

Sam says aiming for policy address to meet residents' expectations

Tony Wong

Chief Executive Sam Hou Fai says that his administration is drafting his first policy address, which is slated to be delivered early next year, in a way that meets civil society's expectations.

Sam, who took office as the Macau Special Administrative Region's (MSAR) new chief executive on December 20, made the remarks on Boxing Day, Thursday of last week, the first working day of the new-term government, in a statement released through the Macau Government Information Bureau (GCS).

Sam was sworn in by President Xi Jinping on December 20 as the MSAR's sixth-term and fourth chief executive at the celebration of the 25th Anniversary of Macau's return to the motherland and the inauguration ceremony of the MSAR's sixth-term government.

According to the GCS statement, Sam had a meeting with Secretary for Administration and Justice André Cheong Weng Chon on the new-term government's first working day where they discussed the government's work plans under Cheong's portfolio.

According to the statement, Sam underlined that Xi's important speech made during the celebration on December 20 has provided the MSAR government with clear guidance for its administration. Sam said that all public entities must deeply study the spirit of Xi's important speech and carry out their tasks in compliance with it.

Sam also reaffirmed that over the next five years his administration will strive to achieve the four major visions of Law-based Macau, Vibrant Macau, Cultural Macau, and Happy Macau. The chief executive stressed that the MSAR government will continue to comprehensively, accurately and unwaveringly implement the "One Country, Two Systems" principle, ensuring its implementation will not be distorted.

According to the statement, Sam ordered members of his team



Chief Executive Sam Hou Fai (centre) pays a visit on Thursday last week to the government's newly-built Macau Open-Air Performance Venue in Cotai, before the facility's first trial concert was held on Saturday, which drew around 11,000 spectators. - Photo: GCS

to strengthen their sense of unity and responsibility, pledging that he will firmly serve his role as the MSAR's leading person responsible for resolving Macau's long-standing problems, strengthening the city's appropriate economic diversification, and improving the population's well-being, with the aim of enabling Macau to achieve greater breakthroughs in its development based on the solid foundation created by the implementation of the "One Country, Two Systems" principle.

Samsaid that his administration's current priority is to review the still incomplete tasks that were launched by the previous-term government, ensuring the effective implementation of the policies and measures that need continuity.

According to the statement, his administration will come up with details aiming to ensure the implementation of the policies and measures laid out in his election campaign manifesto, with the aim of drawing up his 2025 Policy Address in a way that meets civil society's expectations.

The statement also underlined that before the new-term

government's first official working day on Thursday last week, Sam and his team had already started carrying out their duties, including his one-day visit to Guangzhou on Christmas Eve, his first working visit in his capacity as the MSAR's chief executive, where he met with top leaders of Guangdong Province, discussing the promotion of Guangdong-Macau cooperation.

In his working visit to the provincial capital, Sam met with Communist Party of China (CPC) Guangdong Provincial Committee Secretary Huang Kunming and Guangdong Governor Wang Weizhong. The other members of Sam's delegation comprised André Cheong, Secretary for Economy and Finance Tai Kin Ip, and Sam's chief-of-cabinet Chan Kak.

5 policy secretaries' work

Moreover, the GCS statement also laid out duties carried out by Sam's five policy secretaries respectively on the new-term government's first official working day on Thursday last week.

According to the statement,

André Cheong convened a meeting with top officials of public entities under his portfolio where he underlined that the government will improve the city's legal system for its public administration, push ahead with public administration reform, continue improving the legal systems concerning the safeguarding of national security, and set up more municipal facilities.

Tai administered the oath of office of the newly appointed director of the Economic and Technological Development Bureau (DSED), Yau Yun Wah, on Thursday last week, the statement noted.

The bureau had been headed by Tai since 2016 until December 19. After he took office as the secretary for economy and finance the next day, he appointed Yau as the bureau's new director effective from December 20. Yau joined the bureau in 2003 where he was promoted to a department chief in January 2017, but he was appointed by the Macau government as a deputy director of the Commercial Services Bureau of the Guangdong-Macau In-depth Cooperation Zone in Hengqin in

April last year, before moving back to Macau on December 20.

