

# Ho urges local officials to adopt spirit of CPC Central Committee 3<sup>rd</sup> plenum



Chief Executive Ho Iat Seng addresses Friday's session at Government Headquarters about the spirit of the third plenary session of the CPC 20<sup>th</sup> Central Committee. – Photos: GCS

Chief Executive Ho Iat Seng addresses Friday's session at Government Headquarters about the spirit of the third plenary session of the CPC 20<sup>th</sup> Central Committee.

**Tony Wong**

Chief Executive Ho Iat Seng convened and chaired a session on Friday briefing top and senior local officials about the spirit of the third plenary session of the 20<sup>th</sup> Central Committee of the Communist Party of China (CPC), which was held from July 15 to 18.

According to a statement by the Macau Government Information Bureau (GCS) on Friday, Ho said during the session that local officials at all levels must ensure the full implementation of the central authorities' decisions and plans for Macau, enabling the

city to embrace the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic of China (PRC) and the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of its return to the motherland with "excellent results and new development achievements".

The session held at Government Headquarters on Friday afternoon was attended by Ho's five policy secretaries and their respective chiefs-of-cabinet, other principal officials, as well as all the heads of the government's about 70 bureaus and other bureau-level entities, according to the statement.

Ho was flanked by his five policy secretaries during the session.

The statement said that Ho delivered an important speech during the session, leading the officials to "earnestly" study and comprehend the spirit of the third plenary session of the CPC 20<sup>th</sup> Central Committee, where the five secretaries also shared their insights.

**Milestone meeting**

According to the statement, Ho pointed out that the third plenary session of the CPC

20<sup>th</sup> Central Committee was a milestone meeting convened at a critical period of building a strong country and moving towards national rejuvenation on all fronts through Chinese modernisation. The third plenary session adopted the Resolution of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China on Further Deepening Reform Comprehensively to Advance Chinese Modernisation, systematically planning a string of strategic and overall major reform measures, Ho noted.

*Continued on p.3*

## Mourners bid adieu to French film star Alain Delon

**Tom Masson**

DOUCHY, France – Emotional mourners gathered outside the countryside chateau in Douchy-Montcorbon, south of Paris, where French film legend Alain Delon died yesterday at the age of 88.

Admirers left flowers as tokens of their appreciation for the movie star, best known for his roles in classics "Purple Noon" (1960) and "Le Samourai" (1967), outside his central French home.

"I was the first one here to put down a rose," said Marc as he bade adieu to his idol. "What more can I say? French cinema

has lost its greatest figure."

"I am very sad," Jean-Pierre Lecluse, who worked as a projectionist at Delon's property for 22 years, told AFP.

"I will never forget all of our memories and the first time I met him. It was memorable," said Lecluse, tearful and calling the actor a "wonderful man, a sacred monster of cinema".

Abel Martin, the mayor of the small village of Douchy-Montcorbon, said "an icon has gone".

The local flower shop, which usually shuts its doors on Sundays, stayed open.

"The phone has been ringing all day, sometimes from very far away," florist Agnes Bourgoin told AFP, who said she got a call from a customer in the south of France.

Bourgoin's retired husband has stepped in to give her a hand with what will likely be a busy week.

An accordion player, who goes by "Titi the accordionist", came to pay a musical tribute to Delon and saluted the "immense actor" -- as he had requested Titi do on the day of his death, the artist told reporters.

"We hadn't seen him in two years, but he has always been a notable figure in the

village," said the mayor, who came to inspect security protocols on site, where dozens of police officers were deployed.

"We used to run into him in shops and restaurants. But everyone had always respected his privacy," Martin added, although he expected fans to flock to Douchy on the day of his passing.

"He was cordial. But he was very protected here, no one would say anything," said Sophie Angevin, a neighbour who cycled to the property to spare a thought for the figure.

