



'MSAR govt must safeguard nation's sovereignty, security & interests': Sam vows in Beijing

Yuki Lei

For the first time, Macau's top leader Sam Hou Fai attended the opening meeting of the third session of the 14th National People's Congress (NPC) at the Great Hall of the People in Beijing yesterday in his capacity as the chief executive of the special administrative region (SAR), after which he emphasised the importance of national security as a fundamental principle of "One Country, Two Systems", saying that the MSAR government must continue to safeguard the nation's sovereignty, security, and development interests.

According to a statement by the Macau Government Information Bureau (GCS), the third session of the 14th NPC opened yesterday morning, during which Premier Li Qiang delivered a report on the work of the Central People's Government.

In the report, Li emphasised the need for both the SAR governments



Macau Chief Executive Sam Hou Fai (left) and Hong Kong Chief Executive John Lee Ka-chiu attend yesterday morning's opening meeting of the third session of the 14th National People's Congress (NPC) at the Great Hall of the People in Beijing. – Photo: GCS

to "fully, accurately and steadfastly" implement the principles of "One Country, Two Systems", "Hong Kong people administering Hong Kong" and "the people of Macau

governing Macau". His report also highlighted, the GCS statement added, the importance of maintaining a high degree of autonomy to safeguard the constitutional order

of the two SARs, as confirmed by the national Constitution and both regions' respective Basic Laws, and to uphold the principles of "patriots governing Hong Kong"

and "patriots governing Macau".

The GCS statement quoted Li's report as highlighting the central government's support for Hong Kong and Macau in developing their respective economies, improving people's livelihoods, deepening international exchanges and cooperation, better integrating themselves into the nation's overall development, and maintaining the long-term prosperity and stability of both SARs.

In the statement released by GCS after the meeting, Sam expressed his "heartfelt" gratitude to the central authorities for their long-term care and support for Macau, pledging that his government would continue to implement the principle of "One Country, Two Systems" in an "unswerving and comprehensive" manner, while also consolidating and developing its successful implementation with Macau characteristics.

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President Xi Jinping, also general secretary of the Communist Party of China (CPC) Central Committee and chairman of the Central Military Commission, gestures while taking part in a deliberation with fellow lawmakers from Jiangsu during the third session of the 14th National People's Congress in Beijing yesterday. (Story on p.7) – Xinhua

Britain to require electronic travel authorization for European visitors

LONDON – The British government announced yesterday that European visitors will need to apply for an Electronic Travel Authorization (ETA) starting April 2, as part of the final phase of a global rollout aimed at enhancing border security and streamlining entry processes.

According to the Home Office, eligible people can apply for the ETA – a digital travel permit linked to their passports. This replaces traditional visa requirements for short-term visits.

The policy follows the system's implementation for non-European travelers, including those from the United States, Canada, and Australia. To date, more than 1.1 million ETAs have been issued globally.

"Expanding the ETA worldwide underscores our commitment to a secure, contactless border system while ensuring a seamless travel experience," Minister for Migration and Citizenship Seema Malhotra said. She added that the digital approach strengthens immigration controls and aligns with Britain's broader strategy to innovate through technology.

Applicants can obtain an ETA via the British government's official website or mobile application by submitting biometric and biographic details, along with responses to eligibility questions. The government is working with airlines, ferry operators, and rail carriers to ensure smooth compliance with the new requirements, the Home Office said in a statement.

– Xinhua

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Li Qiang unveils resilient growth target with strong policy support

China has set an economic growth target of around 5 percent for 2025, reflecting a sound economic outlook despite increasing global uncertainties, as policymakers are determined to secure steady recovery through decisive and effective measures. – Story on p. 6

Israel's new army chief says mission against Hamas 'not accomplished'

Israel's new military chief Eyal Zamir said his country's mission to defeat Hamas remained unfinished as he took office yesterday, with uncertainty hanging over the fragile Gaza ceasefire. – Story on p. 10

Trump says tariffs will bring 'a little disturbance' to US economy

The US economy is set to experience some "disturbance" from tariffs, US President Donald Trump said on Tuesday, as trade tensions flare after he imposed sweeping levies on Mexico, Canada and China. – Story on p. 12

Phone scams top fraud cases last year, students among most affected: civic leader

Ginnie Liang

Central District Community Service Consultative Committee member Chan Hio Teng said yesterday that phone scams remained the most prevalent type of fraud in Macau last year, accounting for 70 percent of all reported scam cases and causing significant financial losses, particularly among students, according to the Judiciary Police (PJ).

