

# Sam meets with builders, developers, architects

Tony Wong

Potential chief executive candidate Sam Hou Fai paid a visit to the headquarters of the Macau Association of Building Contractors and Developers yesterday where he met with top board members from eight major associations representing the city's building contractors, developers, architects and civil engineers, his election campaign office said in a statement yesterday.

The Macau Association of Building Contractors and Developers is headquartered on the fifth floor of a residential high-rise on Rua do Campo, which is named for the association, which it built in the early 1980s.

The meeting was presided over by Mok Chi Wai, who chairs the association.

According to the statement, 16 representatives raised opinions and suggestions during the meeting, on topics such as enhancing local engineers' professionalism, striking the right balance between the public housing supply and the private housing market's development, improving legislation aiming to boost the city's urban renewal process, streamlining the government's administrative formalities assessing and approving the private sector's construction plans, old buildings' safety, and the rational distribution of public housing resources.

In addition, the statement said, several representatives said during the meeting that there are not enough places to park large construction machinery in Macau. They also suggested that Sam's administration study the feasibility of making better use of the advantages brought about by Hengqin's



This handout photo provided by the Sam Hou Fai Election Campaign Office yesterday shows Sam (front, centre) posing on the sidelines of yesterday's meeting at the Macau Association of Building Contractors and Developers on Rua do Campo with board members of eight major associations representing building contractors, developers, architects and civil engineers, such as the association's chairman Mok Chi Wai (front, second from right) and Macau Architects Association Chairman Leong Chong In (front, first from left).

development with the aim of overcoming the current obstacles hindering the development of Macau's construction sector.

According to the statement, Sam acknowledged during the meeting that his administration would need to study how to address the various issues raised by the representatives.

## Health chief upbeat about Sam's governance

Meanwhile, Sam paid a visit to an office in the Macao Daily News Building on Monday night where he met with senior members of about 40 associations representing young local people, his election campaign office said in a separate statement yesterday.

The Chinese-language *Macao Daily News*, Macau's top-selling newspaper, is headquartered in the high-rise on Avenida de Venceslau de Moraes, with some of its floors being used by a number of associations from various segments of civil society as their respective offices.

Continued on p.5

## Wildfires kill 7 people in Portugal

LISBON – Wildfires that erupted on Sunday are continuing to ravage central and northern Portugal while at least seven people have been killed and more than 40 injured, local authorities reported yesterday.

The fires also destroyed dozens of homes and forced the closure of major roads and highways.

Yesterday afternoon (local time), the National Emergency and Civil Protection Authority was coordinating efforts to

control four major fire outbreaks in the northern Aveiro district. The fires have spread over an area with a perimeter of approximately 100 km.

Authorities have arrested three people in connection with the fires: two women and a man from the municipalities of Pombal, Alvaiázere, and Condeixa-a-Nova.

In response to the escalating crisis, the Portuguese government has extended the national alert level until tomorrow. – *Xinhua* (More about Portugal on p.12)



A folk artist performs a traditional carbon flower dance, creating sparks by burning charcoal, for tourists in Xiuning County, Huangshan City, east Anhui Province, on Monday. Mainlanders enjoyed a three-day holiday for the Mid-Autumn Festival, which fell on September 17 this year. – *Xinhua*

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## Mid-Autumn Festival sparks longing for reunion across Taiwan Strait

As the Mid-Autumn Festival arrived once again on the 15<sup>th</sup> day of the eighth month on the Chinese lunar calendar, Yang Ming-quan, who lives in Taipei, called his cousin, thousands of miles away in southwest China's Yunnan Province. – *Story on p. 7*

## Hezbollah in Lebanon hit by wave of deadly pager blasts

Hundreds of pagers used by Hezbollah members exploded across Lebanon yesterday, killing at least eight people and wounding Tehran's ambassador in Beirut in blasts the Iran-backed militant group blamed on Israel. – *Story on p. 10*

## WHO warns of antivenom shortages amid snake bite scourge

The problem of snake bites, which kill tens of thousands of people each year, is being exacerbated by climate-induced flooding in a number of countries with little access to antivenoms, the WHO warned yesterday. – *Story on p. 11*

# Duo cheat govt out of 1.1 million patacas with 362 subpar street nameplates: police

Yuki Lei

The Judiciary Police (PJ) announced yesterday that they had launched a follow-up investigation into the contract fraud of the Municipal Affairs Bureau (IAM) by an outsourced company with subpar replacements of street nameplates, resulting in the questioning of two males for allegedly pasting stickers onto the nameplates' white ceramic tile surface during a street nameplate replacement project.