"We would sometimes even forget he lived near us," she said. (More on p. 15) – AFP

**Summer box office tops 10 billion yuan**

The Chinese mainland's summer box office topped 10 billion yuan over the weekend, with previously released blockbusters such as "Successor" continuing their momentum and several newcomers adding more impetus to the market. – *Story on p. 7*

**Netanyahu urges more pressure on 'obstinate' Hamas over Gaza truce talks**

Israel's Prime Minister Netanyahu yesterday accused Hamas of being an obstacle in negotiations for a Gaza ceasefire deal and called for more pressure on the Palestinian militants ahead of a new round of talks later this week. – *Story on p. 10*

**X to shutter local operations in Brazil**

Social media platform X, formerly Twitter, will shutter its local operations in Brazil following a bitter legal tussle over the platform's rights and responsibilities, owner Elon Musk said on Saturday. – *Story on p. 12*

# Chief executive candidacy nomination to run from Aug 29 to Sept 12

### Staff Reporter

Macau's chief executive candidacy nomination period will run between August 29 and September 12, the Macau Special Administrative Region's (MSAR) Chief Executive Electoral Affairs Commission (CAECE) has announced.

According to a statement by the commission on Friday, anyone interested in running for the MSAR's top post can collect their candidacy proposal form from the electoral affairs counter at the Public Administration Building on Rua do Campo in person or through a designated representative and return the filled-in form to the counter during the nomination period.

The potential candidates also need to present a signed statement confirming that they uphold the MSAR Basic Law and are loyal to the People's Republic of China (PRC) and the MSAR.

The commission will vet the form and statement handed in by the potential candidate, which will also be submitted to the MSAR's Committee for Safeguarding

National Security (CDSE) for its binding appraisal of the candidacy application, which will assess whether the potential candidate upholds the MSAR Basic Law and is loyal to the PRC and the MSAR. The CDSE appraisal cannot be appealed.

The 400-member Chief Executive Election Committee will elect the MSAR's sixth-term head of government on Sunday, October 13. By law, all elections in Macau are held on a Sunday.

A potential chief executive candidate requires the endorsement of at least 66 members of the 400 electors, or 16.5 percent of its members, to get his or her candidacy off the ground.

According to the MSAR Basic Law and the Chief Executive Election Law, the chief executive must be at least 40 years old at the end of the nomination period, be a permanent local resident, hold Chinese nationality, does not have the right of abode in a foreign country, and must have "habitually" lived in Macau for at least 20 years.

Chief Executive Ho Iat Seng's



Pedestrians walk past the Public Administration Building on Rua do Campo on Saturday, with an official announcement about Macau's chief executive candidacy nomination period posted on the ground-floor display window.

- Photo: Tony Wong

current five-year term ends at midnight on December 19, 2024. Ho has still to announce whether he wishes to seek a second five-year term - as did his two predecessors - Edmund Ho Hau Wah (December 20, 1999 to December 19, 2009) and Fernando Chui Sai On (December 20, 2009 to December 19, 2019).

The MSAR was set up by the

PRC on December 20, 1999.

According to the MSAR Basic Law, Macau's chief executive can serve no more than two consecutive five-year terms.

Ho Iat Seng, a former president of the Macau Legislative Assembly (AL) and ex-member of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress (NPC), started

his current term about a month before the COVID-19 pandemic began to impact Macau's economy, its tourism, entertainment and retail sectors in particular, for three years. Observers say that Ho's steady-handed policies and close coordination with the central government in Beijing succeeded in getting Macau through the pandemic relatively unscathed and preparing well its ongoing recovery.

Ho, born in Macau in June 1957, is a former business community leader. He began his political career in the 1970s as a member of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC) for Zhejiang Province. His family originates from Zhejiang.

Ho is widely expected to be the only candidate for the upcoming election on October 13.

Apart from the chief executive election in 1999, when there were two candidates - Edmund Ho and Stanley Au Chong Kit - vying for Macau's top post, all the other chief executive elections (2004, 2009, 2014 and 2019) only involved one candidate each time. ■

## MGTO holds mid-phase review briefing for QTSAS

### Rui Pastorin

The Quality Tourism Services Accreditation Scheme (QTSAS) Mid-phase Review Briefing Seminar for the Food and Beverage and Travel Agency Sector was held on Friday to give participating

businesses an overview of the completed inspections for the scheme's first stage, according to a Macau Government Tourism Office (MGTO) statement on that day.

The scheme was launched in 2014.

The statement did not say where the seminar, aimed to "facilitate merchants' prompt optimisation and improvement of their services", was held.

