

# Sam vows to enhance Macau's competitiveness in GBA development

Tony Wong

During Saturday's public hearing with residents, chief executive candidate Sam Hou Fai acknowledged that Macau's competitiveness is lower than the other three designated "core cities" in the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macau Greater Bay Area (GBA), namely Hong Kong, Guangzhou and Shenzhen, despite the fact that Macau has various unique advantages in the GBA development, which he said Macau has failed to leverage.

The GBA consists of nine cities in Guangdong Province and the nation's two special administrative regions of Hong Kong and Macau. The nine Guangdong GBA cities include the provincial capital of Guangzhou and Shenzhen, the nation's high-tech innovation hub. Hong Kong is one of the world's leading financial centres, while Macau is one of the world's most popular tourist destinations.

The four cities of Hong Kong, Macau, Guangzhou and Shenzhen are designated as "core cities" in the GBA development, while the other seven cities together form the GBA's "key node cities".



Macau's sole chief executive candidate Sam Hou Fai (second from right) addresses Saturday's public hearing at Hou Kong Middle School as Lei Wun Kong (second from left), the trustee of his election campaign, Ip Sio Kai (first from right), the election campaign office's head, and Chan Ka Leong, the office's deputy head, look on. - Photo: Tony Wong

The GBA development initiative was launched in 2017, with its outline development plan released in 2019.

Sam's election campaign office hosted a Q&A session on Saturday

afternoon so that he could hear opinions and suggestions from members of the public and answer their questions. The public hearing, which lasted two hours, was held

at Hou Kong Middle School (濠江中學) on Estrada de Ferreira do Amaral (亞馬喇馬路), located just a stone's throw from the headquarters of local power utility CEM.

About 400 residents attended the session, according to Sam's election campaign office.

Local residents aged 18 or over were eligible to sign up for the public hearing, which provided 400 places. As the number of those who signed up exceeded the number of places available, the participants were chosen by the election campaign office through a lucky draw on Wednesday, after a registration period ran between Sunday and Tuesday last week.

During Saturday's two-hour session, a total of 11 participants were chosen by lucky draw to ask Sam questions, on topics covering tourism, economic diversification, urban renewal, medical resources, education, low birth rate, population ageing, public administration, Hengqin's development, and Macau's participation in the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macau Greater Bay Area's (GBA) development.

Sam is the sole candidate for the chief executive election on Sunday, October 13. His ongoing election campaign period runs until Friday.

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This photo taken on Wednesday shows the pyrotechnic show presented by mainland China's "Dancing Fireworks Company", which yesterday won the 32<sup>nd</sup> Macao International Fireworks Display Contest held in celebration of 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 Macau's return to the motherland. The company received its prize and trophy last night, when the contest ended with the separate displays by the Portuguese and Japanese teams. Russia and Japan were the contest's silver and bronze winners respectively. - Photo: GCS (Story on p. 3)

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## Xi, Kim exchange congratulatory messages over 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of diplomatic ties

President Xi Jinping and Kim Jong Un, general secretary of the Workers' Party of Korea and president of the State Affairs of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK), yesterday exchanged congratulatory messages over the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the China-DPRK diplomatic ties. - Story on p. 8

## Israel pounds Lebanon ahead of Hamas attack anniversary

A fireball lit up the sky and smoke billowed over Beirut yesterday as Israel unleashed intense strikes targeting Hezbollah, almost a year since the Hamas attack that sparked war in Gaza. - Story on p. 11

## Mozambican election campaign: no suspense

Across Maputo are red flags pierced by harsh sunlight and faded walls plastered with posters of FRELIMO, the party that has been in power in Mozambique for half a century. - Story on p. 12

# Last-ditch negotiations must succeed to avert China-EU trade war over EV tariffs



After the 27 European Union countries failed on Friday to agree on whether to slap China-made electric vehicles (EVs) with steeper tariffs, the European Commission under President Ursula von der Leyen may now finally get its controversial proposal to raise EU import duties on the environmentally friendly automobiles from China off the ground.

The protectionist tariffs were proposed in June by the Commission, which claimed that China-made EVs were benefitting from government subsidies creating an unfair advantage.

Beijing has steadfastly denied the existence of the subsidies and on Friday reacted to the EU nations' vote by saying that it "firmly opposes the unfair, illegal and unreasonable protectionist practices of the EU in this case, and resolutely opposes the EU additional countervailing duties on China electric vehicles".

The issue has been highly controversial among the EU member states. In order to pass or reject the tariffs suggested by the EC, any side needed to garner support from at least 15 EU countries representing over 65 percent of the bloc's population of 450 million.\*

As neither side reached the 65 percent threshold, it is now up to the Commission to uphold or withdraw its contentious proposal.

