



Sam vows to enhance young locals' career development prospects



Macau Federation of Trade Unions President Jimmy Lee Chong Cheng (left) and Vice President Ella Lei Cheng I speak to the media outside Government Headquarters after yesterday's closed-door meeting with Chief Executive Sam Hou Fai. – Photo combo: Yuki Lei



Alliance for Common People Building Up Macau President Nick Lei Leong Wong (left) and Macau Fukien Natives General Association Executive Chairperson Becky Song Pek Kei pose before speaking to the media outside Government Headquarters about their closed-door meeting with Chief Executive Sam Hou Fai yesterday morning. – Photo: Yuki Lei

Yuki Lei

More local social organisations met with Chief Executive Sam Hou Fai yesterday about his upcoming 2025 Policy Address and among them, Alliance for Common People Building Up Macau President Nick Lei Leong Wong and Macau Federation of Trade Unions Vice President Ella Lei Cheng I told the media after their separate closed-door meetings that Sam expressed concern about local youth employment by saying that the government

will review the clerical positions in large-scale enterprises to ensure that local youth have opportunities for their career development prospects, while also committing to protect employees' rights and interests.

The Alliance for Common People Building Up Macau, together with the Macau Fukien* Natives General Association, as well as the Macau Federation of Trade Unions (commonly known as Gung Luen in Cantonese), paid separate visits to Sam yesterday morning,

during which the groups voiced their views and expectations regarding the government's administration, as well as put forward their proposals for his Policy Address, slated, according to Nick Lei, to be delivered in April.

Speaking to reporters after their respective meetings, all the group representatives noted that during the meetings Sam expressed a "positive" attitude toward the general public's views conveyed by them, demonstrating the government's attentiveness and openness.

Nick Lei quoted Sam as underlining the necessity for the government to conduct in-depth studies on certain policies to ensure they align with the city's community development and the affordability of the government's financial resources. The meetings were also attended by Secretary for Security Wong Sio Chak, Secretary for Transport and Public Works Raymond Tam Vai Man, and Secretary for Social Affairs and Culture Wallis O Lam, respectively.

Continued on p.3

Mexican president expects 'good' deal with Trump to avoid tariffs

MEXICO CITY – Mexican President Claudia Sheinbaum said yesterday that she expected to reach a "good agreement" with her US counterpart Donald Trump this week to avoid being hit with tariffs.

Her remarks came a day after Trump said that his planned levies on imports from Mexico and Canada were moving forward as planned.

"We hope to be able to reach an agreement before the end of the week, at the latest on Monday," Sheinbaum said at her morning news conference.

"I think that there will be a good agreement because until now there has not been a single issue where there is conflict, a problem that cannot be solved," she added.

Mexican officials are in Washington for talks this week and Sheinbaum said she would speak with Trump again by phone if needed.

Shortly after taking office, Trump announced duties of up to 25 percent on Mexican imports, citing illegal immigration and the flow of deadly fentanyl.

He issued a last-minute halt to the levies for a month, until next Tuesday, after Sheinbaum agreed to deploy 10,000 more troops to the Mexican-US border.

"The tariffs are going forward on time, on schedule," Trump told a news conference on Monday. – AFP

Trump's list of 'foreign adversaries' on investment front targets 6 countries, incl PRC with its 2 SARs

Staff Reporter

US President Donald Trump's "America First Investment Policy" directive, addressed to 15 of his top officials, including the Secretary of State and US State Representative, which was released by the White House on Friday, targets "certain foreign adversaries" on the investment front, such as the People's Republic of China (PRC) including its two special administrative regions – Hong Kong and Macau.

The directive states that "for the purposes of this memorandum, the term 'foreign adversaries' includes the PRC, including the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region and the Macau Special Administrative Region; the Republic of Cuba; the Islamic Republic of Iran; the Democratic People's Republic of Korea; the Russian Federation; and the regime of Venezuelan politician Nicolás Maduro". ■

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Shenzhou-19 crew successfully tests pipeline inspection robot on space station

China's Shenzhou-19 crew aboard the orbiting Tiangong space station recently completed the in-orbit test of a pipeline inspection robot, laying a solid technical foundation for future pipeline inspections on the space station. – Story on p. 7

'Matter of survival': Nations spar over nature funding at UN talks

Global talks to protect nature restarted yesterday with a call for humanity to come together to "sustain life on the planet" and overcome a fight over funding that caused a previous meeting last year to end in disarray. – Story on p. 11

Europe 'backsliding' on child health: WHO

Complications linked to births and infections kill nearly 76,000 children under the age of five every year in Europe and is "backsliding" on some health indicators, the World Health Organisation (WHO) said yesterday. – Story on p. 12

Pedestrians reveal how they deal with stress

Vox pop by Kristina Vallesteros, Rui Pastorin

Macau is a city that – virtually – doesn't sleep, a place that has people across various ages constantly moving and working at different times of the day. This can undoubtedly lead to stressful moments for some, while others may find other factors that cause anxieties in their lives. How do people manage their stress? The *Post* wanted to find out, with street interviews held around the city centre yesterday.