This, according to the Judiciary Police, resulted in 362 street nameplates across Macau not displaying underglaze colours in line with the bureau's official craftsmanship requirements, among which the stickers on 44 of the nameplates had already peeled off the surface and lost their colour.

During a regular press conference yesterday, PJ spokesman Lou Chan Fai corrected the date of receipt of the report, making it clear that the Judiciary Police received a letter from the Municipal Affairs Bureau last Thursday, stating that during its inspection of Macau's newly installed, Portuguese-style blue-and-white porcelain street nameplates, its officials found that some of the newly installed nameplates showed signs of poor craftsmanship, and the



This undated handout photo provided by the Judiciary Police (PJ) yesterday shows a PJ officer checking the subpar quality of a newly installed street nameplate on Rua dos Eucaliptos in Coloane, with a temporary plastic sheet pasted onto the sign by the Municipal Affairs Bureau (IAM).

quality of the nameplates obviously did not comply with the contractual specifications. Previously, the Judiciary Police said that it had received the report on Friday.

The letter also stated that the bureau suspected that the outsourced contractor had merely pasted stickers onto the nameplates in a way that did not conform with the method of displaying underglaze colours, as stipulated by the contract with the outsourced company, which had won the bureau's public tender about the project.

Lou quoted the bureau as saying that the street nameplate project involved the installation of 362 street nameplates at a cost of over 1.1 million patacas, ranging from 600 to 1,200 patacas per nameplate, underlining that the contract specifically required the process to be done by underglazing at high temperature.

On April 19 last year, according to Lou, the Municipal Affairs Bureau launched a public tender for the manufacture and installation of the street nameplates. A total of nine

contractors, including the company of one of the two suspects in the case – a local man surnamed Ao aged 47, were eligible to bid for the project.

According to the bureau's report, in September last year, the main contractor provided samples of ceramic tiles as required by the contract, together with a satisfactory test report from a testing company in Foshan City in Guangdong Province. Complying with the requirements of the contract, the bureau immediately arranged for the installation of the 362 new street nameplates in various streets in Macau, but subsequently found that of the 362 street nameplates installed, 44 were visibly peeling, and most of the remaining ones showed discolouration.

The Judiciary Police intercepted the two suspects at their respective companies – Ao in the northern district and a 39-year-old mainland man surnamed Mai, the project manager of a subcontractor located on Avenida do Almirante Lacerda, according to Lou, who noted that the duo failed to give any explanations as to why the street nameplates did not display underglaze colours in accordance with the process required by the bureau's contract, while Ao said that after accepting

the project from the bureau, he immediately handed over the contract to the subcontractor to carry out the street nameplate project, but the two companies never signed any agreement on their cooperation.

Lou said that there existed strong indications that the two suspects have committed the crime of contract fraud and that their cases were transferred yesterday to the Public Prosecutions Office (MP) for further investigation, adding that the Judiciary Police do not rule out the possibility that more people are involved in the case.

Meanwhile, the Municipal Affairs Bureau (IAM) warned members of the public not to try to tear off the plastic sheets the bureau has temporarily pasted onto the "problematic" street nameplates until they are all replaced, reaffirming that all the "problematic" street nameplates will be replaced upon completion of the porcelain firing process. All the replacements are expected to be completed within the fourth quarter of this year, the bureau said.

