisation project led by her bureau will continue to gather and study opinions raised by different segments of civil society with the aim of further evaluating the feasibility of implementing the pedestrianisation of Taipa Village on a regular basis during festive periods in the future while striking the right balance between the development of the city’s tourism industry and the daily life of the neighbourhood’s residents.

Cheang also said that thanks to the central government’s new policies of issuing “one-trip-per-week” travel permits for Zhuhai residents and “multiple-entry” travel permits for Hengqin residents to visit Macau, over 230,000 people visited the pedestrianised Taipa Village during this year’s Chinese New Year Golden Week holiday period, equivalent to a daily average of 33,000, an increase from the average daily of 31,000 recorded during last year’s Chinese New Year Golden Week holiday period and 22,000 recorded during last year’s National Day Golden

Week holiday period.

The pedestrianisation of Taipa Village was implemented for seven days during this year’s eight-day Chinese New Year Golden Week holiday period.

Since New Year’s Day this year, permanent residents of Zhuhai City have been able to apply for a “one-trip-per-week” travel permit to Macau, enabling them to visit Macau once per calendar week, with a maximum stay of seven days per trip, within a one-year validity period, while permanent residents or residence permit holders in the Guangdong-Macau In-Depth Cooperation Zone in Hengqin can apply for a multi-entry travel permit to Macau, granting them unlimited visits to Macau within a one-year period, with a maximum stay of seven days per trip.

Cheang also noted that the number of visitor arrivals to Macau during this year’s mainland three-day Ching Ming Festival holiday early this month increased 14.7 percent from last year’s corresponding period.

Cheang said that the government expects 130,000 to 150,000 people to visit the temporarily pedestrianised Taipa Village during the upcoming five-day Labour Day holiday. ■

## Local woman cheated out of 650,000 patacas in online scam: police

*Ada Lei*

A local middle-aged woman has lost 650,000 patacas in an online investment scam, Judiciary Police (PJ) spokesman Cheong Siu Keong said in a regular press conference yesterday.

According to Cheong, the woman met a man online and they became friends on a social media platform in February. The man claimed to be an “investment company consultant” and lured

her into investing. After being persuaded, the victim downloaded an investment software and made three separate payments totalling 650,000 patacas for “virtual currency”. Following these payments, her account showed a profit of 20,000 patacas.

However, the victim recently lost contact with the man and suspected she had been scammed. She reported a total loss of 650,000 patacas to the police on Monday. ■



Judiciary Police (PJ) spokesman Cheong Siu Keong looks on during yesterday’s regular press conference. — Photo: Ada Lei

## STOCK MARKETS

### Hang Seng Index closes 0.78 pct higher

HONG KONG — Hong Kong’s stock market ended higher yesterday, the first day of trading after the Easter break, with the benchmark Hang Seng Index up 0.78 percent to close at 21,562.32 points. The

Hang Seng China Enterprises Index rose 0.68 percent to end at 7,950.79 points, while the Hang Seng Tech Index climbed 0.24 percent to end at 4,899.21 points.

— Xinhua



# Toyota signs deal for US\$2 billion EV project in Shanghai

SHANGHAI — Japanese automaker Toyota Motor Corp. yesterday signed an agreement to establish a wholly-owned electric vehicle (EV) plant in Shanghai, in a strategic move to bolster its presence in China, the world's largest automotive market.

In the strategic cooperation agreement with the Shanghai municipal government, Toyota commits to invest a total of 14.6 billion yuan (US\$2 billion) into the new energy vehicle (NEV) project in Jinshan District, which focuses on the research and development, production and sales of Lexus EVs and EV batteries.

The investment underscores the attractiveness and openness of China's huge market. As a leading destination for foreign investment, the country has been continuously pushing forward opening-up and improving its business environment while the world grapples with rising protectionism and economic uncertainty.

The project will introduce groundbreaking technologies to

create a leading carbon neutrality model project that will have significant influence both in China and globally, noted Tatsuro Ueda, chief executive officer of China Region and chairman of Toyota Motor (China) Investment Co., Ltd.

"Additionally, we look forward to collaborating with more local suppliers to showcase the competitive advantages of China's NEV industry chain to the world and jointly promote Chinese technologies to benefit the global market," he added.