One task at a time

"Stress can make you pessimistic about life," said Elnora, a Philippine missionary currently studying in Macau. For her, stress often arises from homework and societal standards. She approaches stress by tackling tasks one at a time and prioritising effectively.

To combat the negativity that comes with stress, Elnora now focuses on rest, healthy eating, taking walks, and engaging in prayer—be it through silent reflection or walking meditation. She also values social interactions and learning new skills as effective ways to alleviate stress.

Talking about it

Yip, a local high school student, shared how school is a significant source of stress for her. To relieve stress, the 17-year-old finds joy in listening to music and playing video games. She also mentioned how school guidance counsellors regularly check in on students, giving students a safe space to talk about their problems.

Meanwhile, Santos, a 19-year-old local university student, highlighted several other factors that are causing him stress: financial pressures, conflicts with classmates and colleagues, and poor time management. "I sometimes schedule part-time work on days when my schedule is already busy enough, which in turn causes me more stress," he explained.

During these times, Santos finds solace in talking to someone about his problems, or else he'd "keep stressing alone until the situation has passed".

'It's my goal'

Xenia, a 32-year-old local staff member of a jewellery shop, said that her work-related stress was manageable, joking that her stress comes from being a parent. After stressful situations arise, Xenia said that she chooses to take part in hobbies that make her happy, such as watching movies or by creating art through drawing or painting. She also takes a goal-oriented approach, looking at places that she hopes to visit someday to keep her going. "It's my goal".

'Just pray and enjoy life'

Work-related pressures are also not so high for 44-year-old Alejandro, he told the *Post*, but did note that there are other aspects of his life, such as family-related matters, that give him worries. To ease troubles whenever they come, Alejandro, who has worked in Macau for 13 years, likes to be outside and find quiet moments to pass the time.

"When you're at home, you're alone. You don't really have anyone to talk to and maybe you'll just watch TV. There will be moments when you just think about your problems and feel unhappy. So, I choose to go out, hang around outside. Maybe take a walk or jog", Alejandro said. The Filipino security guard also emphasised prayer and being with people to get through hard times. "Just pray and enjoy life, it doesn't need to be so stressful. Go out and find your friends. Be with them".

Don't think so much about the little things

Meanwhile, a local senior surnamed Tam said that she has been able to generally live a comfortable and mostly happy life without too much stress. She is now in her sixties and has recently retired from work.

On living a happy life, Tam offered advice, one of which was not to think and worry so much about the little things. She added that one should take life easy and not give oneself too much stress, while noting that although good times will pass, the bad ones will too. ■

Police say opposed car drifting shoot injuring 12

William Chan

Public Security Police (PSP) spokesman Wong Wai Chon said yesterday during a regular police press conference that regarding Monday's film shoot accident, in which a driver lost control while drifting, injuring 12 extras, prior to the incident the police had opposed the shooting method used by the crew.

Wong noted that all the extras injured in the accident have meanwhile been discharged from the hospital.

The accident occurred on a closed section of road when the vehicle, a Volkswagen Golf model, intending to turn from Rua do Seminário (三巴仔橫街) into Largo do Aquino (亞堅奴前地), crashed into a roadside metal barrier and subsequently veered into Calçada de Francisco António (三層樓斜巷).

Wong emphasised that a cross-departmental meeting was held in advance to coordinate the filming arrangements, during which the police explicitly opposed the crew's proposed filming method due to the area's narrow roads, which were deemed unsuitable for high-speed driving.

According to Wong, the police demanded that the crew conduct the filming in a safe manner, especially by avoiding any dangerous driving. He noted that the crew, however, had not complied with the police forces' requirements articulated during the coordination meeting.

Wong also pointed out that the police had informed the Cultural Affairs Bureau (IC) about their stance on the matter before the shooting. Since the crew obtained

filming permission from the bureau, there were currently no grounds for laying charges, Wong said.

Meanwhile, IC President Leong Wai Man spoke to reporters during an event hosted by the Macau Women's General Association (commonly known as Fu Luen in Cantonese) yesterday, saying that the accident was still under investigation at the time of the press briefing.

Leong added that customarily the bureau provides a one-stop service platform for filming permit applications, with the bureau acting as the lead entity, forwarding relevant plans to other entities involved with the proposed shooting venue for their input. She noted that for certain technically demanding filming projects, a panel meeting may be convened for further approval, while meetings may not be necessary under normal circumstances.

Film shooting permission suspended

Meanwhile, the Cultural Affairs Bureau announced in a statement late last night that it has decided to suspend the crew's filming permission because of which film shooting for its ill-fated project has been officially suspended with immediate effect.

The statement said that the bureau has ordered the crew to submit a report about the accident, adding that the bureau does not rule out the possibility of even revoking the crew's filming permission for the whole project.

