

ANIMAL WELFARE

Association refuses televised debate



IN response to animal welfare group Anima's call for a publicized debate over the merits of a renewal of greyhound racing, the Abandoned Animals Protection Association of Macau (AAPAM) has notified the Times that it will not be participating in the debate.

Earlier this week, the Times gained access to a series of letters penned by Anima President Albano Martins, who challenged Josephine Lau, the Vice-President of contender animal rights group AAPAM, and representatives of the Canidrome Company to go head-to-head in a televised debate. Martins notified the Secretary for Economy and Finance, Lionel Leong, of his desire to have the debate broadcast on TDM.

A representative of AAPAM wrote to the Times to say that the association "cannot spare any time or resources" for the debate "due to limited

manpower in our association," and therefore AAPAM will not be participating.

The point of contention between the two organizations stems from Anima's claim that AAPAM collaborates with the Canidrome facility, where as many as 30 underperforming dogs are killed each month.

"Disturbing business enterprises is not our preference and there is no point" in it, the AAPAM representative wrote in relation to claims of collaboration with the facility.

The organization added that for the past few years it has been focusing on the promotion of the Animal Protection Law, which, once laid down, will better protect animals "not to our ideal [level] but at least better than [with] no law."

"Without a law, cases of abuse cannot be controlled," the note read.

AAPAM will hold a walk this Saturday in promotion of the Animal Protection Law. The association said that the walk is to be held in conjunction with other activities that has been planned for the same cause. **DB**

ZHUHAI FINES FOR KEEPING EXTRA DOG

ON APRIL 14, a Zhuhai resident was fined RMB2,000 for owning two dogs, according to a report by Journal Va Kio. The owner, surnamed Li and living in Nanping town, a district subordinated to the city center, was permitted to own only one dog under Zhuhai regulations, which stipulate that residents from Hengqin district and from the city center may keep only

one dog. The Gongbei police took the unauthorized animal to the city's official dog shelter after the owner had failed to resolve the problem within the three days' notice given by the police. This marks the first time that the mandatory fine has been issued by Zhuhai since the implementation of a dog management regulation, which came into effect last June.

Government sets up steering committee on services for elderly

THE government has set up a steering committee to coordinate and promote measures to protect the elderly.

According to a notice published this week in the Official Gazette, the Interdepartmental Steering Committee on Mechanisms to Protect the Elderly will be responsible for reviewing and modifying the protection mechanisms that currently exist for the elderly.

Other functions of the committee include enabling non-governmental organizations to take part in policymaking on issues affecting the elderly, and reporting to the Chief Executive on the progress and follow-up required for each action plan.

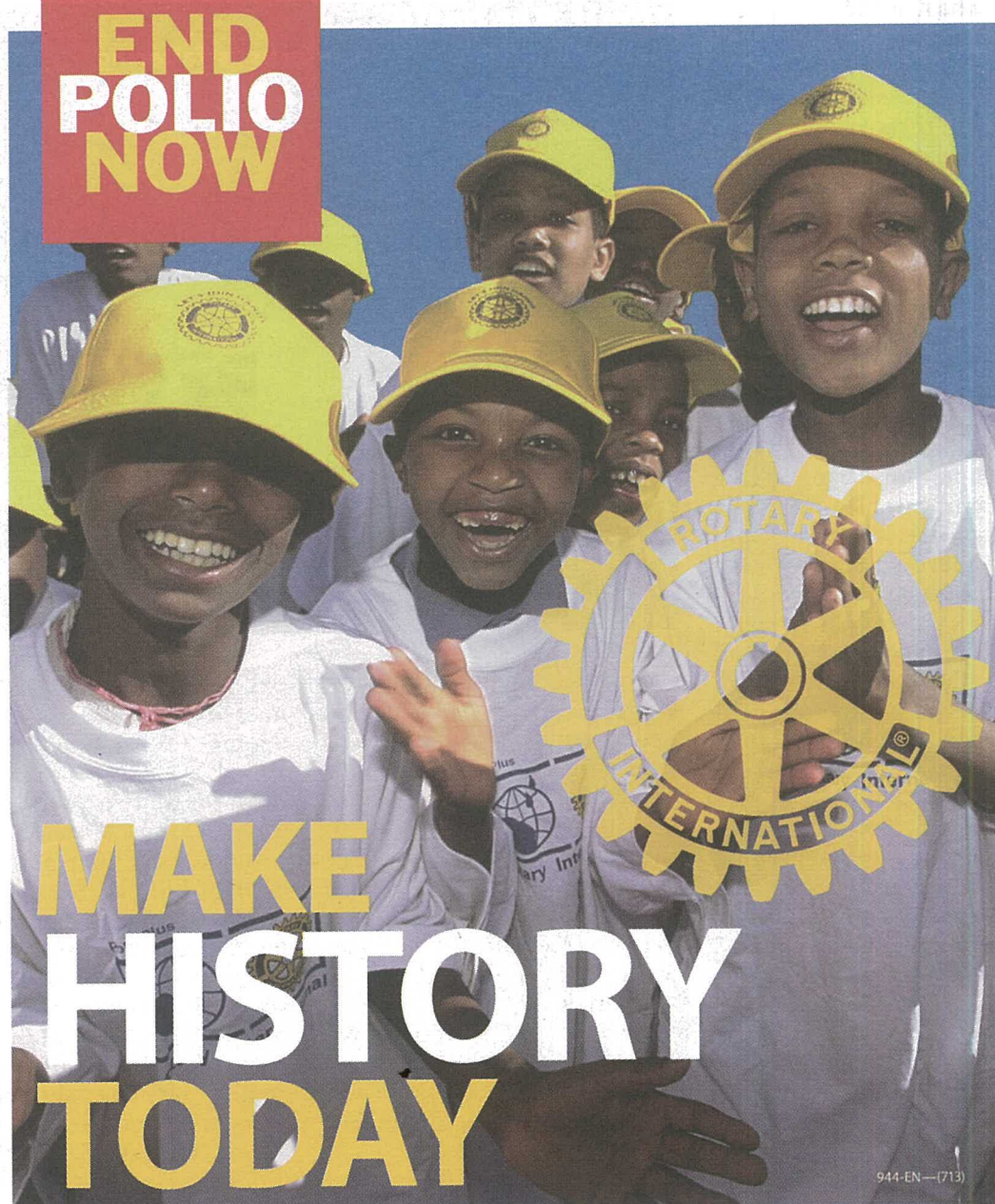
The body has 14 members, with the Secretary for Social Affairs and Culture occupying the role of chairman. The director of the Social Welfare Bureau is the vice chairwoman of the steering committee.

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