According to the GCS statement, Tai said that he and officials under his portfolio will visit various commerce associations and other community associations in the near future to gather suggestions on promoting Macau's economic development, with the aim of drafting his portfolio's policy guidelines for next year.

Secretary for Security Wong Sio Chak convened a meeting with top officials of public entities under his portfolio where he underlined that Macau's public security is still facing certain challenges despite being good currently, adding that the government still needs to carry out a great deal of work concerning the safeguarding of national security and the prevention of crimes.

According to the statement, Secretary for Social Affairs and Culture Wallis O Lam also convened a meeting with top officials of public entities under her portfolio where she said that the entities must draft their respective policy guidelines for next year in compliance with Sam's election campaign manifesto. She also said that officials must more extensively gather opinions from residents.

Secretary for Transport and Public Works Raymond Tam Vai Man administered the oath of office of the newly appointed director of the Environmental Protection Bureau (DSP), Ip Kuong Lam, on Thursday last week, the statement noted.

The bureau had been headed by Tam since 2016 until December 19. After he took office as the secretary for transport and public works the next day, he appointed Ip as the bureau's new director effective from December 20. Ip joined the government's Environmental Council, the bureau's predecessor, in 2001. The bureau was established in 2009 where he was promoted to a deputy director in 2015.

According to the statement, Tam said that he will work with officials under his portfolio to rise to challenges with the aim of improving the population's quality of life. ■

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Mainland debuts prototypes of world's fastest high-speed train

Prototypes of the CR450 bullet train, with a test speed of up to 450 kilometers per hour and an operational speed of 400 kilometers per hour, were debuted in Beijing yesterday, highlighting the mainland's cutting-edge advancements in rail technology and contributions to the global rail industry.

- Story on p. 7

Cambodia pardons jailed surrogate Philippine mothers

Cambodia has pardoned and sent home 13 Philippine women who were jailed over a scheme to become surrogate mothers, an outlawed practice, the Philippine government said yesterday.

- Story on p. 9

Mikheil Kavelashvili, ex-Man City striker and Georgia's disputed far-right president

Georgia inaugurated yesterday an ex-footballer turned far-right politician - Mikheil Kavelashvili - as Tbilisi's next figurehead president, after a controversial election process denounced as "illegitimate" by the current pro-EU leader.

- Story on p. 11

MAICC vows to deepen Macau-ASEAN economic & trade cooperation

Yuki Lei

The Macao ASEAN International Chamber of Commerce (MAICC) held on Friday its 15th anniversary celebration dinner as well as the inauguration ceremony of its 4th Board of Directors and Supervisors, during which Kelvin Tan Hai Ching, the chamber's chairperson, pledged to continue to deepen the economic and trade cooperation with ASEAN countries and to broaden the channels of tourism exchanges between Macau and ASEAN countries.

ASEAN is the acronym for the Association of Southeast Asian Nations.

In his speech delivered on the sidelines of Friday's dinner, Tan summed up the chamber's "contribution" to the promotion of economic and trade cooperation as well as tourism exchanges between Macau and ASEAN countries over the past 15 years, including the organisation of annual collaborations with the commerce and tourism

departments of ASEAN consulates in Hong Kong and Macau to participate in the Macao International Trade and Investment Fair (MIF) and the Macao International Environmental Cooperation Forum and Exhibition (MIECF). He also underlined that in the future the chamber, in addition to continue to deepen economic and trade cooperation with ASEAN countries and broaden tourism exchange channels, will also promote potential investments from ASEAN countries in the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macau Greater Bay Area (GBA) through the Macau-Hengqin window, achieving mutually beneficial and win-win common development goals.

The celebration dinner and inauguration ceremony at Grant Hyatt Macau were also addressed by Secretary for Economy and Finance Tai Kin Ip, other attendees were Ho Hou Wah, vice chairman of the National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (NCCPPC); Sun

Xiangyang, deputy commissioner of the Office of the Commissioner of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China (PPC) in the Macau Special Administrative Region (MSAR); Kou Hoi In, president of the Legislative Assembly (AL); and Yang Quanzhou, deputy director of the Economic Affairs Department of the Liaison Office of the Central People's Government in the MSAR.