Chan made the remarks during a press conference after a regular closed-door meeting at the Patane Municipal Market Complex yesterday, with the attendance of PJ officials who were present to provide updates on their crime prevention efforts.

Chan quoted data from the Judiciary Police revealing that 243 phone scam cases were recorded last year, which accounted for 70 percent

of all kinds of scam cases, with fake police scams being the most financially damaging, which resulted in losses exceeding 14 million patacas, making up 92 percent of the total losses from phone scams.

Central District Community Service Consultative Committee Deputy Convener Pui Seng In added that 109 cases involved student victims, with losses surpassing 6.8 million patacas.

While investment scams accounted for only 9 percent of reported cases, they caused the highest overall financial damage, totalling over 48 million patacas, Chan quoted PJ officials as saying, adding that to combat the rising threat of scams, PJ officers conducted 697 anti-fraud promotion activities across various neighbourhoods, attracting more



Central District Community Service Consultative Committee Deputy Convener Pui Seng In (right) briefs reporters after yesterday's closed-door meeting with representatives from Judiciary Police (PJ) at Patane Municipal Market Complex, while committee member Chan Hio Teng looks at her notes.

than 126,000 participants.

Additionally, an anti-cyberfraud WeChat Mini Program launched by the Judiciary Police in April

last year recorded over 50,000 hits by December, demonstrating its growing reach and effectiveness, Chan said.

Pui yesterday quoted PJ officials as saying that the number of online scam cases last year had dropped in comparison to 2023, and that promotional efforts to prevent scams on campus would continue in the future.

Pui emphasised the importance of a multi-faceted approach to fraud prevention, with efforts including integrating anti-scam content into university curricula, developing online learning systems with anti-fraud quizzes, and disseminating anti-scam information to parents through express delivery and registered mail.

"We aim to create a comprehensive anti-fraud network that not only targets students but also involves families and society as a whole," Pui said. ■

Flowerbeds in Rua do Campo to be replanted in phases: IAM



The artist's rendition provided by the Municipal Affairs Bureau (IAM) yesterday shows the future flowerbed at the junction of Rua do Campo and Rua de Pedro Nolasco da Silva.

Yuki Lei

In view of the phased replanting of flowerbeds at both ends of Rua do Campo (水坑尾街), the Municipal Affairs Bureau (IAM) reminded the public yesterday about a temporary enclosure to be set up at the work site from March 17 to April 15.

According to an IAM statement, the reshaping is being carried out due to the monotony and gradual deterioration of the plants in the green areas at the junction of Rua do Campo and Rua de Pedro Nolasco da Silva, and the section near Octagonal Library Pavilion. Appropriate plants, such as Golden Variegated Sweet Flag, Variegated Croton, Rain of

Gold, Foxtail Fern, Bird-of-Paradise and Pink Mussaenda, will replace the existing ones, to be complemented with landscape gravel to create a multi-layered and colourful composition that resembles an oasis in the city, while enriching the seasonal plant landscape of the streets, the statement said.

The bureau stressed that the restructuring will be carried out with consideration for the growth habits of the plants, traffic safety and other relevant factors. It added that well-preserved plants will be removed from Rua do Campo's flowerbeds and transferred to nurseries to remain there for some time before being replanted in other green belts. ■

Local man & woman fall victim to virtual currency scams: police

Ada Lei

A local man and a woman have each been defrauded of 600,000 patacas and HK\$ 2.7 million in separate virtual currency scams, Judiciary Police (PJ) spokesman Lei Chi Hou said during a regular press conference yesterday.

In the first case, a middle-aged local woman discovered a job advertisement in a Facebook discussion group in late August 2024. She contacted a man via WhatsApp about the job, and their conversation gradually developed into an online romantic relationship. The man enticed her with promises of high returns from investing in virtual currency and encouraged her to download a specific investment application. On September 6, 2024, she made an initial transfer of HK\$ 7,900 to an account provided by the platform's customer service and made additional transfers afterwards. She lost contact

with the man after attempting to withdraw her funds three times. In total, she made 14 transfers amounting to HK\$2.7 million.