Addressing the seminar, which drew over 100 participants, MGTO Acting Director Cheng Wai Tong said that with tourism activities returning to normal, the scheme had fully resumed its assessments in both the catering and travel agency sectors this year. Businesses were joining the scheme "enthusiastically", he added.

Assessments for eligible catering businesses and travel agencies either joining for the first time or competing again have been conducted since mid-June based on the scheme's mechanism, format and judging criteria, according to the statement, adding that the evaluations consist of four Mystery Customer Assessments and a Service Manager System Audit.

Meanwhile, the statement noted that the QTSAS-accredited businesses of 2023 will go through two Mystery Customer Assessments in line with the scheme's "supervisory mechanism". The statement said that 372 businesses have fulfilled the criteria to enter this year's assessment process.

The statement added that 366 merchants finished the required number of Mystery Customer Assessments at the first stage, which involved 536 inspections.

More details on the scheme can be found on <https://www.dst.gov.mo/en/trade-association/qtsas.html>. ■



This photo taken and provided by the Macau Government Tourism Office (MGTO) on Friday shows a speaker addressing attendees at the Mid-phase Review Briefing Seminar for the Food and Beverage Sector and Travel Agency Sector.

## MICAF Music Camp kicks off



This poster downloaded from the Cultural Affairs Bureau (IC) website promotes the ongoing six-day 1st Macao International Children's Arts Festival - Music Camp.

### Rui Pastorin

The "1st Macao International Children's Arts Festival (MICAF) - Music Camp" kicked off on Friday and is on until Wednesday, during which an Achievements Concert is slated to be held at the Macau Cultural Centre (CCM) in Nape to showcase the participants' rehearsal accomplishments, according to a statement from the Cultural Affairs Bureau (IC) on Friday.

The ongoing music camp is co-hosted by the bureau and Wynn Resorts (Macau), as well as produced by Macao Orchestra Company Limited, the statement noted. Comprising around 30 students from Macau and elsewhere, the statement said that camp participants can take part in one-on-one instrument lessons and masterclasses given by the UK's Academy of St. Martin in the Fields, rehearsing with its string musicians and US violinist Joshua Bell. They'll also take part in cultural tours around Macau, the statement added.

Moreover, on Wednesday, the last day of the six-day camp, the statement said that students will perform with the string musicians and Bell.

The statement said that they will play Tchaikovsky's Serenade for Strings in C major, Op. 48, with "outstanding violin students" to perform the solo parts of Bach's Concerto for Two Violins in D minor with Bell, who will also deliver a solo performance of Vivaldi's The Four Seasons.

Moreover, an open rehearsal of the concert will be conducted on Wednesday morning, which members of the public can also attend.

The Achievements Concert will be held at 7:45 p.m., the statement said, with tickets priced at 300 and 400 patacas. Tickets for the open rehearsal, meanwhile, are priced at 100 patacas. More details can be found on [www.macaoticket.com](http://www.macaoticket.com) and [www.icm.gov.mo/micaf](http://www.icm.gov.mo/micaf). ■

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### Macau Weather

MAINLY CLOUDY. SHOWERS. A FEW THUNDERSTORMS. FORCE 3 TO 4 SOUTHWESTERLY WINDS, OCCASIONALLY FORCE 5 WITH GUSTS. RELATIVE HUMIDITY WILL RANGE BETWEEN 80% AND 99%.



25°C~29°C

Source: SMG

# Mainland Olympians to arrive in Macau Aug 29 : Sports Bureau

Ginnie Liang

The Sports Bureau's (ID) Sport for All Division Chief Lou I Wan announced yesterday that the 2024 Paris Olympic Games mainland Chinese Olympians delegation will visit Macau from August 31 to September 2, after visiting Hong Kong from August 29 to 31.

Lou made the remarks during a press conference held at the bureau's headquarters yesterday, adding that the delegation will

depart from Hong Kong for Macau on August 31, while the list of athletes will be announced soon.

During the upcoming three-day visit, the delegation will attend a welcome reception and welcome banquet hosted by the local government, and exchange views with local athletes, as well as visit the local community and the city's landmarks. Members of the delegation will attend a public event, namely the Mainland Olympians Gala Show

in the evening on September 1.

ID Acting President Luis Gomes pointed out that the athletes of the national team won a total of 91 medals at the 2024 Paris Olympic Games, including 40 gold, 27 silver and 24 bronze, the best result for a national team participating in the Olympic Games held outside the motherland, demonstrating to the world the spirit of hard work and promoting the spirit of Chinese sport.