In his speech, Tai lauded the chamber as an important bridge connecting Macau and ASEAN countries, pointing out that ASEAN countries are important economic and trade partners of Macau, and that the government will continue to join hands with the sector to fully utilise Macau's unique advantages in the areas of Macau's returned overseas Chinese connections, business and trade cooperation platforms to strengthen internal and external ties and further deepen the two-way exchanges and cooperation with ASEAN countries. ■



Macao ASEAN International Chamber of Commerce (MAICC) Chairperson Kelvin Tan Hai Ching (left) and Secretary for Economy and Finance Tai Kin Ip deliver their respective speeches during the chamber's 15th anniversary celebration dinner as well as the inauguration ceremony of its 4th Board of Directors and Supervisors at Grant Hyatt Macau. — Photo combo: Yuki Lei

Man throws cleaver from height over 'emotional problems'

Yuki Lei

A cleaver was thrown from a flat of a residential building on Rua Sul do Patane (沙梨頭南街) in Fai Chi Kei last Monday, in response to which the Public Security Police (PSP) on Wednesday identified the suspect as a local man in his forties, underlining that "no one or object had been hit in the incident".

The PSP statement was released on Wednesday afternoon after a resident of the building alleged to a Hong Kong television programme "Scoop" that the Public Security Police had repeatedly refused to investigate a number of incidents of objects being thrown from heights in the neighbourhood on the grounds that "the residents there were not injured".

The programme cited the resident living in the Fai Chi Kei district as pointing out that there had been a number of incidents of objects being thrown from heights in the area, including fruit and scissors, and even a cleaver on a recent occasion, threatening the safety of passers-by.

In response to the resident's allegations, the Public Security Police clarified in the statement that upon receiving a report of an incident of

an object being thrown from a height on Rua Sul do Patane at 1 p.m. last Monday, PSP officers immediately went to the location of the incident to take follow-up action. The statement added that after it was suspected that a cleaver had fallen from a flat of the building onto the pavement earlier, PSP officers immediately conducted their investigation procedures at the site, including on-site evidence collection.

A separate PSP statement on Wednesday night noted that "after days of investigation, PSP officers successfully identified the residential flat involved in the incident and intercepted the local man in his forties suspected of throwing the cleaver out of his flat's window at about 1 p.m. on December 23 due to emotional problems".

The Public Security Police reminded the public that throwing objects from a height may cause serious injuries to other people and the consequences are unimaginable, and the perpetrators shall bear the corresponding criminal liabilities, stating that: "Members of the public are advised not to take the law into their own hands". ■

Internal investigation involving IAM on subpar street nameplates completed

Yuki Lei

Regarding the revelation that hundreds of low quality Portuguese-style blue- and- white porcelain street nameplates were discovered a few months ago, with contractors suspected of fraud in the production process, the Office of the Secretary for Administration and Justice announced on Thursday its internal investigation into the Municipal Affairs Bureau (IAM), pointing out that the incident had caused a negative social impact and recommending that the chief executive should make adjustments to the bureau's leadership.

In early September this year, it was revealed that a number of Macau's street nameplates, which should have shown underglaze colours on ceramic tiles in line with the bureau's official craftsmanship requirements, were affixed with stickers, with large areas yellowing and peeling off, arousing heated discussions and criticisms from the community. The bureau subsequently issued a statement noting that it had reported the case to the Judiciary Police (PJ) after discovering that a number of local street nameplates had been produced in a manner grossly inconsistent with the underglaze-coloured tiles required for use in the project and suspected the contractor of being involved in fraud. On September 17, the Judiciary Police announced the arrest of two project managers of the street nameplates contractors suspected of cheating the government out of 1.1 million patacas with 362 subpar street nameplates.

Following the completion of the police's arrest of the relevant personnel involved in the incident and their transfer to the judicial authorities, Secretary for Administration and Justice André



This file photo taken in July this year shows the outgoing Identification Services Bureau (DSI) Director Chao Wai Ieng, who will be succeeding José Tavares as chairman of the Municipal Affairs Bureau's administration committee on Wednesday. — Photo: Yuki Lei

Cheong Weng Chon authorised the launching of an internal investigation into the bureau for its "negligence and mismanagement in the incident" and announced in a statement on Thursday the results of the investigation.