The outcome of Friday's vote was not publicly available, although several diplomats told the Lyon-based pan-European TV news channel Euronews how each member state positioned itself:\*\*

10 were in favour: Bulgaria, Denmark, Estonia, France, Ireland, Italy, Lithuania, Latvia, the Netherlands and Poland (45.99 percent of the EU population);

12 abstained: Belgium, the Czech Republic, Greece, Spain, Croatia, Cyprus, Luxembourg, Austria, Portugal, Romania, Sweden and Finland (31.36 percent);

Five were against: Germany, Hungary, Malta, Slovenia and Slovakia (22.65 percent).

I found the high number of abstentions puzzling as it includes several countries known to have sought closer relations with China in the recent past. But, as a Brussels-based media colleague told me a decade ago, it is easier to solve even a peculiarly abstruse riddle than to understand how EU member states interact with the Commission

The crux is that the Commission has the exclusive powers to determine the bloc's external commercial policy – and, in this darned case, to ensure that its desired tariffs on EVs imported from China finally get off the ground.

The Commission boasted in a post-vote statement on Friday that its "proposal to impose definitive countervailing duties on imports of battery electric vehicles (BEVs) from China has obtained the necessary support from EU Member States for the adoption of tariffs."

The problem is that the EU's number one car-manufacturing member state, Germany, voted – understandably – against the proposal, considering that its automobile giants such as Mercedes Benz, Volkswagen and BMW have heavily – and profitably – invested in China. This has set German Chancellor Olaf Scholz of the centre-left Social Democratic Party (SPD) against his compatriot von der Leyen, whose conservative Christian Democratic Union (CDU) is Germany's main opposition party.

Friday's vote hurts Germany's national interest, i.e., the interests both of its carmakers (employers, employees and their families) and its consumers looking for affordable, environmentally friendly vehicles.

The Commission also said in its statement that Friday's vote represents another step towards the conclusion of its anti-subsidy investigation. However, it was quick to add that, "in parallel, the EU and China continue to work hard to explore an alternative solution that would have to be fully WTO-compatible...", pointing out that "a Commission Implementing Regulation including the definitive findings in the investigation must be published in the [EU] Official Journal by October 30, 2024, at the latest."

Also on Friday, a spokesperson for the Ministry of Commerce

(MOC) in Beijing urged Brussels "to take concrete actions to implement its political will and get back to the right track of resolving trade frictions through consultations."

The spokesperson stressed that while China firmly opposes the draft final ruling of the EU side, it "has also noted its political will to continue to resolve the issue through negotiations, noting that technical teams from both sides will continue with their negotiations today."

The spokesperson also insisted that "the EU's protectionist practices seriously violate WTO rules and disrupt the normal international trade order," pointing out that since June, China and the EU have held more than 12 consultations on the case, apart from talks held last month between Minister of Commerce Wang Wentao and European Commission Executive Vice President and Trade Commissioner Valdis Dombrovskis where both "clearly expressed the will to resolve differences through consultation and agreed to launch price commitment talks to avoid escalating the trade frictions".

I believe that the "price commitment" approach could be a way out of the conundrum. In this compromise solution, Chinese carmakers would commit to setting up minimum prices for their EVs sold in the EU. However, I hope that the minimum prices would be as low as mutually acceptable by Brussels and Beijing so that the pockets of price- and environmentally-conscious EU consumers aren't hurt unnecessarily.

As a German and EU citizen living in China's Macau Special Administrative Region (MSAR), I can only hope that both sides will be able to hammer out a win-win deal by the end of this month. I would like to add that I grew up a mere 40 km driving distance from Volkswagen (VW) AG's headquarters in Wolfsburg, Lower Saxony, so I know first-hand how important a safe – and relatively well-paid – job in the automobile sector is for many Germans. Von der Leyen should be fully aware of the predicament, as her late father was the minister-president (governor) of Lower Saxony between 1976 and 1990.

No wonder that Germany's association of automobile manufacturers has strongly opposed the imposition of "countervailing duties" by the EU on EVs imported from China. Anyway, the term "countervailing duty", i.e., a duty supposedly levied on an imported article to offset the unfair price advantage it holds due to a subsidy paid to producers or exporters by the government of the exporting country if such imports cause or threaten injury to a domestic industry, is often little more than

a euphemism for punitive and/or protectionist tariffs.

Incidentally, the auto industry accounted for nearly one-quarter of Germany's total domestic industry revenue in 2022.

Germany's Finance Minister Christian Lindner of the pro-business Free Democratic Party (FDP) reacted to the troublesome outcome of Friday's EU Member States' vote that the Commission "should not trigger a trade war. We need a negotiated solution."

After all, politics should be seen as the art of compromise.

The auto sector involves 2.5 million direct and 10.3 million indirect jobs – such as those by suppliers and subcontractors – across the 27-nation bloc.