At the 2008 Beijing Summer Olympics, Team China won 100 medals, 48 gold, 22 silver and 30 bronze.

In addition to Team China, the Chinese regions of Hong Kong (officially known as Hong Kong, China) and Taiwan (officially known as Chinese Taipei) respectively won two gold and two bronze, and two gold and five bronze.

As Macau is not a member of the International Olympic Committee (IOC), it is unable to compete in the Olympic Games.

## Gala tickets to be distributed for free

The gala will be held on September 1 at 7:15 p.m. at the Macau East Asian Games Dome-



The Sports Bureau's (ID) Sport for All Division Chief Lou I Wan (right) addresses yesterday's press conference held at the bureau's headquarters, while ID Acting President Luis Gomes (centre) and ID Sports Development Department Chief Chao Kuok Wai look on.

Coliseum. Tickets will be distributed free of charge and online registration will begin today, while the number of tickets to be distributed will total 4,200, according to Lou, with each person allowed up to two tickets.

Macau ID card (BIR) holders can register from 9 a.m. today to 9 p.m. on Saturday, and after registration, a lucky draw will be held, and those who have been selected will receive an SMS. The lucky ones can collect their tickets

from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. from August 26 to August 29, according to Lou.

Members of the public are urged to use public transport to travel to the venue as much as possible and to conduct their own rapid antigen test (RAT) before departure.

Shuttle bus services will be provided on September 1, and interested individuals can register and find out the details of the shuttle bus services on the bureau's website at [www.sport.gov.mo](http://www.sport.gov.mo). ■

## Ho urges local officials to adopt spirit of CPC Central Committee 3<sup>rd</sup> plenum

Continued from p.1

Ho said that studying and implementing well the spirit of the third plenary session of the CPC 20<sup>th</sup> Central Committee is an important task for Macau at present and in the near future. Local officials at all levels must take the lead in in-depth learning, unify their thoughts and actions with the central authorities' decisions and plans, and combine them with the spirit of President Xi Jinping's important speeches on Macau's work, with Macau's current situation and with their own duties and functions, with the aim of transforming their understanding of the spirit of the third plenary session into a "powerful force" to promote Macau's continuous development, the statement quoted Ho as saying.

During Friday's session, the statement said, Ho "comprehensively, systematically and profoundly expounded on the great significance and main contents of the third plenary session of the CPC 20<sup>th</sup> Central Committee", and shared his insights in combination with Macau's current situation.

Ho underlined the need for local officials to implement well the decisions and plans for Macau made during the third plenary session of the 20<sup>th</sup> CPC Central Committee with a strong sense of responsibility, with the aim of helping the country improve its system and mechanism for high-standard opening up.

### 5 aspects

Ho said that local officials must strongly push ahead with governance in five aspects in close combination with Macau's current situation, namely safeguarding national security, enhancing governance efficiency, improving the population's wellbeing, promoting high-quality economic development, and strengthening the local forces in "Loving the Country and Loving Macau", with the aim of constantly making new achievements in the implementation of the "One Country, Two Systems" principle with Macau characteristics by adopting the third plenary session's "reform spirit".

According to the statement, Ho pledged that the local government will unite and lead all sectors of Macau's civil society in order to promote the spirit of the third plenary session of the 20<sup>th</sup> CPC Central Committee.

Ho said that local officials at all levels must ensure the full implementation of the central authorities' decisions and plans for Macau, further strengthen their sense of responsibility and mission, and integrate the spirit of the third plenary session into their governance work in various aspects, with the aim of enabling Macau to embrace the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the founding of the PRC and the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of its return to the motherland with "excellent results and new development achievements".

### 5 policy secretaries' insights

During Friday's session, the GCS statement said, Secretary for Administration and Justice André Cheong Weng Chon pledged that his portfolio will strengthen the integration of regulations between Macau and the other cities of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macau Greater Bay Area (GBA), continue to deepen Macau's public administration reform, and streamline the procedures of the public administration services by promoting e-government.

Secretary for Economy and Finance Lei Wai Nong said that the local government will make new achievements in developing new quality productive forces, enhance Macau's international reputation as a World Centre of Tourism and Leisure, and promote the city's appropriate economic diversification.