According to the statement, as early as June this year, IAM staff discovered during their inspections that certain street nameplates were plastic sheets with street names printed on the ceramic tiles, but they did not notify their superiors at the time and take effective follow-up actions. It was not until early September that the bureau realised the seriousness of the problem and decided to take remedial measures by reporting the case to the police and replacing the subpar street nameplates.

The statement pointed out that the incident revealed the lack of system development and mismanagement within the bureau's works portfolio,

and that the relevant leaders and supervisors should be held responsible accordingly, with the need to discipline some of the IAM supervisory staff as "some of these staff members may have committed disciplinary offences and will be subject to further investigation under the corresponding disciplinary procedures".

Chao Wai Ieng appointed IAM president after José Tavares steps down

Meanwhile, taking effect this Wednesday Chao Wai Ieng, the outgoing director of the Identification Services Bureau (DSI), will be succeeding José Tavares as chairman of the Municipal Affairs Bureau's administration committee, with a one-year appointment, according to an executive order signed by Chief Executive Sam Hou Fai and published in the Official Gazette (BO) later Thursday.

The executive order also noted that Mak Kim Meng, currently a member of the bureau's administration committee, will be promoted to the committee's vice-chairman, also effective on Wednesday for a period of one year.

Tavares, who has served as the IAM president since 2016, told the local media on Saturday after his last plenary meeting at the IAM headquarters that he had expressed in June and July this year to Secretary for Administration and Justice André Cheong Weng Chon that he would like to retire at the end of this year, and the secretary subsequently agreed to it. He thanked "his colleagues, supervisors, friends, the various sectors of the community and residents for their help and support during his 40 years of being a public servant". ■

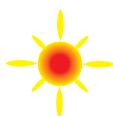
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Macau Weather

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MAINLY FINE.
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NORTHEASTERLY WINDS.
RELATIVE HUMIDITY WILL
RANGE BETWEEN 40% AND 80%.



13°C~21°C

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State councillor addresses conference on women's development, in Macau

Tony Wong

State Councillor Shen Yiqin, who also chairs the All-China Women's Federation (ACWF), visited Macau yesterday where she addressed the opening ceremony of a one-day conference on promoting women's development in the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macau Greater Bay Area (GBA), according to a statement by the Macau Government Information Bureau (GCS).

In addition to Shen, Chief Executive Sam Hou Fai also delivered a speech during yesterday's opening ceremony, which was held at Macau Tower.

Shen is one of the three state councillors of the State Council, which is headed by Premier Li Qiang.

The GCS statement noted that the conference was held in Macau for the first time, it was held in Zhuhai last year.

In her speech, according to the statement, Shen pointed out that President Xi Jinping has noted that women are important drivers of human civilisation and social progress, achieving extraordinary accomplishments in various fields. For many years, Shen said, women and women's organisations in the GBA have kept Xi's instructions in mind, engaging in practical exchanges across



State Councillor Shen Yiqin, who also chairs the All-China Women's Federation (ACWF), delivers a speech during yesterday's opening ceremony of a one-day conference on promoting women's development in GBA, at Macau Tower. - Photo: GCS

various spheres to build a bridge of cooperation and mutual benefit and making significant contributions to the nation's development strategies.

Before yesterday's conference in Macau, Shen noted that since the All-China Women's Federation launched the conference in 2020, it had been held

three times – in Guangzhou, Shenzhen and Zhuhai.

Shen raised three points for promoting women's development in the GBA.

Firstly, Shen said, guided by Xi's important remarks on the implementation of the "One Country, Two Systems" principle, the role of women in the GBA should be better leveraged with the aim of promoting the continued implementation of the principle.

Secondly, Shen said, guided by Xi's important remarks on the GBA development, the professionalism and charm of women in the GBA should be better showcased with the aim of creating a better home.

Thirdly, Shen said, guided by Xi's important remarks on women's personal development, women's well-being in the GBA should be further improved.