Last year, EVs made in China accounted for 19 percent of the EU's EV market, and analysts have forecast that the share could reach one-quarter by the end of this year.

If this month's negotiations fail, the EU's tariffs on affordably priced EVs from China could be implemented as of October 31 and last five years.

Currently, China-made EVs are already subject to a 10 percent tariff.

The Commission claims that the proposed extra tariffs aim to offset the "damaging" effects of the Chinese government's purported subsidies and would close the price gap between Chinese and EU firms. Reportedly, the tariffs would vary according to the car brand and their "level of cooperation" with the Commission's investigation: 7.8 percent for Tesla, 17 percent for BYD, 18.8 percent for Geely, and 35.3 percent for SAIC. Those Chinese carmakers that did not cooperate with Brussels would face tariffs of 35.3 percent – always on top of the existing 10 percent. This means that some Chinese carmakers would soon face tariffs of over 45 percent.

Understandably, Beijing has denounced the Commission's move as a "naked protectionist act".

The EU auto market is much more important to China's than the one in the US because of which Washington's recent decision to impose 100 percent tariffs on China-made EVs is politically annoying, but economically less so.

The Commission's obvious aim is to make it more difficult for Chinese automakers to compete in the EU, many of whose automakers are still struggling to catch up with the world's rapid transition to EVs, by their Chinese rivals in particular. In fact, European carmakers sleepwalked into the industry's historic change triggered by global awareness of the urgent need to protect our already badly battered environment from the climate crisis.

Instead of resorting to 19<sup>th</sup>-century style protectionism to cope

with competition from EVs made in China, European governments ought to do everything in line with WTO rules to assist their countries' automakers' efforts in speeding up the development of EVs.

Protectionism hinders industrial modernisation – in which the EU and other Western countries are lagging behind China's on many fronts. Instead, they should roll up their sleeves and be ready to learn from their competitors, including those in China, even on the price front.

It is nothing new that certain countries complain about the supposedly adverse impact of cheap imports of goods – in the 19<sup>th</sup> century the British targeted German imports by forcing the "made in Germany" label on them which later became a quality mark which it still is – well, to a certain degree. North American and Western European politicians used to lash out against cheap merchandise imports from Japan only a few decades ago, and I expect the same to happen before long to India, Brazil and other countries in the Global South.

So, let's hope that the last-ditch China-EU negotiations will succeed in striking a compromise that is acceptable to both sides and, most of all, in line with WTO rules. Incidentally, the WTO could finally demand that Brussels amend or even remove its tariffs on Chinese EVs if it finds them inadmissible.

Currently, the world is in turmoil, politically, environmentally, economically and militarily, and a trade war between the EU and China is the last thing that the world needs right now. In terms of trade, China and the EU ranked second and third in the world, after the US, last year.

What we need most urgently is trade that is as mutually beneficial, free and fair as practically possible, all this always being subject to political compromise, ideally to be achieved by consultations and negotiations, as well as, if needed, arbitration mechanisms.

Without good will from all sides involved this can never be achieved and would merely result in – ultimately doomed – foul compromises.

So I hope that negotiators from Brussels and Beijing can reach a mutually acceptable deal by the end of the month. I am sure that car factory bosses, their workers and, last but not least, consumers, both in China and the EU, would be grateful for their success.

– Harald Brüning

\*Europe Votes to Slap China-Made EVs With Tariffs—but Tesla Gets Off Easy, by Zeying Yang

\*\*Brussels breaks impasse after EU countries fail to agree on Chinese EV tariffs, by Jorge Liboreiro

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# Mainland wins 32<sup>nd</sup> Macao Int'l Fireworks Display Contest

Rui Pastorin

The 32<sup>nd</sup> Macao International Fireworks Display Contest concluded last night, with the mainland's "Dancing Fireworks Company" team taking home the top prize, according to a statement by the Macau Government Tourism Office (MGTO) last night.

The Pyro-Klass Fireworks Company from Russia won silver, followed by the bronze winner Marutamaya Ogatsu Fireworks

Co. Ltd. from Japan, the statement noted.

The firework competition was held across five evenings from September and October, having a total of 10 pyrotechnic companies from different parts of the world such as Canada, Italy, Philippines and Thailand, according to the statement.

The statement said that during her remarks, MGTO Director Maria Helena de Senna Fernandes pointed out that the teams came all the way to Macau to present splendid

extravaganzas of light and sound for locals and tourists alike on five evenings. They also lit up the city's night sky and brightened Macau's golden calling card as an international metropolis, according to the statement.

Moreover, MGTO again recommended five best vantage points for members of the public to watch the fireworks, while parallel activities supported and subsidised by MGTO were also held.

The statement added that the Fireworks

Carnival held at the Macau Science Centre attracted "great crowds" for splashing out, watching the fireworks and posting on social media, with "the carnival bustling with life" and boosting the nighttime economy.