This marks another globally influential NEV project in Shanghai, after Tesla's Shanghai Gigafactory. It further demonstrates Shanghai's determination to expand high-level opening-up and accelerate the creation of a world-class NEV industry cluster.

Peng Xijun, general manager of Shanghai Xinjinshan Industrial Investment Development Co., Ltd., a local partner, said Toyota has acquired 1,692 mu (112.8 hectares) of land for the first phase of the project.

Construction is slated to begin in June, with production expected to start in 2027, according to the plans of Toyota, the world's top-selling automaker.

The new plant marks a significant investment in enhancing Toyota's R&D and production capabilities specifically tailored for the EV sector in China.

Toyota did not disclose the production capacity on Tuesday, but it said in February that the initial production capacity would be around 100,000 units per year, and the project is expected to create approximately 1,000 new jobs during the start-up phase.

The car manufacturing plant, a supplement for the automotive industry chain of Jinshan District, will provide opportunities to upgrade the industrial chain and even benefit automotive suppliers in the whole Yangtze River Delta region, Peng said.

According to the agreement, Toyota and Shanghai will also carry out extensive cooperation in the upstream and downstream sectors of

the industry chain, intelligent driving, hydrogen energy, automotive battery recycling and reuse, and logistics and supply chain.

China's NEV industry has experienced exponential growth, propelled by a dual engine of robust technological innovation and the government's unwavering dedication to green development and sustainable transformation. This strategic synergy has not only catalyzed unprecedented market demand but also accelerated the industry's dynamic expansion.

China's NEV sales soared 47.1 percent year on year to 3.08 million units in the first quarter, accounting for 41.2 percent of total vehicle sales in the period, according to the China Association of Automobile Manufacturers (CAAM).

Toyota's increased investment is a microcosm of multinationals deepening their presence in China, noted Bai Ming, a researcher at the Chinese Academy of International Trade and Economic Cooperation.

Citing official data that from January to March 2025, China saw

the establishment of 12,603 new foreign-invested enterprises, which registered a 4.3-percent increase year on year, Bai specified that it shows the Chinese market remains "highly attractive" to foreign companies.

US carmaker Tesla's new Megafactory in Shanghai launched production in February, marking a significant expansion of the company's presence in China. The new Megafactory, dedicated to manufacturing energy-storage batteries known as Megapacks, is its second major facility in Shanghai and the first of its kind outside the United States.

In March, German carmaker BMW partnered with Chinese tech giant Huawei to develop an in-car digital ecosystem specifically tailored for the Chinese market.

Also in March, Germany's Volkswagen Group signed a strategic cooperation agreement with China's First Automobile Works (FAW) to introduce 11 new models, including 10 NEV models, specifically tailored for the Chinese market, starting in 2026. —AFP

## Global South must speak as one against 'reciprocal tariffs'

*Commentary by Mohammed Saqib*

US President Donald Trump's recent sweeping tariff agenda represents perhaps the most aggressive trade policy initiative in modern history. It is another sign of US arrogance and unilateralism that has sent shockwaves across global markets. The staggering tariffs on US imports threaten a trade disruption, destabilizing the global economy. These measures will likely damage supply chains, cause inflation, lead to global market volatility, and disproportionately harm the Global South members.

The current tariff crisis is a wake-up call — unite or perish. It presents itself as not only a challenge, but also an opportunity for a unified Global South response, one that amplifies the voice and influence of developing nations in shaping international economic governance.

China faces punitive tariffs of up to a bizarre 245 percent, while India, though in a comparatively low position at 26 percent (currently on a 90-day hold), is in a precarious state between strategic autonomy and economic pragmatism.

The United States may label India "tariff king" for its trade practices, but it hypocritically imposes tariff burdens on nearly all its trade partners, regardless of their development status. This approach seems to be a strategy to reestablish unilateral U.S. dominance in global

trade governance, in the guise of efforts to address trade deficits or protect American jobs.

The announced tariff on global imports shifts from targeted pressure to aggressive economic nationalism. Countries in the Global South, intricately linked to Chinese manufacturing networks, are bracing for a significant fallout.