Last night's statement noted that as the filming project was deemed to be technically demanding, the



Public Security Police (PSP) Wong Wai Chon looks on during yesterday's regular press conference.

— Photo: William Chan

bureau convened a meeting attended by representatives of other relevant public entities and those from the crew before the commencement of the shooting, where officials explicitly said that the location concerned was unsuitable for car drifting so that the crew's representatives were aware of the local authorities' requirements.

In the wake of the accident, the statement said, the Cultural Affairs Bureau held a meeting yesterday with relevant public entities including the police. Based on the opinions raised by other public entities during the meeting, the statement said, IC officials have decided to suspend the crew's filming permission for the time being, after concluding that the filming project has "obviously" disturbed public order, safety and tranquility. ■

Local & mainlander nabbed for theft-by-finding, HK man nabbed for theft

William Chan

A man and a woman have separately been arrested for theft-by-finding, and a Hong Kong man for theft, Public Security Police (PSP) spokesman Wong Wai Chon said at a press conference yesterday.

In the first case, a mainland woman reported to the police in November that she had left her smartphone worth 11,000 patacas in a taxi. With the help of CCTV footage, the police identified a woman surnamed Zhang, in her thirties, as the individual who had picked up the victim's phone.

Zhang was arrested when she reentered Macau through the Barrier Gate checkpoint on Saturday. She admitted to stealing the phone out of greed, and putting it in her flat in the mainland.

In the second case, a mainland man reported to the police in December that he had left his smartphone worth 6,900 patacas on a couch at a Cotai casino, which had disappeared when he attempted to pick it up.

The police identified a local man surnamed Cheong, in his sixties and

retired, as the individual who had stolen the victim's phone. Cheong was arrested when he reentered Macau through the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macau Bridge checkpoint.

He admitted to stealing the



This undated photo provided by the police yesterday shows the Hong Kong theft suspect being escorted to a police station in the northern district.

phone for personal use and returned the phone during questioning.

In the third case, a mainland non-resident worker (NRW) was pushing a trolley with her backpack inside near the Barrier Gate checkpoint earlier this month. Her backpack fell on the ground without her noticing, but half an hour later she found it there, but her belongings, containing a phone worth 5,900 patacas and 1,100 patacas in cash, were missing. The police identified a Hong Kong man surnamed Chu as the individual who had picked up the backpack and stolen the cash and phone. Chu was arrested when he reentered Macau through the Taipa Ferry Terminal checkpoint on Saturday.

Under questioning, he admitted to the crime and claimed that he had thrown away the phone as he could not unlock it.

The three suspects have been transferred to the Public Prosecutions Office (MP). Zhang and Cheong face theft-by-finding charges, while Chu faces a theft charge. ■

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**MAINLY CLOUDY.
A FEW RAIN PATCHES.
FORCE 2 TO 4 EAST TO
NORTHEASTERLY WINDS.
RELATIVE HUMIDITY WILL
RANGE BETWEEN 65% AND 98%.**



14°C~20°C

Source: SMG

Community revitalisation helps stimulate cultural & tourism economy: Sam



These two handout photos provided by the Government Information Bureau (GCS) on Monday night show representatives of the Macao SME Association (left) and local National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC) members addressing separate meetings with Chief Executive Sam Hou Fai meeting.

Yuki Lei

Chief Executive Sam Hou Fai has pledged that the government will leverage its community revitalisation efforts to stimulate the local cultural and tourism economy, with a view to further supporting the city's small- and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and safeguarding local residents' employment.

"Many neighbourhoods and streets in Macau are rich in historical and cultural heritage," said Sam, who made the remarks during a meeting with the Macao SME Association on Monday.

According to a statement by the Government Information Bureau (GCS) on Monday night, Sam emphasised the significance of SMEs in the development of the local economy: "SMEs are a vital force in Macau's economic and social development, contributing significantly to sustainable growth and a healthy job market".

According to the statement, Sam acknowledged the local government's commitment to revitalising the community economy and promoting the quality development of SMEs.

Sam told members of the

association during the meeting, the statement noted, that he would forward their proposals to various functional entities for further study and as a reference for his upcoming 2025 Policy Address.

The statement pointed out that the association's chairman, banker Stanley Au Chong Kit, raised a raft of issues, such as raising the standard of technological and vocational education in local tertiary institutions, encouraging the trade to effectively utilise information technology (IT) and artificial intelligence (AI), enabling SME operators to

enhance productivity and optimise their resources, and establishing a fair, reasonable, and incentivising investment environment.

Meanwhile, in a separate meeting with local National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC) members on Monday, Sam, according to a separate GCS statement, listened to their views and suggestions on the formulation of his upcoming 2025 Policy Address, while also exchanging views on issues such as the ageing population, youth education,

redevelopment of old quarters, and promoting appropriate economic diversification in Macau.