In his speech, Sam pledged that his government will extensively listen to the opinions of women, continue ensuring the protection of women's rights, support the development of women's associations, and stimulate the potential for women's personal development.

Meanwhile, after the conference's opening ceremony, Sam had a meeting with Shen at Government Headquarters in Nam Van. ■

Wong's chief-of-cabinet passes away in traffic accident

Staff Reporter

The office of Secretary for Security Wong Sio Chak confirmed in a statement on Tuesday last week that his chief-of-cabinet Cheong Ioc Ieng passed away the previous night after a traffic accident earlier that day.

According to the statement, Wong and all the staff of his office expressed extreme sorrow for losing a good colleague with a very excellent performance.

All entities under Wong's portfolio also expressed their deep sadness at Cheong's passing away.

According to local media reports, Cheong was the victim of a car accident on Monday last week, which occurred on Avenida de Venceslau de Morais. She was the driver of the car.

Announcements by the Fire Services Bureau (CB) identified the driver as a 57-year-old local woman.

On Monday afternoon last week, the car rammed into the back of a public bus which was slowing down to give way to pedestrians.

The crash resulted in the engine catching fire. A passer-by rescued the driver from the car, after which firefighters and paramedics rushed to the scene where they were unable to detect her heartbeat, and she was not breathing.

The firefighters extinguished the blaze shortly after arriving at the scene.

She was rushed to the public Conde de São Januário Hospital Centre where she died that night after emergency treatment to save her life had failed, according to announcements by the Public Security Police (PSP). ■

'Macau City Walk. City story' showcases city's culture, transformation

Rui Pastorin

A number of works created by artist Zha Rui are currently on display at the Rui Cunha Foundation (FRC) for the "Macau City Walk. City Story – Zha Rui Art Exhibition", which is on until Saturday.

Featuring local landmarks, scenes and staples, those visiting the exhibition will find digitally created works and oils, among others, that are related to Macau's culture, heritage and the city's transformation over the past decade. The way the works are presented include those on canvas and the cultural and creative products on display.

Zha, according to a curator's statement displayed at the gallery, has been living in Macau for a decade. In this exhibition, she reflects on her initial impressions of Macau's rich cultural aspects, reinterpreting the city's

"unique charm, vividly portraying its vibrant living cultures and architectural landscapes".

Its theme, meanwhile, is "Dimensional Reconstruction", showing Zha's "profound reflections on the reshaping of space and culture", with all the works exploring the values of art and incorporating culture with personal artistic expression.

Moreover, the statement said that the artist aims to showcase Macau beyond just being a tourist attraction, but is also a place of "cultural richness".

The exhibition is organised by the foundation in conjunction with the Macau Youth Art Association and the Macau Artist Society. One can view the works from today through Friday from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. and on Saturday from 3 p.m. to 7 p.m. Admission is free.



Photos: Rui Pastorin



UTM students work on projects with restaurant group, cultural association

Rui Pastorin

Undergraduate students of the Macao University of Tourism's (UTM) Culinary Arts Management degree programme and Marketing and Brand Management degree programme worked on industrial projects last semester, earning praise from the local restaurant group and cultural association that they supported, according to a recent UTM statement.

The projects were guided by UTM Prof. Fernando Lourenço. The statement noted that the Culinary Arts Management students supported Portuguese Restaurants & Retail Concepts (PRRC), which operates ALBERGUE 1601 Restaurant, Three Sardines Restaurant, Pastéis de Chaves, Loja Portuguesa and Amor.

Over a three-month period, the students went on restaurant tours, evaluated the offerings as customers, and proposed recommendations to the general manager, as well as researched the São Lázaro district where PRRC has a "significant

presence", using the data to create a tourism map and route that "showcases the district's cultural attractions and distinctive local businesses"

PRRC General Manager Ricardo Balocas was quoted by the statement as saying that the students "have developed a practical and innovative map that significantly supports our business and marketing efforts, exemplifying how academic projects can align with industry needs."

Meanwhile, the Marketing and Brand Management students supported the "Red Boat 1866" event, which showcases Macau's heritage and was held in conjunction with the Macau Wu Jun Fu Yueju Opera Role Association, with students excelling in areas like market research, digital marketing and event execution, the statement said.