In the second case, a young local man was approached by a user on Instagram who sent him a friends request. The user introduced him to investing in Bitcoin and other virtual currencies, using similar tactics to lure him with the promise of high returns. He was also asked to download a specified investment application. Initially, he deposited approximately 100,000 patacas and later invested a total of 500,000 patacas. He attempted later to withdraw his funds but to no avail. The platform's purported customer service then requested additional funds for the withdrawal, providing various excuses. Even after paying these extra fees, he was still unable to access his money, and eventually, he lost contact with the platform's



Judiciary Police (PJ) spokesman Lei Chi Hou looks on during yesterday's regular press conference.

— Photo: Ada Lei

customer service.

Both victims realised they had been scammed when they were unable to withdraw their funds and could no longer reach the suspects. They reported their respective cases separately to the police on Tuesday. ■

Police nab local woman for drunk driving

Ada Lei

The Public Security Police (PSP) arrested a local woman on Tuesday for drunk driving and evading responsibility, with her blood alcohol concentration being 2.23 grams per litre, PSP spokesman Kong Chi Ian said during a regular press conference yesterday.

The suspect, surnamed Ma, is in her twenties and works in sales.

According to Kong, the police received two reports in the wee hours of Tuesday. One reported that a car hit a roadside barrier on Rua do Comandante João Belo (俾若翰街) and fled the scene. The other reported that three parked cars were struck in a nearby car park. Police suspected

that both incidents were caused by the same car. Later that morning, the police found Ma and her car in the car park.

Kong noted that Ma was reeking of alcohol, and a breathalyser test showed that her blood alcohol concentration was 2.23 grams per litre, confirming her drunk-driving offence.

Under questioning, Ma admitted to drinking alcoholic beverages at a bar in Zape before driving. She first collided with a roadside barrier and left the scene, then struck three parked cars in the car park without stopping to report the situation.

Ma has been transferred to the Public Prosecutions Office (MP), facing charges of drunk driving and evading responsibility. ■



This undated handout photo provided by the Public Security Police (PSP) yesterday shows a PSP officer escorting the drunk-driving suspect to a police station.

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TEMPERATURE FALLING.
CLOUDY.
PERIODS OF RAIN.
MIST AT FIRST.
FORCE 4 TO 5 NORTHERLY
WINDS WITH GUSTS.
RELATIVE HUMIDITY
WILL RANGE
BETWEEN 80%
AND 98%.



13°C~16°C

Source: SMG

Macau faces challenges in concert development hardware & software: industry rep

Interview by Yuki Lei

The Cultural Affairs Bureau (IC) has scheduled a performance for about 20,000 spectators at the newly established open-air performance venue in Cotai, set to take place later this month – and in a recent interview with the *Post*, Lawrence Che Fok Sang, founder and CEO of Chessman Macau, noted that the number of concerts in Macau has surged following the three-year COVID-19 pandemic, but, at the same time, he acknowledged that Macau's concert development faces challenges in keeping up with both its hardware and software aspects.

Che noted that Macau is currently in the first stage of its concert economy, following the government's introduction of the concept of "City of Performing Arts" in its 2024 Policy Address to promote concert development. He noted that after the removal of COVID-19-related travel restrictions in 2022, concerts in Macau have become even more "explosive", with the number of performances this year already exceeding that of pre-pandemic 2019: "Even though there were many performances in 2019, 2023 and 2024 were even more crazy", highlighting the performances by top artists such as South Korean girl band Blackpink, Hong Kong singer Andy Lau Takwah, and mainland Chinese singer Pan Xiaofeng in Macau. He also revealed that another well-known Hong Kong singer, Jacky Cheung Hok-yau, is planning to perform in Macau this year.

Commenting on the new experiences that the government's open-air venue will bring to the city, he pointed out that its completion has indeed added a new attraction to the concert industry, emphasising its versatility. "We always lacked large-capacity venues before; and the current indoor venues can accommodate only up to 20,000 spectators each. So, if you want to organise a concert for a bigger audience than that, there was previously no venue available," he said.