Sam was quoted as saying that he expected the redevelopment of the city's old quarters to enhance residents' quality of life while simultaneously revitalising the community and improving its environment. He also pointed out that adding new projects featuring leisure, cultural and tourism experiences to the old quarters would be conducive to diverting visitor flows and continuously enhancing the attractiveness of Macau as a tourist destination. ■

Sam vows to enhance young locals' career development prospects

Continued from p.1

Govt to review large-scale enterprises' posts to ensure local employment: Nick Lei

According to Nick Lei, the policy proposals put forward by his group, in conjunction with the Macau Fukien Natives General Association, cover 13 areas of social issues, including the city's economy, housing, healthcare, community economy, the situation of the elderly, the middle-income class, and youth employment.

On youth employment, Nick Lei pointed out Sam's concern that the current unemployment rate of young locals aged between 16 and 44 exceeds two-thirds of the overall rate, quoting him as saying that the government plans to review clerical positions at major enterprises, including the city's six integrated resort operators and financial institutions, which "young local people are willing and able to fill".

Lei did not elaborate on the jobless rate mentioned during their meeting.

The government's home-ownership scheme (HOS) has recently garnered significant attention, Nick Lei said, quoting Sam and Tam as saying that progress of the ongoing study on the HOS swap system has been "relatively smooth", with expectations for an announcement soon. He added: "Currently, a one-person household can only apply

for T1, which is a one-room flat. This may be impacted if the family structure changes in the future."

Nick Lei also said that some fellow members at the meeting made suggestions on the city's community economy, hoping that the government could reference successful models from other regions and leverage Macau's unique advantages, such as the convergence of Chinese and Western cultures and its hardware infrastructure, to revitalise the development of the city's night-time economy.

Govt 'attaches great importance to youth employment': Ella Lei

Meanwhile, according to Ella Lei, Gung Luen has summarised 18 viewpoints covering a wide range of areas, including measures to benefit the public such as employment, education and medical care, with special emphasis on national security as well as the physical and mental health of employees and the management of work pressure.

Among them, on the challenges faced by young locals and middle-aged individuals in finding employment, Ella Lei quoted Sam as saying that the government "attaches great importance to youth employment", including the need to improve the employment environment. She highlighted his commitment that in order to move forward, the portfolios of the secretary for social affairs and culture and the secretary for economy and finance would focus more on the

relevant aspects, while enhancing the opportunities for young locals to gain access to training and vocational development.

In an effort to improve vocational training, employee development and employees' incomes, according to Ella Lei, her group urged the government at the meeting to set up standards, such as setting local employees' ratios for supervisory positions, with the aim of better promoting the development of enterprises and industries by prioritising promotion opportunities of locals, who would be able to enhance their own competitiveness through vocational training and provide the community with opportunities of advancement, ultimately leading the city to improve its development.

Concerning the upward adjustment of old-age pensions, education allowances, family carer allowances, as well as the granting of childcare allowances and the introduction of measures to encourage childbearing, both Leis said that Sam had given a "positive and transparent" response to such issues.

Gung Luen President Jimmy Lee Chong Cheng said Sam made it clear that the government would implement its policies, such as its "wealth-sharing" handout scheme, "fairly, justly and precisely" to ensure that they would benefit people's livelihoods. ■

* "Fukien" is the Cantonese romanisation of "Fujian" (福建), a province in southeastern mainland China near Taiwan region.

2025 Wynn Signature Chinese Wine Awards judging week kicks off on Friday

Rui Pastorin

The 2025 Wynn Signature Chinese Wine Awards' six-day judging week will kick off on Friday and run through Wednesday, being hosted at Wynn Macau on the peninsula and Wynn Palace in Cotai, integrated resort (IR) operator Wynn said in a statement on Monday.

The statement noted that the highly anticipated event follows up on last year's inaugural

awards, and is the largest gathering of its kind to evaluate Chinese wines based on international standards.

This year's competition has garnered nearly 200 of China's top wineries, receiving over 900 varieties of wine, while the judging panel comprises 27 leading authorities on wine, according to the statement. Moreover, there will be 38 awards to be presented, an increase from last year's 24 awards.

Among the awards to be presented are the "Wynn Signature Best Wine of China Trophy", along with two new award categories: "Wynn Sommelier's Choice", chosen by a team of sommeliers from the IR's six award-winning restaurants, and "Best Young Winemaker", which recognises new and young winemakers under 40, the statement said.

The statement added that among the highlights of this year's judging panel are returning panellists, revered wine educator and the mainland's first resident Master of Wine Fongyee Walker



This poster provided by Wynn on Monday promotes the upcoming "2025 Wynn Signature Chinese Wine Awards".

MW*, who is again this year's vice chair; first Chinese national Master of Wine Gus Zhu MW; and China's newest and youngest Master of Wine Xing Wei MW.

The winning wines are set to be unveiled during an award ceremony scheduled for April 11, the statement said.

The six-day event will also feature a highlight of activities throughout its run, including four seminars conducted by judges, three afternoon masterclass sessions, and wine dinners.