Meanwhile, the statement said that the pyrotechnic event's photo contest and student drawing contest are open for submissions until October 31, with more details on <http://fireworks.macaotourism.gov.mo> ■

## UTM team wins awards at 47<sup>th</sup> WorldSkills Competition

Rui Pastorin

The Macao University of Tourism (UTM) team won three "Medallions for Excellence" during last month's 47<sup>th</sup> WorldSkills Competition.

According to a statement from the public university on Friday, the competition took place from September 10 to 15 in Lyon, central-eastern France and had over 1,400 young competitors from around the world. The three competitors from Macau, all of whom have been trained by UTM, comprised students Huang Wenyi and Chan Chi Lek, along with University of Macau (UM) student Nelia Choi Rodrigues.

The statement noted that Huang, Chan and Rodrigues respectively won "Medallions for Excellence" in Cooking, Hotel Reception and Restaurant Service.

The statement said that Huang and Chan noted that the competition enhanced their skills and adaptability and thanked UTM for providing them with professional training and valuable exchange activities, they also encouraged other students to join the contest as it challenges their skills and offers a "valuable opportunity for self-improvement and growth".

The statement said that UTM has been entrusted by the Labour Affairs Bureau (DSAL) to serve as the representative entity for Macau's participation in the competition since 2015. The statement added that this includes the selection and training of competitors in Hotel Reception, Bakery, Pâtisserie and Confectionery, Restaurant Service, and Cooking categories. ■



This undated handout photo provided by the Macao University of Tourism (UTM) shows UTM student Chan Chi Lek, who won the Medallion for Excellence in the Hotel Reception category in the central-eastern French city of Lyon.

## 11<sup>th</sup> Int'l Lion Dance Championship 2024-MGM Cup with 4 winning teams



This undated handout photo provided by MGM yesterday shows audience members watching the 11<sup>th</sup> International Lion Dance Championship 2024-MGM Cup outside Ma Kok (A Ma) Temple.

Rui Pastorin

Integrated resort (IR) operator MGM's two-day "11<sup>th</sup> International Lion Dance Championship 2024 - MGM Cup" concluded yesterday, with winning teams across the competition's four categories announced.

The "Lion Dance Troupe of Qiaotou, Fuhai, Shenzhen, China" took home the top prize in the "Freestyle Lion Dance Championship", while the "MGM Golden Lion Troupe - A" won the "Women's Traditional Lion Dance Championship". Meanwhile, the "Macao Lo Leong Sport General Association" team emerged as the winners in the "Youth Traditional Lion Dance Championship", while Mak Chi Leong Dragon & Lion Dance Association Macau won the "Junior Traditional Lion Dance Championship".

The competition, which according to an MGM statement last night attracted 60,000 on-site visits, featured 33 competitions held in Barra district in front of A-Ma Temple, marking the second year that the event was held at the venue.

This year's competition comprised 21 lion dance troupes from 13 countries and regions, with MGM's Brand Marketing Senior Vice President Catarina Lio (廖穎琦) telling the Post after the event that there were many more competitors this year than previously. Moreover, this edition also saw more female teams and teenagers taking part in the event, according to Lio.

Lio added that last year's competition at A-Ma Temple had also generated awareness of the competition area among teams from different parts of the world, noting that they found it to be "amazing". ■

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## Diamond Zhang gig to take place at Venetian Arena next month

Rui Pastorin

The Venetian Macao said in a statement on Thursday that the “Diamond Zhang Concert Tour-Macao” is slated to be held at The Venetian Arena at the integrated resort in Cotai at 8 p.m. on November 23, with tickets to go on sale soon.

The Mandopop singer’s concert is themed “Have a Nice Day” and, according to the statement, reflects Zhang’s state of mind and attitude to life throughout the past decade. She invites fans to “take a break from the daily grind, hit the reset button and embark on a wonderful musical journey to rediscover the simple pleasures of life” during the concert.

According to the statement, Diamond Zhang (张碧晨), who is from the mainland, made her debut in 2014 after winning the third season of “The Voice of China”. She has released two studio albums, “Morning Bound for Midnight” and “Timing”, and has also sung theme songs for a number of popular films and television series such as “Bracing the Chill”, “Annual Ring”, “Cage” and “Ordinary”.

The statement said that Zhang, who has established a “formidable presence” in the Chinese music scene, captivates “countless hearts with her powerful empathy and heartfelt singing voice”.

Tickets are priced between 580 patacas and 1,680 patacas, with more details available on [www.macaoticket.com](http://www.macaoticket.com) and the official The Venetian Macao and Cotai Ticketing pages.



This undated handout photo provided by The Venetian Macao on Thursday shows Mandopop singer Diamond Zhang (张碧晨) performing.