He also quoted industry insiders and organisers as appreciating the open-air venue, pointing out that



Lawrence Che Fok Sang, founder and CEO of Chessman Macau, poses after Monday's interview with the *Post* at his office in Zape. – Photo: Yuki Lei

"it is very well built in terms of hardware", especially as it is double the size of the venue at the Central Harbourfront Event Space in Hong Kong, adding: "This is a microcosm of Macau's development".

However, Che was quick to admit that the development of the concert industry in Macau faces some hardware and software challenges that cannot keep up with developments, including issues such as insufficient human resources, a lack of budget hotel rooms, and inadequate transport support: "If the open-air venue begins operation alongside other venues hosting shows simultaneously, the shortage of skilled staff – such as security and cleaning personnel – will become even more acute".

A preview gig was held at the end of last year at the open-air venue, with Chessman as one of the co-organisers. In this regard, Che pointed out that the trial performance went well, with a relatively manageable turnout of around 10,000 concertgoers, but he also noted that the lack of transport support in the vicinity and insufficient space in the surrounding buffer zone are areas that need to be improved.

Speaking to the *Post* at his office in Zape on Monday, Che said he agrees that the government should gradually increase the open-air



This file photo shows the Cultural Affairs Bureau's preview concert at the open-air performance venue in Cotai on December 29.

venue's audience capacity to help understand the impacts and needs of the surrounding areas, "but it could be accelerated a little bit. It's a little slow right now. We're going to have two concerts in March and two in May, so we'll wait and see". He also expressed concerns about the possible impact if the venue and its supporting facilities were left entirely to the industry itself in the future.

Macau's potential in concert industry

Overall, he said, Macau has the potential for concert development, but much of the market remains untapped, pointing out that although Macau receives around 30 million visitors each year, it has not done enough to provide "cheaper" accommodation options, leading many visitors to choose Zhuhai including Hengqin as alternatives: "We need to think about how to rationalise Macau's hotel rates and provide more choices in the middle and high price ranges".

He emphasised Macau's potential, pointing out the city's rich culture and history: "There's culture and stories here, and there's a history behind these buildings". However, he added, there was still room for development in terms of nightlife and dining options, suggesting that the government continue to enhance

Macau's tourism infrastructure, including linking up the city's six revitalisation quarters, to provide more "good places to go" for tourists.

Referring to the fact that concerts are now mainly geared towards mainland visitors, Che pointed out that in order to attract foreign visitors, "we must provide more reasons for them to want to come to Macau", adding: "While mainland travellers rely on online platforms such as "rednote" (colloquially also known as "little red book" in English), foreign tourists have different needs and this is a segment of the market that we have yet to tap".

Che also stressed the need for cooperation between Hong Kong and Macau, pointing out that Macau should learn from Hong Kong's experience instead of treating it as a competitor, adding he believes that through their respective strengths, the joint development of the two places could attract more tourists, thereby enhancing the competitiveness of the overall market.

Concert economy boosts Macau's economic value: MIM chief

Meanwhile, IC President Deland Leong Wai Man has revealed that the figures for 2023 show that more than 2,000 large-scale performances were organised by the government

and private enterprises, with a total of more than 10,000 performances in various arts and cultural activities, while the number of spectators at large-scale performances and concerts in Macau's integrated resorts reached over one million, generating about 1.1 billion patacas in box-office takings.

Macau Institute of Management (MIM) President Samuel Tong Kai Chung acknowledged in a telephone interview with the *Post* last week that while the concert economy accounts for a small portion of Macau's overall tourism economy, it effectively enhances Macau's attractiveness as an emerging World Centre of Tourism and Leisure by driving the city's overall economic development in terms of ticketing, publicity and promotion, as well as merchandise sales and tourist spending.

Tong also said he expected the completion of the large-scale open-air performance venue to have a positive impact on Macau's economy, encouraging local small- and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) to participate actively in the concert economy, such as by producing souvenirs and engaging in publicity and promotion activities.

According to Tong, the concert economy is an important direction for Macau's development, but "it is not the only one". He emphasised the need for Macau to continue to develop and improve the concert economy while, at the same time, developing other sectors and industries, in line with the government's appropriately diversified economic development strategy known as "1+4".