More details about the upcoming event can be found on: <https://www.wynnresortsmacau.com/en/wynn-palace/whats-on/wynn-signature-chinese-wine-awards> ■

*MW refers to "Master of Wine" and are recognised for their expertise in various aspects of wine, including production, tasting, and business. – Source: Poe



From engineer to entrepreneur: a local's journey in 'bing sutt' business

Interview by William Chan

In an exclusive interview last week with “bing sutt”* owner Chan Iat Seng at his café in the city centre, he told the *Post* about his passion for Japanese culture and the bakery scene. Chan, an engineer by profession and bakery owner by passion, said, “I’ve always been fascinated by Japanese culture and enjoyed the diverse bakery options in Japan. Their creative fusion pastries and the cultural appreciation for trying new delicacies were often lacking in Macau. This inspired me to create something similar here.”

After resigning from his engineering position, Chan attended bakery courses in Shanghai and opened his first bakery in Ilha Verde district in 2022, specialising in Japanese-style pastries.

However, the journey was not without challenges. As a first-time business owner, Chan discovered that running a bakery involved much more than just baking. He faced logistical hurdles and learned that customer perceptions of distance can be misleading. “Although Ilha Verde is close to many areas on the peninsula, people often view it as being far away because it’s a relatively new area. This made it difficult to attract both tourists and local customers.”

In light of these challenges, Chan contemplated closing his shop in 2024. Fortunately, he was approached by Sands China, which was launching a programme to revitalise Macau’s city centre, particularly Rua das Estalagens (草堆街). “A member of Sands’s marketing team visited my shop and enjoyed my pastries. They wanted to support me on a new project,” Chan explained. He diligently worked on the proposal, which ultimately gained their backing.

Sands provided Chan significant funds for the shop’s renovations and rent. “To be honest, their goal was to support our venture without the pressure of repayment,” Chan noted. “They wanted us to take the risk without the stress of a loan, acknowledging that even if we didn’t succeed, it wouldn’t cause us any burden.”

In his new endeavour, Chan transitioned from a bakery to a ‘bing sutt’ café, aptly named 翻撻冰室 Café Fantart (meaning “to start over” in Cantonese). “Bing sutt is the polar opposite of upscale bakeries, which are on the rise while ‘bing sutt’ options are dwindling. Initially, I aimed to attract tourists since this area is close to San Ma Lo [Avenida de Almeida Ribeiro]. However, I am pleasantly surprised by the local residents who also flock to my café, particularly elderly people living nearby.”

To distinguish his business from other “bing sutt” establishments and to maintain his affinity for Japanese baking, Chan retained Japanese baking techniques while incorporating traditional local items like egg tarts and toast. “I haven’t heavily promoted my unique approach yet, but I plan to leverage social media to reach a broader audience,” he said, also pointing out that in Macau very few restaurants bake their own pastries, Café Fantart being one of them.

Chan expressed gratitude to Sands for their ongoing support, underlining, “Their marketing team regularly visits to provide advice on strategies to enhance my business. They say they will also distribute coupons for my shop at upcoming Sands events, which is both helpful and generous. They’re not asking for anything in return; we don’t even have Sands promotions at our café, and very few customers know our background.”

Moreover, Chan acknowledged the government’s commitment to supporting small businesses. For him, improving infrastructure is crucial for creating a thriving environment for entrepreneurs. “The streets here are narrow, making it challenging for visitors. Japan has many well-designed visitor zones that foster a vibrant atmosphere, which is something Macau can learn from,” he said.

*The Cantonese term “冰室” can be transliterated into English as “bing sutt.”

“冰” (bing) means “ice.”

“室” (sutt) means “room” or “shop.”

So, “冰室” (“bing sutt”) traditionally refers to a type of old-style Hong Kong café that serves drinks, snacks, and light meals, often with a focus on cold beverages. – DeepSeek



Former Macau chief executive Ho Iat Seng (right) and Executive Vice Chairman of Sands China Ltd. Wilfred Wong Ying-wai (left) visit Chan Iat Seng’s (centre) “bing sutt” on Rua das Estalagens last December. – Photos provided by Chan

Govt grants 2nd round of subsidies for repairs of private historic buildings: IC

Ginnie Liang

The Cultural Heritage Committee held this year's first plenary meeting yesterday at the Macau Cultural Centre (CCM), during which all its members backed the Macau Cultural Development Fund's (FDC) second round of its programme launched last year to provide subsidies to five private buildings that are officially listed as cultural heritage sites, according to Cultural Affairs Bureau (IC) President and Cultural Heritage Committee Acting President Deland Leong Wai Man yesterday.

Leong made the remarks at a press conference after a closed-door meeting, during which the bureau also briefed members on the work relating to the cultural heritage portfolio for this year.