Macau's street nameplates are widely regarded as a part of the city's cultural heritage, and they are popular with tourists posing in front of them. ■

## Hotel security guard exposes 2 mainlanders, 2 Russians' involvement in prostitution

Yuki Lei

Two mainland men, together with two Russian women, stalked guests at a hotel in Cotai last Thursday and were later exposed by a security guard for their involvement in prostitution, according to a regular police press conference yesterday.

Public Security Police (PSP) spokeswoman Kong Chi Ian identified the quartet as two mainlanders, both surnamed Zhang, who are in their twenties and thirties respectively, while the Russians are in their twenties. Both Zhangs entered Macau on September 8, and one of them told the police that his cousin – the other suspect in the case – had promised him 3,000 yuan to arrange for the two Russian suspects to work as prostitutes in Macau.

Kong announced the arrest of the quartet at the press conference, noting that the Public Security Police received a report from the

hotel security guard last Thursday who had seen the younger Zhang stalking hotel guests, adding that while he was about to take him from the hotel's casino to the hotel's security room to find out what was going on, the other Zhang and the two Russian women accosted him.

PSP officers arrived at the scene where they took the younger Zhang and the two Russian women in for questioning, during which, according to Kong, the two women denied working as prostitutes, while Zhang admitted to having arranged for the two women to engage in prostitution three times.

The Public Security Police arrested the elder Zhang at a hotel lobby on Estrada da Baía de Nossa Senhora da Esperança in Taipa on Saturday, who insisted that he did not know the younger Zhang, and he also denied any involvement in prostitution. However, Kong added,

PSP officers found HK\$16,000 on him, which was believed to be the proceeds from controlling prostitutes.

Kong said that the Public Security Police have transferred the two Zhangs to the Public Prosecutions Office (MP) for possible charges of controlling prostitutes, while the two Russian women have been transferred to the PSP Immigration Department as they were engaged in activities inconsistent with their status as visitors.

While prostitution is not illegal in Macau, visitors are not allowed to engage in gainful employment.

Meanwhile, in response to a video circulating on social media about police officers taking law enforcement action outside a hotel in Cotai on Saturday, the Public Security Police said in a statement on Monday that they had received a report on Saturday about the interception of the elder Zhang by a hotel security guard in the lobby of a hotel on Estrada da Baía de Nossa Senhora da Esperança in Taipa, adding that upon their arrival, PSP officers saw Zhang fleeing the scene so they immediately gave chase and successfully stopped him.

The statement underlined that during the interception, the elder Zhang kept struggling to get away from the officers who finally succeeded in handcuffing him, which did not stop him from still trying to escape, adding that after repeated warnings were ignored by the suspect, the officers used force to overpower him. ■

## Duo nabbed for 'guess whom I am' scams totalling 360,000 patacas

Yuki Lei

The Judiciary Police (PJ) have arrested two mainlanders on suspicion of cheating two local senior citizens out of a total of 360,000 patacas in separate "guess whom I am" scams, PJ spokesman Lou Chan Fai announced the case details at a special press conference yesterday.

The two victims – a male and a female – reported their respective losses of 310,000 patacas and 50,000 patacas to the Judiciary Police on Monday, saying that earlier that day they had received calls on their fixed line telephones at home from persons who identified themselves as their "son" and "grandson", asking for cash to pay bail and compensation for causing physical injury, according to Lou, who noted that the two victims then handed the money, as instructed by their "son" and "grandson", to each one's purported "friend" at the victims' respective homes in the northern district.

According to Lou, the Judiciary Police set up a sting operation in the vicinity of the two victims' flats on Monday night following the phone call of the "son" and "grandson" again demanding another 200,000 patacas from each of the victims.

In the operation, PJ officers arrested the men, surnamed Liao and Jiang, who are aged 30 and 25 respectively, Lou said, identifying Liao, who told the police that he is



Judiciary Police (PJ) officers escort the hooded mainlanders suspected of "guess who I am" phone scams to a police vehicle outside the PJ headquarters in Zape yesterday.

– Photo: Yuki Lei

unemployed, as the gang's kingpin giving orders to his downline members, including Jiang.