## Dior Galaxy Macau boutique reopens

Rui Pastorin

The two-story, reinvented Dior Galaxy Macau boutique at the integrated resort’s (IR) Galaxy Promenade in Cotai reopened last week, showcasing the “different universes of the house” and a raft of exclusive products and experiences, the company said in a recent statement.

The statement said the boutique features the House’s diverse range from the ready-to-wear collection and accessories dreamt up by Maria Grazia Chiuri and Kim Jones, to watches and jewellery.

Exclusive offerings such as the My Dior fine jewellery collection and exotic leather goods customisation services are also among the highlights, the statement added, alongside the Dior autumn-winter 2024-2025 ready-to-wear collection; a wardrobe “radiating the strength of plural femininity, presented alongside timeless 30 Montaigne models, and Victoire de Castellane’s Rose des Vents and My Dior creations”.

The statement said that men’s pieces from the Dior Winter 2024-2025 line and the Lifestyle Capsule dedicated to board sports are also showcased at a second space.

The boutiques design, the statement said, is magnified by Dior codes – including Versailles parquet and cannage graphics – and punctuated by furniture that “combines audacity and sophistication in soft shades of white, beige and grey”. Moreover, artworks by several artists are also showcased, while there is also VIP private shopping areas for both men and women, according to the statement.



This undated handout photo shows the recently unveiled reinvented Dior Galaxy Macau boutique in Cotai.

## SJM represents Macau in Parma’s ‘Gastronomic September’

Rui Pastorin

SJM Resorts was the sole Macau representative that participated in the recent “Gastronomic September” food festival in Parma, northern Italy, showcasing Macau’s offerings during the event as a fellow UNESCO “Creative City of Gastronomy”, the company said in a statement on Thursday.

“Gastronomic September” was organised by UNESCO and was held in Parma throughout the month.

According to the statement, Casa Don Alfonso Chef de Cuisine Francesco Magni was chosen to represent Macau and participated in activities from September 26 to 28. Casa Don Alfonso is located at Grand Lisboa Macau.

Chef Francesco partnered with chefs from Parma to present a four-course fusion dinner on September 26 for 40 guests with a menu inspired by Italian and Macanese cuisine, the statement noted.

The statement said that the chefs presented an amuse-bouche\* of Pasteis de Bacalhau with Green Curry Sauce, which combined the richness of bacalhau with exotic spices from Malaysia and India. Next, Anolini in Brodo featured two types of Italian ravioli: one filled with slow-cooked “Char Siu” (Cantonese barbecue-flavoured pork), and the classic version filled with traditional ravioli stuffing.

The chefs also served Macanese Minchi with an Italian twist, elevating the flavours with the addition of Parma ham and local red wine, and lastly, Portuguese Egg Tarts from Grand Lisboa made with local butter from Parma in the puff pastry, the statement said.

Chef Francesco held a session the day after to introduce Macau’s gastronomic culture and tourist spots, as well as highlighting the city’s inventive culinary scene. Moreover, on September 28, the chef held a “Welcome to



This undated handout photo provided by SJM Resorts on Thursday shows Casa Don Alfonso’s Chef de Cuisine Francesco Magni, who represented Macau at the “Gastronomic September” in Parma, northern Italy.

Macau” cooking demonstration together with chefs from the prestigious Academia Barilla for 50 guests, demonstrating one of Macau’s renowned dishes, African Chicken.

SJM Managing Director Daisy Ho Chiu Fung was quoted by the statement as saying: “We are grateful for the opportunity to showcase Macau’s distinctive culinary traditions at the festival, sharing the stories of our unique East-West heritage and promoting our city to a global audience”.

\* “Amuse-bouche” is a French term that translates to “mouth amuser” in English. It refers to a small, complimentary appetizer served in fine dining restaurants, designed to give diners a taste of the chef’s style and creativity. Typically, it is a single bite or a small portion, meant to stimulate the palate before the main courses are served. – Source: Poe

## Hallo Wynn Poolside Party set for Saturday

Rui Pastorin

The “Hallo Wynn Poolside Party” is set to take place on Saturday at the Wynn Macau Poolside, with tickets, priced from 488 patacas, now on sale.

According to a statement from the integrated resort (IR) operator on Friday, the hotel poolside in Nape will be transformed into “into a mystical Halloween Garden for an enchanting celebration” and will have an immersive and chilling atmosphere.

The event will feature a buffet with variety of snacks, specially crafted Halloween-themed cocktails and mocktails. Moreover, there will also be various photo spots, DJ performances and a captivating close-up magic show, as well as fire dance performance and “eerily dressed characters”, the statement said.

Party attendees can also take part in the Best Costume Competition and win prizes. A make-up and dress-up area with assorted costume selections is also available for those who want to join in at the last minute, according to the statement. Stage games and booths will also be set up.