Secretary for Security Wong Sio Chak said that the local government will ensure the full implementation of the plans listed by the third plenary session's resolution concerning the safeguarding of national security.

Secretary for Social Affairs and Culture Elsie Ao Ieong U said that her portfolio will push ahead with its talent acquisition programme, improve Macau's education system, and train more scientific and technological talents.

Secretary for Transport and Public Works Raimundo do Rosário pledged that with special emphasis to be placed on areas such as housing, transport and environmental protection, his portfolio will push ahead with infrastructure projects, ensure local residents' access to basic housing conditions, and build a green, liveable and beautiful Macau. ■



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# MAICC aims to grasp business opportunities in Johor-Singapore SEZ



Members of the Macao ASEAN International Chamber of Commerce (MAICC) visit UOBVM Private Limited in Singapore on Friday, the second day of their six-day fact-finding trip to the Lion City and Malaysia's Johor Bahru.

## Yuki Lei in Malaysia

A business delegation of the Macao ASEAN International Chamber of Commerce (MAICC) visited the Johor State Government of Malaysia yesterday and toured the R&F Princess Cove and RTS (Rapid Transit System) railway projects there, and MAICC Chairman Kelvin Tan Hai Ching said he expected the delegation members to deepen their knowledge and grasp the business opportunities before the Johor-Singapore Special Economic Zone (JS-SEZ) is established, making full preparations for their future investments in the large-scale undertaking.

With the rapid changes in the global economy in recent years, the traditional strengths in manufacturing, medical equipment, electronics and electrical appliances remain an important basis for cooperation between Southeast Asia economies, particularly between Johor and Singapore. As an important result of the cooperation between Malaysia and Singapore, Johor State Executive Council Member and Chairman of the Investment, Trade, Consumer Affairs and Human Resources Committee Lee Ting Han told the delegation during yesterday's meeting that the Johor-Singapore Special Economic Zone will play a pivotal role in fostering

closer economic integration between the two countries and attracting various types of investment.

According to Lee, the state of Johor is the third most economically developed state in Malaysia, with a total area of 19,166 square kilometres and a population of about four million. He underlined that the state has the second-largest petrochemical industry in Southeast Asia, as well as a relatively well-developed semiconductor industry, adding that the manufacturing of medical equipment and furniture is also a traditional strength of the state situated in the south of the Malay peninsula.

Taking into account the resources, geography and manpower of Singapore and Johor, Lee said, there is tremendous potential for economic development in the region, especially in the Southeast Asian market, where the growing population is getting younger.

In order to promote close cooperation between Malaysia's Johor and Singapore, Lee noted, both sides put forward the idea of establishing the Johor-Singapore Special Economic Zone last year and conducted several rounds of negotiations this year, with plans to formally launch the project at the end of the first quarter of next year, covering 16 areas such as electronics and electrical, medical, pharmaceuticals,



Members of the Macao ASEAN International Chamber of Commerce (MAICC) visit the Thomson-East Coast Line in Singapore on Saturday.

aviation, specialised chemicals and logistics, striving to achieve interconnectivity and interoperability.

Lee also said: "With the gradual advancement of the Johor-Singapore Special Economic Zone, new opportunities for economic cooperation between Johor and Singapore will arise. In the future, the Johor-Singapore Special Economic Zone will not only bring economic growth to the two countries but will also provide a strong impetus for the development of the entire Southeast Asian market."

Speaking to the *Post* and *Macao Daily News* – Macau's top-selling English- and Chinese-language newspapers, respectively – after the meeting with Lee, Tan said that the success of economic zones can be traced back to Shenzhen, where the city has become a model thanks to its flexible economic policies and regional cooperation, adding that with the establishment of the Johor-Singapore Special Economic Zone (JS-SEZ) in southern Malaysia's Iskandar development corridor, both countries are holding on to the experience of Shenzhen and hoping to find a suitable path for their development by learning from it.

Tan pointed out that the free movement of people between two regions or countries is one of the key factors for the success of an economic special zone, suggesting Malaysia

follow suit and introduce a "blue card" policy similar to that of Macau, to ensure that workers can move between the places with ease.