Under questioning, the two suspects refused to cooperate with the police, but the PJ investigation showed that Jiang had received 500 to 1,000 patacas as "commission" each time he collected the cash from the victims.

The duo were transferred to the Public Prosecutions Office (MP) yesterday, facing charges of organised crime and fraud involving a considerably large amount of money.

The Judiciary Police, according to Lou, are still looking for other possible gang members, at least one of whom was still at large at the time of yesterday's press conference. ■

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MACAU POST

### Macau Weather

**VERY HOT.**  
**CLOUDY APART FROM SUNNY PERIODS.**  
**ONE OR TWO SHOWERS.**  
**FORCE 4 TO 5 EAST TO NORTHEASTERLY WINDS, OCCASIONALLY FORCE 6 WITH GUSTS.**  
**RELATIVE HUMIDITY WILL RANGE BETWEEN 55% AND 95%.**



**26°C~33°C**

Source: SMG

# Macau marks Mid-Autumn Festival with city-wide events

William Chan

Macau celebrated the Mid-Autumn Festival with several festive activities across the city last night.

At the Mandarin's House, also known as Zheng's Mansion, visitors participated in a lantern riddle event. Colourful lanterns adorned with dozens of riddles were displayed throughout the mansion, challenging visitors to solve them. Some riddles focused on Macau's history and famous landmarks. Successful participants were rewarded with lanterns as prizes. Admission was free.

## Concert at Ruins of St. Paul's

The Macao Chinese Orchestra (OCHM) held an open-air performance at the Ruins of St. Paul's under the baton of Zhang Lie, the newly appointed music director and principal conductor of the orchestra this July.

The Mid-Autumn Festival concert, titled "A Full Moon Night at the Ruins of St. Paul's 2024", featured numerous Chinese music classics as well as arranged popular Chinese pop songs. The stairs were filled with seated audience members, enthusiastically applauding after each tune. The concert can be reviewed on the orchestra's Facebook page.

Both the lantern riddle event

and the concert were organised by the Cultural Affairs Bureau (IC).

Meanwhile, Albergue SCM located on Calçada da Igreja de S. Lázaro hosted its own Mid-Autumn Garden Party. The celebration featured free snacks, live music performances, and special lantern displays. As an added attraction, artists gave live demonstrations of lantern painting, offering visitors the opportunity to immerse themselves in the Mid-Autumn Festival traditions and celebrations. ■



A family tries to solve lantern riddles at the Mandarin's House yesterday evening.



The Macao Chinese Orchestra (OCHM) performs at the Ruins of St. Paul's last night. -Photos: William Chan

# hush! 2024 to feature music marathon, yoga, jazz camp

William Chan

The "hush! Beach Concerts x Urban Yo~ga Wellfest 2024" will be held on November 9 to 10 at Hac Sa Beach in Coloane, bringing together an array of concerts and themed performances for residents and tourists, Cultural Affairs Bureau (IC) President Deland Leong Wai Man announced yesterday during a press conference at the MGM MACAU integrated resort in Nape.

Local music groups Lam Chak Seng Jazz Band and thetiredeyes, along with two yoga instructors, gave a preview performance before the press conference.

Leong noted that musicians from various places will participate in the event, offering audiences various music genres varying from rock, electronic, hip-hop, and jazz in a music carnival surrounded by the seafront, grasslands and beach, with 36 local music groups taking part.

This year's hush! once again features extended activities, from November 2 to 8, including a jazz music camp. Leong expressed the hope that these additions would promote exchanges and collaboration between local artistes and those from outside Macau, thereby enhancing the local music scene.

According to Leong, the event will also resume its collaboration between music and yoga, inviting



Lam Chak Seng (centre) plays the flute alongside other local musicians and two yoga instructors during a performance at the MGM MACAU integrated resort in Nape yesterday. - Photo: William Chan

over 30 fitness and yoga instructors from across Asia. These instructors will guide participants through workouts of varying intensities and categories, encouraging exploration of body, mind, and soul, she said.