According to Leong, the five additional cultural heritage sites are located in the vicinities of Avenida de Almeida Ribeiro (新馬路), Largo do Senado (議事亭前地), Rua de Cinco de Outubro (十月初五街) and Estrada de Coelho do



Cultural Affairs Bureau (IC) President and Cultural Heritage Committee Acting President Leong Wai Man (centre), Cultural Heritage Committee member Wu Chou Kit (left) and Macau Cultural Development Fund (FDC) representative Hoi Kam Un look on during yesterday's press conference after the committee's first plenary meeting this year, at the Macau Cultural Centre (CCM).

— Photo: Ginnie Liang

Amaral (連勝街) respectively.

According to committee member Wu Chou Kit, the programme aims to encourage owners of the cultural heritage buildings to carry out regular maintenance and repairs on the buildings, in order to better facilitate their conservation and revitalisation. The fund received applications from September 24 to November 22 last year.

In addition to properties that have already been officially classified as cultural heritage sites, the subsidy programme also

covers private buildings that the government is proposing to list as officially-protected cultural heritage sites or that it regards as being of "special cultural value".

According to the fund, the programme will pay out subsidies totalling 10 million patacas this year. Each beneficiary will receive a subsidy equivalent to 50 to 80 percent of the cost required to repair or maintain the respective building, with a maximum subsidy amount of two million patacas.

FDC member Hoi Kam Un said

during yesterday's press conference that the programme does not require owners to submit project estimates during the application submission period and, once the project is passed by the Cultural Heritage Committee, the fund will notify the applicant to prepare a maintenance programme within two months or so, which needs to be completed by a third-party specialised consultant, and the budget will be made available only after the submission of the maintenance programme.

Hoi underlined that the subsidies

will only be granted after the proposal has been approved.

In addition, Leong pointed out that two restoration projects will be the most important this year, namely the second stage of restoring the bronze statues at the Ruins of St Paul's and restoring the Chapel of Our Lady of the Snows on Guia Hill.

Leong underlined that on the occasion of the 20th Anniversary of the Inscription of the Historic Centre of Macau on the World Heritage List on July 15, 2005, the bureau will further promote the conservation and revitalisation of Macau's UNESCO-listed World Heritage site, including the organisation of international cultural forums, as well as cultural heritage-related training workshops.

According to the Cultural Heritage Protection Law, which came into force in March 2014, the local government is required to draw up its official plan for the protection and management of the Historic Centre of Macau in compliance with the UNESCO World Heritage Committee's requirements. ■

Police bust currency exchange dealer for fraud & money laundering

Ada Lei

A man from the mainland was arrested on Monday for participating in illegal currency exchange activities, fraud and money laundering, Judiciary Police (PJ) spokesman Cheong Kim Fong said during a regular press conference yesterday.

The 27-year-old suspect is surnamed Pan.

According to Cheong, a young woman from the mainland wanted to transfer money she won gambling in a local casino back to the mainland. She contacted Pan on Sunday to arrange an illegal currency exchange deal for her after consulting a friend. Pan went to her hotel room in Cotai for the deal, and both agreed to exchange HK\$148,000 (152,000 patacas) into 140,000 yuan. She displayed a payment QR code for Pan to transfer the money. She handed over HK\$148,000 to Pan after he had transferred 140,000 yuan to her phone. Pan left the hotel after receiving the money.

Later that day, the woman discovered that her account had been frozen. She contacted the mainland bank, which informed

her that her account was frozen due to receiving illicit funds. The victim encountered Pan in the lobby of another hotel in Cotai on the following day. She stopped him and reported the case to the police. The police arrested Pan but did not find the victim's money on him.

Under questioning, Pan refused to cooperate.

According to Cheong, Pan has been transferred to the Public Prosecutions Office (MP) and is facing charges of illegal currency exchange, fraud, and money laundering. ■



Judiciary Police (PJ) spokesman Cheong Kim Fong looks on during yesterday's regular press conference.

— Photo: Ada Lei

Scammers send SMS with link to 'verify residents' FSS account': PJ

Ginnie Liang

The Judiciary Police (PJ) warned the public in a statement yesterday about a phishing SMS sent out by scammers with a link to a fake Social Security Fund (FSS) website where would-be victims will be asked for credit card details to "verify their personal information online".

The statement noted that the Judiciary Police have recently received reports that scammers have been sending out phishing SMSs that claim to be from the FSS.

The fraudulent short message service (SMS) claims that recipients need to upload their personal information for a review by clicking an enclosed link, or else their FSS accounts would be cancelled, the statement said.

The link redirects recipients to a phishing website that closely resembles the actual FSS website and prompts users to enter their personal information such as their names and ID numbers, according to the statement. They are then required to provide credit card details including their card number, expiration date, cardholder's name, and security code, for purported "identity verification".

The statement underlined that to avoid data theft, the Judiciary Police Anti-Fraud and Coordination Centre is warning members of the public to be wary when receiving such messages and not to click any links, nor to enter their account or credit card information.