Amid this economic chaos, the White House is using intimidation tactics. Policies are announced, held and withdrawn by the hour. Some nations are being tempted by offers of preferential market access from the United States in exchange for reducing their economic ties with China. However, countries should look at historical examples that strongly advise against falling into the trap of opportunism.

Negotiating individual deals with the United States may falsely suggest secure national interests but actually weaken collective bargaining power. Bilateral agreements offer neither security nor sustainability in a system that allows unilateral changes to rules. Global South members must understand that such deals can undermine their collective negotiating strength.

India and China, the fastest-growing large economies with a combined GDP of more than US\$22 trillion and nearly 35 percent of the global manufacturing capacity, possess significant economic

leverage. Their collaboration can potentially create substantial benefits for both themselves and the broader developing world.

By working together, the two countries can establish vital market access reciprocity, develop an alternative financial framework, harmonize technical standards and coordinate resources effectively for the Global South. This constructive partnership can pave the way for more equitable global economic governance. Moreover, accelerating de-dollarization and strengthening frameworks like the BRICS and New Development Bank could enhance their financial autonomy.

While India-China coordination is essential for an effective response, the broader Global South must be engaged. The Bandung Conference in 1955 and the WTO Bali Ministerial Conference in 2013 demonstrated the potential for South-South cooperation.

Developing nations can counter US economic coercion and amplify their influence in international economic governance with solidarity, and India-China coordination is crucial. When these giants speak as one, the world will indeed listen. —Xinhua

*\*Mohammed Saqib is the founder and secretary general of India China Economic and Cultural Council, a think tank on India-China's economic and cultural issues.*



*Leveraging its unique location advantages, strong industrial foundations, and an open and inclusive growth environment, the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area (GBA) has in recent years been taking confident strides toward new competitions. In this area, a series of major technological infrastructures is being rapidly deployed, and high-end scientific research talents are gathering apace. Emerging industries such as drones, new energy vehicles, and biomedicine are booming while a number of internationally competitive innovative enterprises continue to emerge. On the other hand, the institutional innovations have provided solid guarantees for the development of new quality productive forces. As a crucial engine for China's high-quality development, the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao GBA is using new quality productive forces as a breakthrough point to accelerate its ascent into the league of world-class bay areas through deepened open cooperation.*

—Xinhua

## Shenzhen's foreign trade posts double-digit growth in March

SHENZHEN — Shenzhen saw its foreign trade top 387.05 billion yuan in March, up 12.3 percent year on year, customs statistics showed yesterday.

In March, exports rebounded significantly, reaching 218.53 billion yuan, up 8.8 percent year on year, while imports also surged 17.2 percent year on year to 168.52 billion yuan, according to Shenzhen Customs.

Shenzhen showed remarkable resilience in foreign trade despite facing increased external challenges and a high base from the previous year, said customs officers.

The city's total foreign trade volume reached 990.1 billion yuan in the first quarter, with exports amounting to 585.5 billion yuan

and imports totaling 404.6 billion yuan. Despite an 8.7-percent drop in exports in the first quarter, imports grew by 7.1 percent year on year.

Private enterprises continue to be the backbone of Shenzhen's foreign trade. In March, private enterprises accounted for 69.6 percent of Shenzhen's total imports and exports, contributing 269.4 billion yuan in foreign trade, a 13.8-percent increase from the same period in the previous year. Foreign-invested enterprises also registered a 9.3-percent year-on-year growth in foreign trade, reaching 102.17 billion yuan.

Shenzhen's trade with its top 10 trading partners all saw positive growth. —Xinhua

## China makes big progress in helium exploration

BEIJING — China has made big progress in the exploration of helium in recent years, according to a data released by the Ministry of Natural Resources yesterday.

China's newly added geological reserves of helium have reached 4.07 billion cubic meters, according to the latest data from the China Geological Survey under the ministry.

Helium is an irreplaceable resource in many high-tech industries in fields such as aerospace, nuclear reactors, semiconductors and quantum computers.

—Xinhua



# Wang Yi calls on China, Britain to uphold international order established after WWII

BEIJING – Against the current backdrop of rampant unilateral bullying, China and Britain bear the responsibility to uphold the international order established after World War II (WWII), Foreign Minister Wang Yi said yesterday.