Association President Lei Kin Hou said that the students' ability to apply theoretical knowledge in a practical environment contributed to the project's success and significant advancements in cultural tourism. ■



This undated handout photo provided by the Macao University of Tourism (UTM) shows students standing outside the ALBERGUE 1601 Restaurant operated by Portuguese Restaurants & Retail Concepts (PRRC) in the São Lázaro district.

Academic report on evolution of urban patterns released

Yuki Lei

The Macao Cultural Heritage Reinventing Studies Association released yesterday its academic research report on "The Evolution of Urban Patterns and the Study of Urban Planning Systems", and Matias Lao Hon Pong, vice president of the association, urged the government to improve the laws and regulations on the direction of urban design and the supporting facilities.

"At present, while the urban planning mainly focuses on the functions and capacity of buildings, the direction of urban design is often overlooked," Lao made the remarks when speaking to the media on the sidelines of yesterday's press conference at M Dimensions on Rua dos Artilheiros (炮兵街). He was quick to add that the draft plans, indeed, contain some urban design guidelines, "these guidelines are rather fragmented", and that he hoped that the government would introduce laws and regulations or complementary measures in the direction of urban design in the future, so as to let the public know the pattern of future development.

Based on three case studies, namely the plan for stricter construction height limits on plots around Guia Hill; the relocation of the old tree in Cheok Ka Village (卓家村); and the flood prevention scheme in Coloane, the research report puts forward ideas and suggestions on the current planning structure for future planning.

The Macau Urban Master Plan (2020-2040)



Macao Cultural Heritage Reinventing Studies Association Vice President Matias Lao Hon Pong talks to reporters on the sidelines of yesterday's press conference about its academic research report on "The Evolution of Urban Patterns and the Study of Urban Planning Systems", at M Dimensions on Rua dos Artilheiros. - Photo: Yuki Lei

came into effect in February 2022, on which Lao raised concerns about the problem of land under the "yarn paper lease" – an unofficial, unregistered and unrecognised land contract – in some districts, such as Coloane and Pátio do Espinho, which would be subject to more restrictions. He suggested that consideration could be given to providing a certain degree of flexibility to land under yarn paper leases when the law is amended in the future, so as to facilitate suitable development and enable the users to improve their living environment. ■

Academic Year 2025/2026 Central Registration for Children Entering Kindergarten for the First Time



Aims

Optimise schools' enrolment mechanism; simplify the steps for parents to enrol their children in kindergarten for the first time; enable parents to confirm the preferred schools as early as possible.

Targets

Macao residents aged 3 by 31 December 2025, and will enrol in infant education in Macao for the first time.

Timeline (Year 2025)

| | |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Admission information | Starting from 1 January onwards, parents can consult the enrolment information on the DSEDJ website or school website. |
| Central Registration | Parents register through "Macao One Account"/ on the DSEDJ website / at the DSEDJ counters Between 6 and 16 January |
| Schools announce the interview date and time | Between 19 and 21 February |
| School admission interviews | Between 1 and 25 March |
| Schools release the admission list and parents confirm online which school to enrol their children in | Release the admission list on the DSEDJ website and at schools 7 April Parents can check the admission list and confirm one school to enrol their child in through "Macao One Account"/ on the DSEDJ website Between 7 and 9 April |
| Schools announce the students admitted from the waiting list | From 10 April onwards |
| Parents go to school to process enrolment/ school transfer procedures | From 11 April onwards (According to the period informed by schools) Students on the admission list must process enrolment on or before 14 April |
| Enrolment at other schools | If a child has not yet been admitted to any school by 15 April, or parents want to enrol their child in another school, parents can visit the DSEDJ website to check the status of K1 places available at different schools, and go to the schools that still accept enrolment for enquiries and registration. |

Gentle Reminder:

- To enrol in schools in Macao, non-Macao residents must possess a stay permit or residence permit for over 90 days issued by the competent entity of the Macao SAR. Parents must process the registration at any of the DSEDJ counters.
- Schools set no limit to the number of registrants and interviews. There is also no priority for early registration in the Central Registration system. Therefore, there is no need to be hurry to process registration.
- Macao residents can apply for "school for children of Macao residents" in Hengqin through Central Registration; it is not counted as the registration limit of 6 schools.
- At the time of interview, parents should show the screenshot of "Interview QR Code" on their phone to the school staff. The QR Code can be reused.
- Parents only need to bring the screenshot of the child's "First-time Enrolment QR Code" to the school to process enrolment or school transfer procedure according to the requirement of the school.
- The DSEDJ will provide "Service of consultation and arrangement of school places" to parents who are in need.