The fund said in a separate statement yesterday that it has never issued any SMSs to "verify" residents'



This poster provided by the Judiciary Police (PJ) yesterday warns members of the public of the fake FSS phishing SMS.

identity online, urging residents not to believe the messages or click on the links. The fund also stressed in the statement that it does not send SMSs with links attached.

The statement pointed out that if there are doubts about the authenticity of an SMS, one can call the actual institutions to verify it, while those suspecting they have been scammed should immediately call the Judiciary Police's Anti-Fraud hotline on 8800 7777 or the crime report hotline on 993. ■

Police bust mainlander for drug use

Ada Lei

A man from the mainland was arrested on Sunday for using drugs, Judiciary Police (PJ) spokesman Cheong Kim Fong said during a regular press conference yesterday.

The 33-year-old suspect surnamed Chen claimed to be a businessman.

According to Cheong, a housekeeper at a hotel in Cotai discovered a bottle that was

apparently being used to take drugs in a guestroom, after which the hotel reported the case to the police on Sunday. The police arrested Chen in the guestroom later that day. The police confiscated the bottle which had been modified and used for taking drugs, and found 0.36 grams of methamphetamine, commonly known as ice, with an estimated street value of 700 patacas in the room.

Cheong noted that Chen admitted to using drugs and tested positive for methamphetamine. He also told the police that he had purchased the ice from a man in Macau.

Chen has been transferred to the Public Prosecutions Office (MP), facing charges of drug use and possession of drug-taking paraphernalia. ■

STOCK MARKETS

Hang Seng Index closes 1.32 pct lower

HONG KONG — Hong Kong stock market ended lower yesterday with the benchmark Hang Seng Index down 1.32 percent to close at 23,034.02 points.

The Hang Seng China Enterprises Index dipped 1.39 percent to end at 8,499.19 points, while the Hang Seng Tech Index fell 1.57 percent to close at 5,698.82 points. — Xinhua

Sam urges local women to promote Macau's high-quality development, national rejuvenation

Tony Wong

Chief Executive Sam Hou Fai said yesterday he hopes that women in Macau will open a new chapter in promoting Macau's high-quality development and make new contributions to the great cause of building a strong country and national rejuvenation.

Sam made the remarks while delivering a speech at a reception hosted by the Macau Women's General Association, commonly known as Fu Luen in Cantonese, to celebrate the upcoming International Women's Day on March 8. Yesterday's event, held at Macau Fisherman's Wharf in Nape, was also the swearing-in ceremony for the new term of the association's board members.

In his speech, Sam pointed out that International Women's Day originated from a great movement advocating gender equality and social justice. Looking back over the past century, Sam said, women have transitioned from domestic roles to societal contributions, stepping out from behind the scenes to the forefront, gaining visibility.

With unwavering perseverance and a spirit of relentless effort, Sam said, women have shone brightly in various fields, earning equal rights and respect.

Sam said that women from all countries have written their own glorious chapters with diligence, wisdom and courage, and through their efforts and achievements, they have also been promoting social progress and development.

Sam noted that more and more women in Macau are breaking through traditional boundaries, where they are actively engaging in different sectors and industries with the ambition and determination to rival their male counterparts and through persistent hard work, showcasing extraordinary talents and abilities and becoming an indispensable force in Macau's socioeconomic development, he said.

Sam acknowledged that, however, the local government is aware that many women in Macau are still facing various challenges and difficulties, pledging the local government's commitment to safeguarding women's rights and interests and gender equality.

Sam underlined that the government will continue to unite all sectors of Macau's civil society in safeguarding the rights and well-being of women in Macau, continuously promoting the faster and better development of women's causes, supporting women in building their careers, and encouraging them to realise their life aspirations and



Chief Executive Sam Hou Fai delivers a speech during yesterday's reception hosted by the Macau Women's General Association marking the upcoming International Women's Day, at Macau Fisherman's Wharf. — Photo: GCS

showcase their brilliance.

Sam said he hopes that women in Macau will continue to demonstrate their unique charm, gather strength and take on responsibilities, contributing their wisdom and abilities in their respective jobs, leveraging their unique advantages and roles in building family harmony and civility, giving new impetus into the implementation of the "One Country, Two Systems" principle with Macau characteristics, opening a new chapter in promoting Macau's high-quality development, and making new contributions to

the great cause of building a strong country and national rejuvenation.

Sam also said that over the past 75 years since its founding, the Macau Women's General Association has always upheld the fine tradition of patriotism, love for Macau, and care for women and children, making tremendous contributions to Macau's development and progress of women's and children's causes, with remarkable achievements that have been widely recognised.

The Macau Women's General Association was founded in 1950.

In his speech, Sam urged the

association to stay committed to its original aspirations, continuing to promote the spirit of benevolence and love, uphold the core values of patriotism and love for Macau, and support the local government in exercising law-based governance, while making new and greater contributions to promoting the steady and far-reaching implementation of the "One Country, Two Systems" principle with Macau characteristics, to ensuring Macau's prosperous and stable development, and to building a harmonious society and a better home for all.