Wang, also a member of the Political Bureau of the Communist Party of China (CPC) Central Committee, made the remarks during a phone conversation with British Foreign Secretary David Lammy.

Wang said the two sides also share a responsibility to uphold the UN-centered international system and protect the multilateral trading system.

Noting that since the beginning of this year, the China-UK Economic and Financial Dialogue, Strategic Dialogue, and Energy Dialogue have been successfully held,

Wang said preparations are underway for more dialogues in fields such as artificial intelligence, science and technology, climate change, education, and economic and trade.

He said the momentum of improvement and easing in China-Britain relations has not come easily and requires utmost cherishing. China is willing to work with Britain, under the strategic guidance of the two countries' leaders, to overcome various disruptions and distractions, steer the bilateral relationship steadily forward, focus on mutually beneficial cooperation and build up a more positive agenda.

Wang said that the United States has used tariffs as a weapon to launch indiscriminate attacks on other countries, openly violating WTO rules and undermining the legitimate rights and interests of nations around the world.

Such actions, which push international

relations back to the law of the jungle, represent a dangerous regression in history. They are unpopular, unsustainable, and increasingly met with resistance and opposition from the global community, said Wang.

By standing up against the United States' use of tariffs as a weapon, China, as a responsible country, aims not only to defend its own legitimate rights and interests but also to uphold international rules and the multilateral trading system, he noted.

China will remain committed to high-standard opening-up, to mutually beneficial cooperation with all countries, and to sharing development opportunities with the world, Wang added.

For his part, Lammy expressed Britain's appreciation for the current positive momentum in bilateral relations. He said that

Britain is ready to further enhance high- and all-level exchanges between the two countries and to engage in regular dialogues with China on bilateral and multilateral issues of mutual concern, jointly addressing challenges.

Britain has always been an open country, firmly supports free trade and is committed to upholding the multilateral trading system with the WTO at its core, he noted.

As permanent members of the UN Security Council, both Britain and China bear significant responsibilities for the sustainable development of the world economy and international trade, and Britain stands ready to maintain communication with China on this matter, said Lammy.

The two sides also exchanged views on issues of common concern, including the Ukraine crisis.

– Xinhua

## Wang Yi hopes new Austrian govt will continue friendly policy toward China

BEIJING – Foreign Minister Wang Yi yesterday expressed hope that the new Austrian government will continue to pursue a friendly policy toward China, promote bilateral relations to jointly address current global challenges, and play a constructive role in international peace and development.

Wang, also a member of the Political Bureau of the Communist Party of China (CPC) Central Committee, made the remarks in a phone conversation with Austria's Foreign Minister Beate Meinl-Reisinger at the latter's request.

Noting that Austria has a profound historical heritage and a mature, stable foreign policy, Wang said China-Austria relations have maintained sound development, with both sides consistently upholding their partnership, prioritizing cooperation, adhering to mutual respect, and seeking common ground while shelving differences.

China is ready to further deepen high-level exchanges with the EU, solidify the foundation of mutual trust, and properly manage differences, Wang said, calling on the two sides to take the 50th anniversary of China-EU diplomatic ties as an opportunity to draw useful experience and jointly open the next successful 50 years.

He hopes that Austria will continue to play a positive role in this process.

The United States has been arbitrarily imposing tariffs on other countries, severely undermining international trade rules and order, Wang said, calling these actions classic acts of unilateralism, protectionism and economic bullying.

China, as a responsible major country, will continue to firmly uphold the international system with the United Nations at its core, safeguard the international order based on international law, and share development opportunities with the world through high-level opening-up, said Wang.

As two major pillars and markets of the global economy, China and the EU should shoulder international responsibilities, jointly protect the multilateral trading system, and work together to build an open world economy, Wang added.

For her part, Meinl-Reisinger said that China is an important partner for Austria in Asia, with fruitful and promising cooperation in areas such as the economy, trade and tourism.

Noting the profound changes in the current international landscape, Meinl-Reisinger said that Austria values and looks forward to deepening its sound relations with China on the bilateral and multilateral levels. The new Austrian government adheres to the one-China policy and will maintain continuity in its China policy.