In a post-conference interview, Leong highlighted the event's emphasis on jazz, a music genre also showcased at the upcoming 36th Macao International Music Festival (MIMF). She emphasised jazz's versatility and popularity, revealing plans to include a wider range of jazz styles in future events.

Local jazz musician Lam Chak Seng, who will teach at the jazz camp and perform during hush!, expressed his appreciation of the bureau's

support of jazz when talking to the Post after the press conference. He noted that jazz has been a part of Macau's cultural landscape since the 1970s and emphasised its importance in promoting Macau's multicultural identity.

hush! is jointly organised by the Cultural Affairs Bureau and MGM, and co-organised by the Macau Government Tourism Office (MGTO), the Municipal Affairs Bureau (IAM), and the Marine and Water Bureau (DSAMA). The event also features markets, outdoor sport zones, and more. Admission to the "hush! Beach Concerts" is free.

For more information, visit the event's website at [www.icm.gov.mo/hush](http://www.icm.gov.mo/hush) ■

36<sup>TH</sup> MACAO INTERNATIONAL MUSIC FESTIVAL 04.10 - 04.11

20.10 20:00 2024

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# RENOWNED HK LYRICIST GIVES INSIGHTS INTO MUSICAL THEATRE AT LOCAL SALON

Ginnie Liang

Renowned Hong Kong lyricist Chris Shum Wai-zung, who has spent over 30 years navigating the world of drama and musical theatre, hosted a salon\* in the local café “Bookand” about lyric writing earlier this month. The event attracted approximately 50 attendees, including musicians, songwriters, theatre creators, performers, and educators, who were interested in learning about the intricacies of lyric writing.

Shum’s presentation, a prominent figure in the Hong Kong music scene, discussed his extensive experience in writing lyrics for films and television, as well as his contributions to musical theatre in Hong Kong, Taiwan, and Macau. He has also translated numerous foreign musical theatre plays into Cantonese.

During the salon, Shum elaborated on his creative journey in writing lyrics for musicals, focusing on the nuances of Cantonese lyricism. He explored various aspects of lyric writing, including the richness of language and the importance of understanding different cultural contexts. Shum emphasised the need for lyricists to have a diverse vocabulary that resonates with people from various social strata –whether they are affluent individuals, intellectuals, or those from lower socioeconomic backgrounds.

“Musicals often feature characters from different levels of society and mindsets, so it’s crucial for lyricists to consider how these individuals express themselves,” Shum explained. He noted that even the use of slang or vulgar language can be sophisticated and varied, reflecting the complexities of life experiences and interactions.

## Fostering local musical theatre

The salon was organised by Choi Leng Chi, a local theatre director who expressed gratitude for Shum’s willingness to talk about his expertise. Choi noted that it had been a long time since Shum’s last visit to Macau, making the event an excellent opportunity for local artistes to engage with a seasoned professional. She encouraged attendees to pay attention to the creation of musical theatre and Cantonese songs, hoping to inspire the development of local productions.

Local playwright Mok Keng Fong expressed his appreciation for the opportunity to engage closely with Shum, noting that the workshop provided a valuable chance to learn about the basic techniques of lyric writing and how to develop a sense of language. He found Shum’s suggestion for beginners to practise by rewriting classic musical theatre songs with Chinese lyrics particularly useful, as continuous practice is essential for honing one’s skills.

Vong Tin Ian, vice-president of the School of Theatre at the Macao Conservatory, also shared his thoughts during the event. He highlighted that while there is a market for musical theatre in Macau, there is a pressing need to cultivate more talent, enhance appreciation for the art form, and train more behind-the-scenes professionals. “Local talent exists, but the general public’s familiarity with musicals is still lacking,” he said.

“I hope to see more diverse salons in the future, allowing Macau residents to connect with external artistes,” Choi remarked. “These activities serve as valuable platforms for artistic exchange, fostering a greater appreciation for the beauty of Cantonese music and theatre.”