According to previous statements by the local government, the "1+4" strategy aims to reinforce Macau's function as "One Centre" for integrated tourism and leisure, officially known as the World Centre of Tourism and Leisure, while facilitating the development of four emerging industries: big health; modern financial services; high-tech; and conventions, exhibitions, sports, and the commercial and trade industries. ■

Population rises 0.7 pct to 688,300

Staff Reporter

Macau's total population rose by 0.7 percent (+4,600) year on year to 688,300 at the end of last year, the Statistics and Census Bureau (DSEC) said in a statement yesterday.

A DSEC statement attributed the increase mainly to a rise in the number of non-resident workers (NRWs) living in Macau.

Females accounted for 53.7 percent of the population.

The youth population (aged up to 14) took up 12.5 percent of the total population, while the elderly (aged 65+) amounted to 14.6 percent.

The local population (total population minus NRWs and non-local students living in Macau)

dipped by 0.4 percent to 568,700 at the end of 2024, as the net outflow of local residents exceeded the natural increase, i.e., more births than deaths.

The number of households totalled 205,000, up by 600 year on year.

In 2024, the number of live births decreased by 105 to 3,607, while mortality dropped by 504 to 2,477. The main causes of deaths were cancer (937), heart disease (362) and pneumonia (268).

Based on Macau's total land area of 33.3 square kilometres, its population density amounted to 20,669 people per square kilometre, one of the highest in the world. ■

'MSAR govt must safeguard nation's sovereignty, security & interests': Sam vows in Beijing

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In light of the fact that this year marks the conclusion of the nation's 14th Five-Year Plan for National Economic and Social Development and Vision 2025, with the central authorities now focusing on high-quality development and planning for their 15th Five-Year Plan, Sam pledged that his government will collaborate with all sectors of the community to study and implement the spirit of the "two sessions" – of the 14th National People's Congress and the National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC). Sam, the statement said,

also emphasised the importance of seizing the opportunities presented by the further advancement of Chinese-style modernisation, in line with President Xi Jinping's important speeches during his visit to Macau on December 18-20, adding that he will work "diligently and boldly" to make changes, aiming to create a glorious new chapter for Macau's development.

As quoted by the statement, Sam underlined his government's commitment, in accordance with the central authorities' plans, to further deepen reforms in a comprehensive manner, saying that

the local government would convert the spirit of the two sessions into practical actions, enhance the effectiveness of governance by strengthening inter-departmental coordination and policy linkages, and strive to promote the appropriate development of Macau's diversified economy. Additionally, Sam also stressed that Macau would endeavour to build a platform for greater openness to the outside world, fully leveraging its role as a "strategic liaison" between China and Portuguese-speaking countries, thereby contributing to the nation's high-quality development. ■



Show-Off 3.0: Three Collectors' Exhibition presented at Taipa Village Art Space

Ginnie Liang

Show-Off 3.0: Three Collectors' Exhibition is now on at the Taipa Village Art Space, unveiling a treasure trove of art acquired by three renowned collectors whose backgrounds are a study in diversity: Creative Macau founder Lúcia Lemos, publisher Carlos Morais José and architect Rita Machado.

The opening ceremony was held last Thursday, during which the three collectors spoke about why and what they are collecting, and the significance of their habits.

"Each collection in the exhibition reveals aspects of their personality," João O, curator of the exhibition said, adding that the exhibition presents a selection of works collected over the years, even decades, seeking to address the nature of collecting and to stimulate a visual conversation about cultural possessions by individuals with very specific and highly personal interests.

According to the curator, Lemos has been involved in the promotion of local artists for over two decades. An artist herself, who developed her skills in black-and-white photography and taking videos, her special relationship with images stems from her many years of exposure to the artistic milieu of Portugal's northern city of Porto. Interestingly, her chosen collection is mainly based on vibrant, colourful paintings by local and foreign artists.

O said that while Morais José's collection reminds us of a subtle yet complex relationship between a scholar and a viewing stone*, as to the untrained eye a stone is just an indifferent rock, but to an aesthete the so-called scholar's stone engages in an aesthetic appreciation of the qualities of the shaped rocks, prompting the mind to dwell on other matters that transcend its appearance.