For enquiries
8397 2309

For details, please browse
DSEDJ website:

www.dsedj.gov.mo



DSEDJ app



DSEDJ account on Wechat
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Nearly 800 fencers compete in Sands' Asian Youth Elite Fencing League

Rui Pastorin

The inaugural Sands China Ltd. Asian Youth Elite Fencing League 2024 Macau kicked off on Saturday, with nearly 800 fencers aged 6 to 14 competing throughout the event, which runs through today, at The Venetian Macao's Cotai Expo.

The event, organised by the integrated resort operator in conjunction with Hong Kong-based Asia Sports Development Co. Ltd., sees young fencers from places such as the mainland, Hong Kong, Macau, Taiwan, Thailand, Singapore and the US competing across different age groups, according to a Saturday statement by Sands China.

The statement noted that the fencing pistes (playing areas) are standard FIE (International Fencing Federation) adult competition pistes featuring FIE referees, while video assistant referee (VAR) technology is used during elimination rounds. Aside from competitions, activities like sessions by experts and skilled fencers were also held.

Sands China Ltd. Executive Vice President of Operations Sean McCreery was quoted by the statement as saying: "Aligned with the Macau SAR Government's vision of creating a 'City of Sports,' we aim to provide an



This photo taken after Saturday's opening ceremony shows rising stars in the foil category Lung Cheuk Ying (right) from Hong Kong and Macau's Ku Hio Lam engaging in an exhibition match in The Venetian Macao's Cotai Arena.

international platform for young fencers to showcase their talent and energy, thus promoting the sport of fencing in Macau and beyond in Asia. This event also highlights the distinctive allure of Macau's fusion of 'tourism + sports.'"

Asian Youth Elite Fencing League Chairman Antonio Lam Hin Chung was quoted as saying: "We are very honoured to hold such a grand fencing event in Macau, and we hope to assist promising fencers in reaching new heights".

Moreover, the statement noted that Macao Fencing General

Association President Chan U Chun said that he hoped that the competition will be a catalyst to enhance the local government's focus on fencing, while Fencing Association of Hong Kong, China President Aaron Ng Hoi Shan noted that the event presents a unique opportunity for exchange.

The statement added that the organisers hope to develop the event into an Asian youth fencing league, aiming to promote the development of youth sports in the Greater Bay Area (GBA) while preserving the sport's heritage. ■

5 locals lured into 'job offer' scam abroad

Ginnie Liang

Five local people have been lured to Southeast Asian countries and Taiwan since September under the guise of high-paying job offers, only to find themselves embroiled in fraudulent activities, a Judiciary Police (PJ) spokesperson said in a press conference on Friday.

According to the spokesperson, the victims are three men and two women, including a 16-year-old male student. Four of them became tools for scam operations and were arrested by local police in the respective country, while a 38-year-old woman recognised the scam in time and managed to escape after being tricked into going to Cambodia.

The spokesperson said that criminal groups typically recruit job seekers through two main methods: one approach involves posting enticing job advertisements on social media, promising high salaries along with meals, accommodation, and airfares covered, while the other method involves directly targeting individuals who express interest in

participating in fraudulent activities abroad, also offering to pay for their flights and accommodation.

Once these individuals arrive at their destinations, they are coerced into surrendering their mobile phones and passports, the spokesperson said, adding that the groups then provide them with new phones to cut off communication and prevent them from reporting the situation to others.

Upon their arrival, the victims would be forced to engage in various types of scams, including money transportation and acting as customer service representatives for telecommunications fraud, the spokesperson said, adding that they are often threatened with imprisonment if they refuse to comply.