The statement said that the party will last from 7 p.m. to 11:30 p.m. and each ticket includes access to the Halloween-themed buffet, free-flow drinks and entertainment. Macau residents can get a 20 percent discount when purchasing tickets via specific ticketing platforms.

More ticketing details can be found on <https://www.ticketing.wynnresortsmacau.com/> and on MPay, as well as by calling 8889 3988.



This poster provided by Wynn Macau on Thursday promotes the upcoming “Hallo Wynn Poolside Party”.

## Youth Affairs Committee to set up task force on mental health, well-being

Yuki Lei

The government-appointed Youth Affairs Committee will set up a task force on young people's mental health and well-being with a view to gradually launching services to meet the needs of young people, based on the feedback collected, but Education and Youth Development Bureau (DSEDJ) Non-Tertiary Education Department Chief Choi Man Chi underlined on Friday that "this is not due to a sudden increase in the physical and mental health-related condition of young people".

The committee held on Friday its third plenary meeting for this year, during which, according to a DSEDJ statement, Secretary for Social Affairs and Culture Elsie Ao Ieong U, who chairs the committee, said that the government has been attaching great importance to the physical and mental health of young people and has been working at different levels, including the setting-up of the "Walking with Love - Caring for the Mental and Physical Health of Young People" programme in 2021, as well as the establishment of a mechanism for identifying high-risk students, in addition to the formation of a "Working Group on Physical and Mental Health on Campus" in local schools.

The statement quoted Ao Ieong as highlighting the government's action on mental health, adding that in the blueprint for a Healthy Macau announced by the government earlier this year, three specific objectives and six assessment indicators on mental health have been set to enhance the mental health of Macau residents at the policy, environmental and behavioural levels.

The statement noted that the closed-door meeting reported and made a decision on the membership of the task force, "in the hope that through the task force, members of the Youth Affairs Committee can pool their strengths together to explore the needs and aspirations of young

people at different stages of their development and to provide them with advice, thereby taking care of their physical and mental health development in various aspects".

The task force on mental health and well-being of young people will consist of nine members of the Youth Affairs Committee, Choi told reporters during a post-meeting press conference, adding that the government has always attached great importance to the physical and mental health of young students, and consistently optimised the joint prevention, control and action mechanism through the establishment of an inter-departmental collaboration mechanism, as well as by linking up educational organisations and community forces: "Youth-related work has never diminished. At present, the government hopes to collect views through the establishment of a standing task force and expand the scope of receiving feedback from young people, with a view to gradually introducing services that meet the needs of young people..... Young people know that being listened to and cared about is an added support for them".

Choi underlined that there has been no significant change in the physical and mental health of young students in Macau, but more could be done in prevention to build a tighter safety net. According to the statement, Choi urged the whole community to be the gatekeepers of health and to work together to protect the physical and mental health of young students.

Meanwhile, according to Choi, the bureau has launched in this school year for the first time the "Mental Health Education Courseware", which consists of eight themes, mainly focusing on emotions, peer relationships and life education, so as to enable students to pay more attention to recognise and handle their emotions correctly. Teaching staff need to receive training related to the courseware, she concluded. ■

## Nearly 40 pct of young people suffer moderate-to-severe depression: survey

Yuki Lei

The findings of a survey show that nearly 40 percent of young people aged between 18 and 34 suffer moderate-to-severe depression, with their major stressors arising from work, family and financial concerns.

The Mental Health Association of Hong Kong and Macau (MHAHK Macau) and the Faculty of Medicine of the Macau University of Science and Technology (MUST) released their joint "Macau Mental Health Survey 2024" on Friday at the Emperor Hotel in Zape.

The survey was conducted between April and July this year with the support of 23 local organisations and social service agencies, targeted at local residents, with nearly 1,500 valid questionnaires collected. The survey was aimed at enhancing public awareness of locals' mental health and arousing attention in civil society to mental health problems, so as to realise the goal of "early detection and prevention".

The survey results indicate that the risk of depression and anxiety disorders among the 1,500 respondents stood at 27 percent and 19 percent respectively, with the younger age group, i.e., aged 18-34, having a higher risk of these two mental health disorders than the respondents aged 34 and above. According to the findings, 35.9 percent of the respondents aged between 18 and 34 were at risk of experiencing moderate-to-severe depression, with a 19.4 percent prevalence among those aged 34 and above, while the risk of anxiety disorders was 25.2 percent in the younger age group and 14.9 percent in the group aged 34 and above.