Shum’s insights during the event shed light on the artistry behind lyric writing, emphasising the importance of a rich vocabulary and an understanding of the social dynamics at play. His recent works include “The Impossible Trial” and “I Am What I Am,” along with the newly published script collection for the musical “The Woman in Kenzo.”

Interested individuals can view more information on Shum’s official social media page at <https://www.facebook.com/chrislyrics>.

*\*A salon is a gathering of people held for discussion, where intellectuals, artists, and others come together to share ideas and promote cultural exchange.*

Source: Poe

Chris Shum Wai-zung gestures during his speech in a salon event about lyric writing earlier this month. – Photos: Bob Wong



## Mid-Autumn Festival holiday

Due to it being the Mid-Autumn Festival holiday today, *The Macau Post Daily's* editing team and office staff will be taking the day off and return to work tomorrow so the print edition of your favourite newspaper will be on the newsstands again on Friday morning. However, our digital edition on our popular website <https://www.macaupostdaily.com/> will be updated round-the-clock. Our local news and editorials as well as commentary by national media organisations are also available on various LinkedIn, Twitter and Facebook accounts.

We wish all our readers, advertisers, distributors and contributors a pleasant holiday.

All government offices and banks will be closed today. They will reopen tomorrow.

Colloquially, the Mid-Autumn Festival is also known as Mooncake Festival. It is the nation's traditional harvest festival.

## Sam meets with builders, developers, architects

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According to the statement, the representatives who attended Monday's meeting with Sam included those from three major youth associations, namely the Macau Youth Federation (MYF), the Macau New Chinese Youth Association, and the Macau General Association of Chinese Students (AECM).

Monday's meeting was presided over by Health Bureau (SSM) Director Alvis Lo Iek Long, who chairs the Macau Youth Federation.

According to the statement, Dr Lo said during the meeting he believed that Sam's administration would be able to take Macau's development to a new phase.

According to the statement, 22 representatives raised opinions during the meeting, on topics such as strengthening the training of highly-qualified local professionals, diversifying platforms and channels for young people to convey suggestions to the government, measures helping young people get a job or

start a business, raising students' awareness about career planning, young people pursuing their personal and career development elsewhere in the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macau Greater Bay Area (GBA), and Macau's development of its digital economy.

Only Sam has submitted his candidacy nomination form to the Chief Executive Electoral Affairs Commission (CAECE), which is required to announce its decision today whether to accept Sam as a candidate for the chief executive election on October 13.

The ex-top judge's candidacy has been endorsed by 386 electors of the 400-member Chief Executive Election Committee, representing 96.5 percent of the total.

Sam, 62, is the former president of Macau's Court of Final Appeal (TUI). He resigned from his position, which he had held since the establishment of the Macau Special Administrative Region (MSAR) on December 20, 1999, so that he could run in the October 13 chief executive election. ■



Potential chief candidate Sam Hou Fai (second from left) takes notes while listening to opinions raised by participants during Monday's meeting with representatives from about 40 youth associations, in an office at the Macao Daily News Building, as Macau Youth Federation (MYF) Chairman Alvis Lo Iek Long (left) also jots down notes while presiding over the meeting. — Photo: Sam's election campaign office

## Audit report slams 'exaggerated' progress of visually impaired facility projects

Ginnie Liang

A report released yesterday by the Commission of Audit (CA) highlights the "exaggerated" progress of the Social Welfare Bureau's (IAS) two inter-departmental teams' visually impaired facility projects a number of years ago, where some projects still in progress were presented by the teams as having been completed, resulting in a lack of tactile guide path connections to major public places and even posing a danger to visually impaired users.

The two public entities slammed by the audit report, which was released yesterday, are the interdepartmental study team and the interdepartmental steering team for the bureau's Ten Year Plan for Rehabilitation Services 2016-2025.

The government developed the Ten Year Plan for Rehabilitation Services 2016-2025 in 2016, and the report yesterday focused on the work from December 2013 to June 2023 in promoting barrier-free walking facilities for the visually impaired.