Machado and her partner have been involved in curating and promoting Macau's cultural scene, so it is natural that their collection is based on their relationships with many local and international artists, some of whom have resulting in lasting friendships, O noted.

The exhibition runs until April 30 every day from 12 p.m. to 8 p.m. at the Taipa Village Art Space, with paintings, photography and furniture on display. Sponsored by Cultural Development Fund, admission is free.

* Viewing stones, also known as scholar's rocks (known in Chinese as "gongshi" – 供石), are naturally formed or subtly enhanced stones appreciated for their aesthetic qualities. They are often used as objects of contemplation, meditation, or decoration, particularly in East Asian cultures like China, Japan, and Korea. These stones are valued for their unique shapes, textures, colors, and the way they evoke natural landscapes, abstract forms, or symbolic meanings. – DeepSeek



Show-Off 3.0:
Three Collectors' Exhibition by
Lúcia Lemos, Carlos Morais José
and Rita Machado

炫耀 3.0 :
露施雅、左凱士及孟麗泰之藝術收藏展



26 / 02 – 30 / 04 / 2025

Taipa Village Art Space
35-AA da Rua dos Clerigos &
123-AA da Rua dos Mercadores
氹仔舊城區藝術空間
木鐸街35-AA 及買賣街123-AA

This poster provided by Taipa Village Cultural Association last Thursday shows the ongoing Show-Off 3.0: Three Collectors' Exhibition.



These photos taken last Thursday at the exhibition's venue at Taipa Village Art Space show some of the exhibitors.

App for black taxis to resume in June, link with mainland ride-hailing platform: cabbie group

Interview by Tony Wong

Macau Taxi Drivers Mutual Help Association President Tony Kuok Leong Son pledges that his association aims to relaunch its mobile ride-hailing app, the operation of which has been suspended for some time for a technical revamp, in June when it will also be linked to a mainland ride-hailing platform aiming to make it easier for mainland visitors to book a taxi while in Macau.

Kuok also underlined that the app will cover at least Macau's 650 black taxis with a permanent taxi licence, pledging that his association will continue to ask more drivers in the sector to join the app.

Currently, according to official statistics, the city has about 1,500 black taxis, 650 of which have a permanent licence, while all the others have a non-permanent licence valid for eight years.

Kuok made the remarks in an interview with the *Post* on Monday at his association's office near the Pak Wai Garden residential estate on Avenida do Conselheiro Ferreira de Almeida (荷蘭園大馬路).

After its suspension during the three-year COVID-19 pandemic from early 2020 through 2022, the app was relaunched in 2024 and



Macau Taxi Drivers Mutual Help Association President Tony Kuok Leong Son poses after Monday's interview with the *Post* at his association's office.

was operating for a while. However, Kuok acknowledged on Monday that the app has been suspended again "for some time", due to a technical upgrade.

Kuok said that his association was working with the app's developer to upgrade it with the aim of further improving its functions, including linking the app's operation with a "major" mainland ride-hailing platform.

Kuok said that the linkage aims to enable mainland visitors to book a taxi directly while in Macau through a mobile platform that they normally use in the mainland, thereby without having to download

his association's app.

According to Kuok, the ongoing upgrade also includes developing a version on WeChat Mini Programs so that mainlanders can also book a taxi covered by his association's app through WeChat, also without having to download his association's app.

Kuok also said that prospective passengers can book a taxi either by opting to download the app from app stores, use a mainland ride-hailing platform, or use WeChat Mini Programs.

Kuok said for the time being he could not reveal the name of the mainland platform while underlining that it is a "large and major" one in the mainland.

Common taxis – as opposed to radio taxis – are colloquially known as "black taxis" ("hak dik" in Cantonese), as the colour of common taxis is black.

The city's current radio taxi company, Macau Radio Taxi Services Limited, came into service



Two taxis drive along Avenida do Coronel Mesquita (美副將大馬路) in the peninsula on Monday. – Photos: Tony Wong

in April 2017. Its current 300 radio taxis are not allowed to pick up those hailing a cab in the street. To use the company's ride-hailing service, prospective passengers can phone its call centre or use its own mobile ride-hailing app.