The spokesperson said that PJ officers are urging residents to look for jobs in legal employment agencies and to avoid giving personal information to strangers, and refuse to assist in receiving and transporting unidentified money, and do not trust the network or strangers' recruitment messages. ■



This graphic provided by the Judiciary Police (PJ) in a press conference on Friday explains the fraudster's modus operandi.

Nearly 70 pct of local workers' salaries remain unchanged this year: Survey

Ginnie Liang

A recent survey conducted by the Macau Federation of Trade Unions (FAOM – commonly known as Gung Luen in Cantonese) in collaboration with Macau Economic Association found that nearly 70 percent of respondents have not seen any changes to their salaries throughout 2024, FAOM announced in a press conference on Friday.

The survey, which ran from January to December and collected a total of 2,051 valid questionnaires, also revealed that about 10 percent of respondents reported a decrease in income.

The overall job satisfaction rating averaged 6.19, indicating a slight easing of concerns compared to the previous year, though over 52 percent of respondents still expressed worries about their current work environment, according to the findings.

Findings showed that while 70 percent of respondents reported no change in salary, 20 percent noted an increase, and nearly 10 percent experienced a reduction in income due to pay cuts. Additionally, 36 percent of respondents acknowledged that the issue of illegal non-resident workers (NRWs) remains serious.



This screenshot captured yesterday from the livestream video uploaded by the Macau Federation of Trade Unions (FAOM) on Friday shows trade unionist Lam Lon Wai addressing media about FAOM's recent survey results on local workers' current salary status.

Despite a slight decrease in overall job-related anxiety – down four percentage points from 2023 – about 52 percent of the respondents still expressed concerns about their work environment. Among them, 11 percent reported feeling very anxious, attributing their worries to intense competition, poor industry prospects, and age-related concerns, the findings show, while the willingness to change jobs has decreased, with only 11 percent of

respondents considering a career switch, a three percentage point decline from the last survey.

The average working hours reported by participants were 8.37 hours per day, according to the findings. Trade unionist Lam Lon Wai suggested addressing the issue of excessive "invisible" working hours by granting employees the "right to disconnect from the internet", encouraging companies to respect employees' personal time and prevent after-hours communications.

Lam also called for a comprehensive review and optimisation of the Labour Relations Law to strengthen employee rights, including regulations on overtime pay, unpaid wages, holiday systems, minimum wage, severance pay, and maternity leave.

Over 40 percent of respondents expressed a desire for more on-the-job training, with a particular demand from the 26 to 45 age group. Lam recommended providing market-orientated vocational skills training and establishing scholarships for middle-aged employees, incorporating certifications into promotion and salary considerations to encourage continuous learning. ■

Over 48 pct of residents dispose of clothing by giving or throwing it away

Ginnie Liang

The General Union of Neighbourhood Associations of Macau (commonly known as Kai Fong in Cantonese) released a survey on Friday, in which findings show that over 48 percent of respondents choose to dispose of clothing, leather goods, and shoes by either giving them away or throwing them out with the rubbish.

The survey, conducted between August and September, collected 612 valid responses through both online and offline methods, aiming to assess current environmental behaviours and the public's recognition of environmental policies.

The results show that more than 56 percent of respondents rarely or never participate in activities organised by the Environmental Protection Bureau (DSPB), indicating a need for greater public engagement and support for eco-friendly initiatives.

To address these concerns, the survey team recommended increasing the number and

accessibility of recycling points, particularly in high-traffic residential and commercial areas, to facilitate easier waste disposal for residents.

Additionally, the report suggested optimising waste sorting labels to make them more intuitive, considering the introduction of smart recycling machines, and expanding the types of materials that can be recycled, such as televisions, refrigerators and washing machines, so as to reduce the unnecessary waste of resources, increase the rational use of resources, and further increase the amount of resource waste recycled as well as the effectiveness of recycling.

However, on the issue of whether a domestic waste charging system should be implemented in order to reduce the source of waste, it was found in this survey that 37 percent of the respondents opposed the government's introduction of a weight-based waste charging system on a trial basis, while nearly 48 percent of respondents indicated that they had no comment. ■