Tan said he believed that such a policy arrangement could maximise the potential of human resources and promote economic interaction within the region.

With the introduction of new policies and further upgrading of infrastructure, Tan said he expected the upcoming special economic zone, which, he stressed, was poised to become an economic cluster that attracts investment, facilitates the flow of talent, and strengthens regional connectivity, so that it would be able to play an even more significant role in the economic development of Southeast Asia.

Organised by the MAICC, over 40 representatives of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macau Greater Bay Area (GBA), Macau in particular, embarked on their six-day fact-finding trip to Singapore and Malaysia on Thursday.

The delegation ended their three-day trip to Singapore on Saturday, during which they visited United Overseas Bank Venture Management (UOBVM) Private Limited, the Chinese embassy, the New Bahru creative cluster and the Orchard Road Station of the Thomson-East Coast Line in the Lion City. (More on our website <https://www.macaupostdaily.com/>)



MAICC Chairman Kelvin Tan Hai Ching (right) and Director General Joyce Wong Yuk Sze (left) pose with Johor State Executive Council Member and Chairman of the Investment, Trade, Consumer Affairs and Human Resources Committee Lee Ting Han after yesterday's meeting regarding the future development of the Johor-Singapore Special Economic Zone (JS-SEZ) in Malaysia's Iskandar development corridor.



MAICC Delegation members visit the Lion City's OCBC Bank Wisma Atria on Friday.

– Photos: Yuki Lei

## Dealer steals casino chips at least 6 times worth HK\$310,000: police

Ginnie Liang

A male casino dealer was arrested on Friday for stealing chips at least six times worth HK\$310,000 in total since June, Judiciary Police (PJ) spokesperson said at a special conference on Friday.

The 37-year-old local suspect, surnamed Chan, had been working as a dealer in a casino in Cotai since October 2011.

According to the spokesperson, a staff member of a casino in Cotai reported to PJ officers stationed at the casino last Wednesday that a male casino dealer was suspected of stealing chips while he was working that day.

The Judiciary Police scrutinised the casino's CCTV footage from early Friday morning and discovered that he stole six HK\$10,000

chips which the suspect hid in his underwear, when PJ intercepted him on the spot.

Under questioning, Chan admitted that he had stolen chips five times previously worth HK\$250,000 in total starting from June, stealing HK\$50,000 each time, adding that after pilfering the chips each time, he hid the chips in his locker and smuggled them out of the casino later.

The Judiciary Police seized the HK\$60,000 in chips he had on him, and HK\$100,000 in chips in his flat. Chan told the police that he had gambled HK\$150,000 of the stolen chips away.

Chan was transferred to the Public Prosecutions Office (MP) last Friday, facing an aggravated theft charge, according to the spokesperson. ■



Judiciary Police (PJ) officers escort the hooded theft suspected from the PJ headquarters in Zape to a PJ vehicle yesterday. — Photo courtesy of TDM

## Mainland Chinese Olympians to visit HK

HONG KONG — A delegation of Chinese mainland athletes returning from the Paris 2024 Olympic Games will visit Hong Kong from August 29 to 31, the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) government announced yesterday.

The delegation will attend a welcome reception and welcome banquet hosted by the HKSAR government, and visit the Hong Kong Sports Institute for exchange activities. Members will also attend three public events, including a Gala Show at Queen Elizabeth Stadium on August 30, and give sports demonstrations at the Queen Elizabeth Stadium and Victoria Park Swimming Pool on August 31.

HKSAR Chief Executive John Lee Ka-chiu expressed his sincere gratitude to the central government for arranging another visit of the Chinese mainland Olympians delegation, which he said “fully demonstrates its care for Hong Kong.”

“Athletes of the national team, with their spirit of perseverance

and high level of skills, achieved breakthroughs in a number of sports in this year's Paris Olympic Games. The national team achieved its best performance abroad since it comprehensively participated in the 1984 Summer Olympics,” said Lee. “We are extremely proud to have witnessed China's competitive sports continue to scale new heights.”

The visit of national team athletes to Hong Kong is a decades-long tradition. “The visits of athletes of the national team to Hong Kong in the past have always been a craze in the city, bringing a joyful and festive atmosphere to the community,” Lee said.