Concerning the findings that the mental health risk among young people was higher than among older people, Lawrence Lam Tak-ming, a professor at the MUST Faculty of Medicine, said during Friday's press conference that the government should, under the framework of its blueprint for a "Healthy Macau", include young people as a key target



Representatives of the Mental Health Association of Hong Kong and Macau (MHAHK Macau) and the Faculty of Medicine of the Macau University of Science and Technology (MUST), including Ching Chi-kong (left), the association's executive director; and Lawrence Lam Tak-ming (second from left), a professor at the MUST Faculty of Medicine, preside over Friday's press conference about the release of the findings of their joint "Macau Mental Health Survey 2024", at the Emperor Hotel in Zape. - Photo: MHAHK Macau

group for mental health promotion, and with the objective of "giving priority to prevention" design suitable services for young people, such as online counselling and self-learning courses, or make full use of technology by setting up a virtual reality (VR) emotional experience centre and a mental health resource station: "They are at a critical stage of development in their lives and the mental health challenges they face should not be overlooked".

The findings also show that more than half of the respondents did not intend to seek professional help when they felt depressed or anxious, as most of them preferred to seek help from their friends and family members, followed by clinical psychologists and counsellors as well as social workers. The findings listed the main reasons for the respondents not seeking professional help as being due to "having a busy life" and "high service fees", while some said they thought they were capable of coping with the situation and others did not want to face it.

Speaking about the implications of the survey findings on mental health services, Ching Chi-kong, executive director of the Mental Health Association of Hong Kong and Macau, pointed out that as more than half of the respondents did not intend to seek professional help when emotionally disturbed, friends and family members became the "first line of defence" in protecting their mental health, because of which there was a greater need for the public to be more concerned about their own emotional health as well as the emotional health of those around them: "Participating in the mental health first aid training organised by social welfare organisations is an effective way to help individuals not only cope with their own emotional problems, but also provide timely and effective support to others when they are facing difficulties".

He also urged the government to consider launching a five-year survey to continuously monitor the mental health status of local residents as part of its population health assessment. ■

## Salmonella infections increase 'significantly', SSM warns

Yuki Lei

The Health Bureau (SSM) received 86 Salmonella infection reports between August 19 and Friday, more than doubling the 41 cases recorded in the same period last year, as well as three foodborne illness outbreaks of Salmonella enteritidis, all resulting from the consumption of contaminated, raw or undercooked eggs and egg products.

According to an SSM statement on Friday, the number of Salmonella infection cases recorded by the bureau has exceeded the alert level, with an average of 12 cases per week recently, including a peak of 16 cases in one week, urging the public to pay close attention to personal,

environmental and food hygiene to minimise the risk of coming down with a salmonella infection, while also paying special attention to the storage and preparation processes of foodstuff.

The bureau underlined that food, raw or undercooked eggs and egg products in particular, should be thoroughly cooked before consumption, while also ensuring that raw and cooked food items are always handled separately.

The statement pointed out that Salmonella infections are enteritis caused by non-typhoidal Salmonella species, mainly Salmonella enteritidis and Salmonella typhimurium, with more than 2,000 serotypes of

Salmonella having been identified. Salmonella infections can occur throughout the year, but are more common between July and October, with more severe symptoms occurring most frequently in infants and children aged under five, senior citizens and the immunocompromised persons.

The incubation period of Salmonella infection ranges from six to 72 hours, usually 12 to 36 hours, with the infectious period usually ranging from a few days to a few weeks, during which patients may suffer symptoms of acute gastroenteritis, including nausea, vomiting, diarrhoea, fever and abdominal cramps, lasting four to seven days. ■



The Education and Youth Development Bureau's (DSEDJ) Youth Development Division Acting Chief Chio Pou Wai (from left to right), Non-Tertiary Education Department Chief Choi Man Chi, and Io Lok Fong, the functional head of the DSEDJ Youth Department, host a post-press briefing after Friday's closed-door plenary meeting of the government-appointed Youth Affairs Committee at the bureau. - Photo: DSEDJ

# Seminar focuses on rule of law for Hengqin's high-quality development

Yuki Lei

The Alliance for Common People Building Up Macau (API), in conjunction with the Association for the Promotion of Public Legal Services, held yesterday afternoon a seminar themed "Rule of Law Guarantees for High-Quality Development of the Guangdong-Macau In-depth Cooperation Zone in Hengqin", in a bid to contribute to the enhancement of national security education and the development of the rule of law.

The seminar was attended by over 60 legal experts and scholars from Macau and Guangdong Province to exchange views, review the fruitful achievements made in the 25 years since the implementation of the Macau Basic Law, and to discuss issues such as the legal framework for national security, the current status and

future development direction of the rule of law in the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macau Greater Bay Area (GBA), as well as in Hengqin's in-depth cooperation zone, jointly contributing to the development of the rule of law and to make contributions to the development of the legal system.

Delivering a speech during yesterday's seminar at Nam Tung Commercial Building, lawyer Chan Pei Kei, the vice-chairman of the association, underlined the great significance of hosting the seminar in the "double-happiness" year commemorating 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 Macau's return to the motherland: "Since the implementation of the Basic Law, Macau has achieved a series of remarkable development

results,....., all of which cannot be attributed without the backdrop of the prosperity and strength of the motherland, as well as a series of policy guidance and support".