In addition to being allowed to pick up passengers while travelling around the city, black taxis are also allowed to provide a radio taxi service.

Kuok's association, the Macau Taxi Drivers Mutual Help Association, runs a taxi call service – 2828 3283. A few hundred of the city's black taxis are covered by his association's radio taxi service.

According to official statistics, Macau currently has about 1,800 taxis, comprising 300 special radio taxis and about 1,500 black taxis.

Kuok noted that as the operation of his association's ride-hailing app has been suspended, the app has also been temporarily removed from app stores so that "smartphone users cannot find it for the time being" as owners of apps need to pay to keep

them available on app stores.

Kuok said that when the app is relaunched, which he said was expected to happen in June, its name and logo would remain unchanged.

The app is simply known as "Macau Taxi". The black-and-white logo of the app includes the words "Macau Taxi" in both the English and Chinese languages.

Meanwhile, Kuok also noted that about 250 common taxi licences will expire later this year because of which the Transport Bureau (DSAT) will need to launch a public tender for granting new licences accordingly. Kuok said he expected the new taxis to only be able to hit the road early next year after the completion of the upcoming tendering process.

Kuok also noted that the licences of 100 of the city's 300 radio taxis will expire in September this year.

Licences of the city's radio taxis are also valid for eight years. The licences of the other 200 radio taxis, according to the DSAT website, will expire in May 2028. ■

Health Bureau to launch 2026 Health Survey, pilot survey begins this month

Ginnie Liang

The Health Bureau (SSM) is planning to conduct its 2026 Macau Health Survey to help residents understand their basic health conditions and enhance residents' awareness and ability in health management, according to a statement by the bureau yesterday.

In order to facilitate the carrying-out of the 2026 survey, the bureau will first conduct four pilot surveys later this month, targeting Macau residents aged 18 or above, the statement said.

A total of 200 residents will be randomly selected from the Health Bureau's registration card information system for the pilot surveys starting today, and the pilot surveys will be carried out on the last two weekends of this

month at Ilha Verde Health Centre and Praia do Manduco Health Centre, the statement said.

The surveys will include blood and urine samples, body measurements, and health questionnaire interviews, the statement said, adding that some residents will be invited to take a hearing test.

The bureau underlined that information and data on common chronic diseases, risk factors of diseases, and whether the participants suffer infectious diseases, will be collected in order to provide a scientific basis for disease prevention and control strategies and measures, while the personal data involved in the whole process will be handled strictly in line with the city's Personal Data Protection Law. ■

Woman tries to smuggle 52 lipsticks to Zhuhai via Qingmao checkpoint

Staff Reporter

Gongbei customs announced in a statement yesterday that a woman was attempting to smuggle 52 tubes of lipstick from Macau to the mainland via the Qingmao joint checkpoint last Thursday.

According to the statement, the woman, who was entering the mainland through "the nothing to declare" channel in the early hours of last Thursday, did not put her bag on the X-ray machine for inspection, while she also "deliberately" covered her abdomen with her hands.

Consequently, the statement said, customs officers intercepted her and seized 16 tubes of lipstick from her bag and another 36 fastened around her waist.

The statement did not elaborate on the woman's identity, such as her age and domicile.

The statement underlined that evading customs supervision by concealing items that are subject to duty payments when entering or leaving the mainland constitutes the offence of smuggling, adding that



This undated handout photo released by Gongbei customs yesterday shows the seized boxes of lipstick.

serious circumstances constitute a crime.

Meanwhile, the Macau Customs Service said in a statement yesterday that its officers raided a parallel-trading den on Tuesday in the peninsula's northern district where they seized about 7,500

old electronic parts worth around 50,000 patacas in total.

According to the statement, the officers caught a 34-year-old local man who operated the den and hired parallel traders to smuggle second-hand electronic parts to the mainland. ■

STOCK MARKETS

HK stocks close up, tech index rises over 4 pct

HONG KONG – Hong Kong's stock market ended higher yesterday with the benchmark Hang Seng Index up 2.84 percent to close at 23,594.21 points.

The Hang Seng China Enterprises Index rose 3.14 percent to end at 8,630.4 points, while the Hang Seng Tech Index rose 4.02 percent to end at 5,757.94 points. – *Xinhua*