The audit report points out that the teams failed to be results-orientated and to effectively coordinate the work of various departments when formulating the plan, and the descriptions of the 34 short-term, medium-term and long-term programmes concerned were too brief and lacked specific sectoral divisions and work content, making it difficult to determine the actual number of projects.

In addition, the completion time and exact task as well as the workload were not clearly specified



This photo combo and map provided by the Commission of Audit (CA) yesterday shows some projects with a lack of tactile guide path connections to major public places.

by the teams, the report pointed out.

The audit report also pointed out that in the teams' 2019 and 2020 annual reports, unfinished programmes were reported as "implemented and completed", while the public entities' self-assessment of their work progress was not effectively verified, resulting in inaccurate reporting information.

The audit report points out that a barrier-free environment for the visually impaired is a basic configuration promised by the government for many years. However, the report reveals that even though interdepartmental teams have been set up and a

coordination mechanism has been established, various public entities were still "unable to carry out their work at the same pace".

The audit report recommends that the interdepartmental teams should clarify which team takes the lead in the work, so as to avoid affecting the effectiveness of the government entity concerned due to the lack of communication and coordination, and that the various participating entities should have the same goals to ensure the rational use of public funds, and most importantly, to ensure that the barrier-free facilities constructed by the government can perform their intended functions. ■

## Macau deposit protection limit to rise to 800,000 patacas from Oct 1

Tony Wong

Macau's statutory bank deposit protection limit for each depositor will be raised from the current 500,000 patacas to 800,000 patacas from October 1.

Macau's deposit protection legal system took effect in 2012. The protection limit has been 500,000 patacas since then.

A newly drawn-up administrative regulation raising the protection limit to 800,000 patacas was promulgated in the Official Gazette (BO) on Monday.

Government-drafted administrative regulations, informally known as by-laws, do not require the legislature's approval.

A statement by the Macau Monetary Authority (AMCM)

on Monday noted that the Macau government decided to raise the protection limit to 800,000 patacas after considering that "a neighbouring region" will raise its bank deposit protection limit soon.

Hong Kong will raise its bank deposit protection limit from the current 500,000 patacas to 800,000 patacas from October 1. ■

## Macau reports 2 critical meningitis cases caused by streptococcus

Tony Wong

The Health Bureau (SSM) announced in a statement last night that two critical cases of meningitis caused by group B streptococcal infection were recorded in Macau earlier this month.

The statement quoted Hong Kong's Centre for Health Protection (CHP) as saying that Hong Kong has reported a total of 40 cases of group B streptococcal infection over recent weeks. The statement noted that some of the patients in Hong Kong had been exposed to or had handled raw freshwater fish before the onset of the disease, while some of them

had eaten freshwater fish that had not been thoroughly cooked.

The first patient announced by last night's SSM statement is a 76-year-old local man who came down with a fever, headache and muscle pain on September 3. He sought treatment at the public Conde de São Januário Hospital Centre on Sunday last week where he was hospitalised and was diagnosed with bacterial meningitis caused by group B streptococcal infection.

Last night's statement said that the man was still in a critical condition.

The statement said that before his hospitalisation, the man had regularly

bought freshwater fish from wet markets and prepared them for cooking.

According to the statement, the second patient is a 49-year-old local housewife who came down with a fever, headache and muscle pain on September 3. She sought treatment at the public hospital on September 7 where she was hospitalised and was diagnosed with bacterial meningitis caused by group B streptococcal infection.

Last night's statement said that the woman was still in a critical condition.

However, the statement said, the woman does not buy or prepare freshwater fish for cooking, and neither does she eat raw fish. ■

## STOCK MARKETS

### Hang Seng Index closes 1.37 pct higher

HONG KONG — Hong Kong's stock market ended higher yesterday with the benchmark Hang Seng Index up 1.37 percent to close at 17,660.02 points.

The Hang Seng China Enterprises Index rose 1.41 percent to end at 6,176.03 points, and the Hang Seng Tech Index rose 1.12 percent to end at 3,536.57 points. — AFP