As this year marks the 50th anniversary of diplomatic ties between the EU and China, Meinl-Reisinger said that the EU looks forward to enhancing economic and trade cooperation with China, maintaining the stable and constructive development of EU-China relations, and jointly addressing global challenges.

The EU will remain united in safeguarding its own interests and the multilateral trading system, she added.

– Xinhua

## Doolittle Raid rescue, a legacy for China-US friendship

### Backgrounder

HANGZHOU – During World War II, China and the United States joined hands to fight Fascism. Among the stories from this time, the Chinese people's heroic rescue of US airmen after the Doolittle Raid on Japan has united people from the two countries.

Chinese and American people last week gathered in Quzhou City in Zhejiang Province to mark the 83rd anniversary of the Doolittle Raid and celebrate the friendship between China and the United States.

On April 18, 1942, a group of 16 US bombers, led by Lieutenant Colonel James Doolittle, took off from the aircraft carrier USS Hornet and air-raided Japanese cities, including Tokyo, in retaliation for the attack on Pearl Harbor.

Ahead of the raid, bombers took off at a location farther from Japan than in the initial mission plan, as they had encountered Japanese patrol craft.

After the raid, 15 bombers headed for an airport in Quzhou as previously planned, and the other one steered toward and landed in the Soviet Union. The airport in China was considered a friendly territory for the Americans, and was geographically close to mainland Japan.

However, due to the increased flight range, the 15 planes had run out of fuel before reaching their destinations. With conditions exacerbated by bad weather and poor communication, they crashed or were ditched in various parts of east China, mostly in Zhejiang.

Of the 75 airmen aboard the planes, 64 were rescued by the Chinese people, most of whom were villagers who had received no official notice.

Many villages involved in the rescue still tell their stories of finding the "strange-looking foreigners" who couldn't speak Chinese, and of their efforts to shelter, care for and protect them.

In a village in Zhejiang's Ningbo, for example, locals identified the airmen as Americans and cooked eggs and shrimps for the pilots before using a boat to help them leave the village.

These US soldiers made contact



American guests and local students pose for a group photo after planting trees in Quzhou City, Zhejiang Province, on Thursday. A China-US people-to-people exchange activity was held on Thursday and Friday in Quzhou to commemorate the 83rd anniversary of the Doolittle Raid. Some 20 international guests, including representatives of the Sino-American Aviation Heritage Foundation, the USS Hornet Museum and the Children of the Doolittle Raiders, and over 30 Chinese experts participated in the event honoring peace and friendship, co-hosted by the Quzhou Museum and the Quzhou Society for the History of the Doolittle Raid.

– Xinhua

with local authorities and were transferred to safe zones.

Facing Japanese soldiers searching for the Americans on the coast, the locals refused to reveal the whereabouts of the airmen.

Their rescue, however, came at a tremendous cost. Many villagers were suspected of sheltering the Americans, and some were even tortured or slaughtered by the Japanese.

After the Doolittle Raid, Japan launched a campaign in May 1942 to destroy air bases, airports and other infrastructure in the provinces of Zhejiang and Jiangxi, lest they were used by Chinese or US air forces. The airport in Quzhou was subjected to intense bombing. Japan also waged biological warfare by spreading cholera, plague and other diseases.

The three-month campaign resulted in massive civilian deaths.

Over the decades, the rescue of the American airmen has stood as a testament to the friendship between people from the two countries forged

in the war against Fascism.

In 1992, five of the Chinese rescuers were invited to the United States to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the Doolittle Raid. Doolittle and then-US President George H. W. Bush sent their warm greetings.

The children of the American pilots have also visited the Doolittle Raid Memorial Hall in Quzhou to pay tribute to the Chinese people for their heroic efforts.

This year marks the 80th anniversary of the victory in the Chinese People's War of Resistance Against Japanese Aggression and the World Anti-Fascist War.

During this year's commemoration of the rescue, the USS Hornet Museum – a museum converted from the retired US aircraft carrier – gifted an original film reel of a 1942 Doolittle Raiders training exercise to the Quzhou Society for the History of the Doolittle Raid. The society also donated the wreckage of a B-25 bomber from the raid to the US museum.

– Xinhua