One of the keynote speakers, Ivan Fong In Long, assistant researcher at the Centre for Constitutional and Basic Law Studies of the Faculty of Law at the University of Macau (UM), presented his views on legal synergy of cross-border data flow between Macau and the in-depth cooperation zone, proposing the establishment of a unified data compliance mechanism, optimisation of data storage and processing strategies and the enhancement of contingency response, in the hope of promoting the sustainable development of economic, technological and social cooperation between the two places. ■



Association for the Promotion of Public Legal Services Vice-chairman Chan Pei Kei delivers a speech during yesterday's seminar on the Rule of Law Guarantees for High-Quality Development of the Guangdong-Macau In-depth Cooperation Zone in Hengqin, in Nam Tung Commercial Building. — Photo: Yuki Lei

## Local man arrested for damaging motorbike while parking his own

Ginnie Liang

A local man in his sixties was arrested by the Judiciary Police (PJ) on Wednesday for damaging another person's motorcycle while parking his own, a Public Security Police (PSP) spokesperson said in a regular press conference on Friday.

The suspect told the police that he is a businessman surnamed Ng, the spokesperson said.

According to the spokesperson, PSP received a report from a local man in early August that when he parked his motorcycle in a legal parking space on Rua dos Açores in Taipa, and upon returning to his vehicle, he discovered that it had been moved to a nearby area where parking is prohibited. Furthermore, the victim's motorcycle bore visible signs of damage to both the fairing and side panels.

After checking the citywide CCTV surveillance system, PSP officers identified the suspect and summoned him to a police station for questioning on Wednesday.

During the interrogation, the



This undated photo provided by the Public Security Police (PSP) Friday shows a PSP officer escorting the male vandalism suspect to a police station in Taipa.

suspect claimed that he had moved the motorcycle because it was "obstructing" his own parking, the spokesperson said, adding he admitted that while attempting to move the victim's vehicle,

he accidentally knocked it over, resulting in the damage.

The suspect has been transferred to the Public Prosecutions Office (MP), facing a vandalism charge. ■

## Teenage girl commits suicide by taking poison

Ginnie Liang

The Judiciary Police (PJ) received a report from the Fire Services Bureau yesterday at 11:54 a.m. stating that a teenage girl committed suicide by taking poison in a flat on Avenida 1 de Maio, the Judiciary Police said in a statement.

The victim was identified as a female local minor.

According to the girl's mother, she saw her daughter enter her bedroom at around midnight and turn off the lights to go to sleep, the statement said.

However, when she looked in on her daughter at around 11:30 a.m. yesterday morning, she found the room lights on and her daughter unresponsive. She immediately called the emergency services.

Upon arrival, officers discovered a suicide note on the victim's desk, and the room appeared orderly with no signs of a struggle, the statement said.

During the examination, a forensic team conducted a preliminary autopsy and found that the cause of death might be

poisoning, and there were no visible signs of criminal injuries on the body, the statement said.

The statement said that a post-mortem examination will be performed, and the case was listed as dead body found.

Anyone with suicidal thoughts looking for assistance is urged to call the Caritas hotline 2852 5222 for Chinese-language speakers or 2852 5777 for English-language speakers, or the Social Welfare Bureau's (IAS) 24-hour counselling hotline 2826 1126. ■

## Mainlander nabbed for robbing friends' chips worth HK\$450,000

Ginnie Liang

A 31-year-old mainland man was arrested for cheating and robbing a friend out of HK\$450,000 in chips on Wednesday, a Judiciary Police (PJ) spokesperson said in a regular press conference on Friday.

The suspect told the police that he is a businessman surnamed Lai.

According to the spokesperson, the suspect met one of the victims several months ago, and after losing HK\$400,000 in casino gambling, the suspect contacted the victim on Wednesday, claiming he wanted to borrow HK\$450,000 in casino chips, in order to "take a photo of the chips and send it to his wife to pretend he had not lost any money at the casino".

The victim, believing the suspect's story, borrowed chips

from a friend, and the three arranged to meet at a café in a hotel in Cotai. However, when the suspect arrived, he immediately snatched the chips and attempted to flee, the spokesperson said.

The suspect was intercepted by casino security guards in the hotel lobby, after which the two victims called for assistance from police officers in the casino.

The Judiciary Police said at the press conference that their investigation indicated the stolen chips belonged to the two victims, the spokesperson said, adding that the suspect refused to cooperate with the police and has been transferred to the Public Prosecutions Office (MP), facing robbery and fraud involving a considerable amount of money charges. ■



Evidence seized from the robbery-fraud suspect such as chips and a smartphone are displayed during Friday's regular press conference at the Judiciary Police (PJ) headquarters.