For the new term of the board of the Macau Women's General Association, Lau Kam Ling has been re-elected chairwoman while Un Sio Leng has been re-elected president.

In addition to Sam, yesterday's event was also attended by other senior representatives such as Edmund Ho Hau Wah, Macau's first chief executive and now vice-chairman of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC) National Committee, Central People's Government Liaison Office in Macau Deputy Director Lyu Yuyin, Foreign Ministry Deputy Commissioner Sun Xiangyang, and Secretary for Social Affairs and Culture Wallis O Lam. ■

Construction of 2 LRT East Line stations' entrances to start soon



This handout photo released by the Public Works Bureau (DSOP) on Monday shows its director Lam Wai Hou (centre, right) briefs community association representatives on Friday about the upcoming construction of the entrances and exits of the ES1 and ES2 stations of the LRT East Line, at the neighbourhood near the ES2 station.

Tony Wong

Construction of the entrances and exits of the two Light Rapid Transit (LRT) East Line stations off the north-eastern coast of the peninsula, known as ES1 and ES2, will commence in the near future, because of which some pavement sections in the neighbourhood will be temporarily enclosed, the Public Works Bureau (DSOP) has announced.

The ongoing LRT East Line project, which got off the ground in 2023, is a 7.7-kilometre-long section connecting the Barrier Gate checkpoint at the peninsula's northern tip and the Taipa Ferry Terminal via the Zone A and Zone E1 land reclamation areas. The East Line will cross the sea between Zone A and Zone E1 through an undersea tunnel.

The LRT East Line will have six stations, including three stations in Zone A. All six stations will be built underground.

The first two stations of the LRT East Line, ES1 and ES2, are being built off the north-eastern coast of the peninsula. The two stations require the land reclamation of the mudflats

(aka tidal flats) off the coast.

The first station, ES1, will be located next to the Barrier Gate checkpoint, while the second station, ES2, will be located near the Residência Macau residential estate.

A DSOP statement on Monday said that after the completion of the land reclamation of the mudflats off the north-eastern coast, the project has now entered the stage of constructing the two stations' main structures and entrances and exits, adding that works to build the entrances and exits will start in the near future.

In addition to pavements, according to the statement, sitting-out areas near the future entrances and exits will also be partially enclosed.

The statement underlined that the works to build the entrances and exits will be carried out in different phases with the aim of alleviating the adverse impact on pedestrians and businesses alike.

The ongoing LRT East Line project, without the projected extension to the Qingmao pedestrian checkpoint, is scheduled to be completed in 2028, which the government is aiming to open in 2029. ■

China, Germany business sectors vow to boost

STUTTGART, Germany – Around 200 Chinese and German business leaders came together in Stuttgart, southern Germany this week with the goal of boosting cooperation between the two nations.

Representatives from business associations and enterprises met at the China-Germany Economic and Trade Cooperation Forum on Monday.

The theme of the forum, organized by China Council for the Promotion of International Trade (CCPIT), was "New Opportunities for China-Germany Economic and Trade Cooperation in the Context of Global Supply Chain Restructuring."

It has been five months since CCPIT organized a Chinese business delegation to visit Germany, said Ren Hongbin, chairman of CCPIT. He emphasized that the visit aims to implement the consensus reached by the leaders of both countries and to deepen practical cooperation between the two nations' business communities, he said.

The CCPIT is willing to join hands with German partners to tap into the potential of trade cooperation, and to continue providing opportunities for high-quality German products such as autos and agricultural machinery to enter the Chinese market and strengthen cooperation in industrial and supply chains, Ren said.

The CCPIT intends to promote the development of bilateral investment, create a good environment for business cooperation, and encourage more competent Chinese companies to invest in Germany, Ren added. This will begin a

new chapter in high-level China-Germany economic and trade cooperation, he said.

Despite the rise of trade protectionism, the trend of economic globalization is irreversible, and all parties should strengthen international cooperation based on trust, said Johannes Jung, director of strategy, commercial law, foreign trade and Europe at the Baden-Wuerttemberg Ministry of Economic Affairs.

Increased face-to-face exchanges between the business communities of both countries will help enhance mutual understanding, deepen practical cooperation, and achieve mutual benefit and win-win results, said Jung.

"As the second and third largest economies in the world, China and Germany have always been trustworthy partners. They have achieved fruitful cooperation in high-end manufacturing, green energy, technological innovation, finance, and pharmaceuticals," Chinese Consul General in Frankfurt Huang Yiyang said.

The economies of China and Germany are highly complementary, and their development philosophies are deeply aligned, allowing both countries to make greater contributions to global economic development, said Huang.

Also at the forum, Lin Shunjie, chairman of China International Exhibition Center Group Limited, presented the third China International Supply Chain Expo, which is set to kick off on July 16 in China.

The company signed letters of intent and cooperation memorandums for the exhibition with German partners like Wolq GmbH and the China Network Baden-Wuerttemberg. — Xinhua