“We are looking forward to the delegation's visit to share with Hong Kong people their journey of perseverance and success, and to promote the spirit of Chinese sports. Hong Kong people will be able to share the national team's joy and triumphs, thereby strengthening their patriotic passion and national spirit, especially among the younger generation,” he said. — Xinhua

## 4 men cheated out of 880,000 patacas in online-dating scam: police

Ginnie Liang

The Judiciary Police (PJ) arrested two local men on Friday suspected of cheating four local men out of a total of 880,000 patacas in online-dating scams since July, PJ spokesperson said during a special press conference on Saturday.

According to the spokesperson, the four victims are local men, a young male, two middle-aged males, and an elderly male, while the two scammers are a 27-year-old local man surnamed Lo and a 29-year-old local man surnamed Pin.

The Judiciary Police received a report from one of the victims last Tuesday that in early August, he met a “woman” on an online dating platform who asked him to engage in a “rewarding task”, where he would receive a “commission” by depositing money in two designated local bank accounts, and that, moreover, he would be able to have sex with her if he succeeded in doing so.

The victim initially followed the instructions and used his personal bank account to “finish the rewarding task”, for which he received a purported commission. However, as the victim was persuaded to deposit more money, he then discovered that he could not retrieve any money, after which he became suspicious and reported



Judiciary Police (PJ) officers escort the two hooded fraud suspects from the PJ headquarters in Zape to a PJ vehicle on Saturday. — Photo courtesy of TDM

the incident to the police, who said that he had suffered a loss of about 78,000 patacas.

While investigating the case, the Judiciary Police discovered that three other men had been defrauded in the same way, including an elderly man who lost over 630,000 patacas.

The Judiciary Police identified and arrested two local men who owned the bank accounts used for collecting the fraud money. The police discovered that the duo had used their personal bank accounts to collect fraudulent payments and

launder money for fraud syndicates since July.

The duo were found to have handled about 300,000 patacas in fraudulent payments in their accounts, and the money was handed over to various fraud syndicates, for which they received a payment of 12,000 patacas and 5,400 patacas respectively.

The two suspects were transferred to the Public Prosecutions Office (MP) on Saturday, facing charges of money laundering and aggravated fraud involving a considerable amount of money. ■

## Woman, 92, critical with influenza A

Tony Wong

The Health Bureau (SSM) has announced that a 92-year-old local woman inflicted with chronic diseases is in a critical condition after being infected with influenza.

According to an SSM statement on Saturday, the woman came down with shortness of breath on Friday, after which she

was taken to the private Kiang Wu Hospital where she was hospitalised and diagnosed with influenza A complicated with double pneumonia.

The statement said that as the woman's condition did not improve after treatment, she was put on a ventilator and transferred to the intensive care unit (ICU) later that day.

She was in a critical condition at the time of Saturday's statement.

The statement said that the patient had not received a seasonal influenza jab. None of her family members living with her had come down with flu symptoms, the statement said.

Kiang Wu Hospital reported the case to the Health Bureau on Saturday. ■

## CE Lee expects HK economy to improve next year

HONG KONG — Chief Executive John Lee Ka-chiu said yesterday the city's economy was expected to improve next year.

During a two-hour public forum in Tai Po to solicit views for the upcoming Policy Address, Lee heard numerous appeals from the audience to prop up certain industries.

A securities worker said he had never seen so many brokerage firms shut down. While acknowledging efforts by the local government to lure investment from abroad, he said the sector had yet to see any material impact.

In response, Lee admitted

“difficulties” and “challenges” in the current environment. Lee said he believed investors were taking a cautious approach, citing factors such as the upcoming US presidential election, the interest rate development, as well as geopolitical uncertainties.

That said, “those who bet against Hong Kong in the long run will be the first to lose”, Lee added.

“I believe that the global economic axis is shifting to the East. We should focus on ASEAN countries and the Middle East, which are the new engines for global development.”

Lee was also urged to provide

more support to the cultural, sports, and tourism sectors, fresh off stellar performances by Hong Kong's Olympians at the Paris Games.

“Indeed, culture, sports and tourism have been emphasised as a whole. We have had great news recently with the birth of the twin panda cubs, while two more giant pandas are on their way as a gift from the central authorities,” he said.

More consultation forums will be held in the coming weeks, before Lee delivers his third annual policy blueprint in October.

— RTHK, MPD