

## Macau NPC representatives try autonomous vehicles in Shanghai

A delegation of representatives from the National People's Congress' Macau is currently visiting Shanghai. Their first stop was the SAIC Motor Corporation Limited Technical Center for Passenger Vehicles, where they tried operating an autonomous vehicle. Using a mobile phone, the vehicle was set to move within a certain area. The vehicle was even able to look for a parking spot by itself. The Shanghai government has several designated testing areas for autonomous vehicle technology. The allowed driving distance was initially set at 6 km, but has been extended to 12 km. Current laws mandate assisted auto-pilot in the vehicles, meaning that the operation of an autonomous vehicle must be done under the supervision of a human driver.

## MIA serves 800,000 passengers in April, a new record

Macau International Airport (MIA) served more than 800,000 passengers in April, a new record. Year-on-year comparisons showed an increase of 19%. A 31% increase was recorded over the four-day Easter holiday, amounting to more than 120,000 passengers. This past April also saw the busiest month in the airport's history. A total of 6,400 flights were handled. Passenger counts for the first four months of 2019 were above 3.1 million. Despite the increase, MIA was awarded Level 2 accreditation for control of carbon emissions for the sixth year in a row. The accolade was given by the Airport Council International.

## No AL, gov't consensus on social housing age floor

A review of the bill for the Social Housing Legislation continued at the First Standing Committee of the Legislative Assembly (AL). The bill proposes an increase in the minimum age of applicants from 18 to 23 years of age. However, the committee and the government are yet to reach a consensus with regard to this provision, though both sides have a common interest in preventing the abuse of the benefit. Secretary Raimundo do Rosário said that further discussion was needed to come to a consensus, but he was unable to predict how long it would take. Ho Ion Sang, chairperson of the committee, admitted that the government had taken the committee's suggestion of adding a conditional waiver, which authorizes the Chief Executive to waive the age requirement in certain cases.

# 'GBA will strengthen Sino-Portuguese cooperation,' Chui says

IN an written interview with the Portuguese news agency Lusa, the Macau Chief Executive (CE) Chui Sai On said he believes that the new project aiming to bring together nine cities in the south China region plus the two SARs of Macau and Hong Kong, all together known as the Greater Bay Area (GBA), will strengthen Sino-Portuguese cooperation in several areas, including the training of Chinese-Portuguese bilingual staff.

"The participation of the Portuguese-speaking countries in the construction of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macau Greater Bay [Area] and the 'Belt and Road' initiative can serve to broaden the cooperation field in a way that the fruitful outcomes resulting from China's opening to the world can be shared by all, while moving forward with development that provides mutual benefits," said Chui.



The CE noted, once more, that Macau is one of the four main cities and territories that has highlighted responsibilities within the GBA plan. Macau's role is reinforcing its duty to provide a services platform for commercial cooperation between China and the Portuguese-speaking countries.

On the one hand, Chui noted that China "supports the learning of the Portuguese language and the training of

qualified bilingual staff." The task is clearly defined and in general outlines of the GBA plan. "One of the main projects is defined as the construction of a base that guarantees training of bilingual staff in Chinese and Portuguese languages," a base which would not only be a way of diversifying local economy, but also a useful asset for the MSAR itself.

The interview precedes Chui's visit to Portugal, which

starts tomorrow and runs until May 19.

During his tour of Portugal, the CE will lead a delegation from Macau and tour several cities, in addition to meeting with several of the most important Portuguese officials, including President of the Portuguese Republic Marcelo Rebelo de Sousa, who was in Macau on May 1, and Prime Minister of Portugal António Costa.

Chui will also chair the sixth meeting of the Macau-Portugal Joint Commission with Portugal's Minister of Foreign Affairs Augusto Santos Silva.

In his interview, the CE said, "This visit of the MSAR delegation to Portugal aims at continuing, innovating and strengthening the friendly cooperation between the two sides, in order to achieve more fruitful results for cooperation, deeply boosting future development, contributing to mutual development and other partnerships." RM

## CE approves Anima funding of MOP5 million

Lynzy Valles

THE government funding for animal rights group Anima Macau has been increased from MOP3.8 million to MOP5 million, Anima president Albano Martins announced.

Provided by the Macao Foundation, the increase in funding came after Anima sent a request to the Chief Executive.

Anima's 2019 budget is over MOP11.5 million, while its investment budget is MOP1.2 million. The

latter will mainly cover the renovation of the shelter, as well as operational costs.

However, Martins said that the funds remain insufficient to take care of canines and felines and continued calling on donors.

"We have asked the CE in a letter that [funding of only] MOP3.8 million in a budget of around MOP11 million is very hard. [...] Our request was to approve MOP5 million but this does not mean that our lives will be [easier]," Martins told the Times.

"Our lives are still in

hell because our [2019] budget is around MOP11 million and this means that we still have to find a lot of donors for that," he added.

The animal rights activist recalled that last year's budget was cut down to around MOP8 million due to insufficient funding, explaining that the association has no capacity to earn more.

Anima also faces a challenge with its investment budget, due to the increasing maintenance requirements of the building.

"We can allocate our

resources to find donors but this is not a guarantee. [...]

This maintenance [expense] is an investment as we have to build new areas. [...] This requires money and we don't have that," Martins said, stressing that it would be difficult for him to find a successor.

"It's very hard and I do not understand why this is not clear for many people in Macau," he said, noting that no one would want to be his successor without a monthly wage.

In Anima's letter to the CE, the organiza-

tion suggested that gaming operators should be linked to the city's non-governmental associations to assist these organizations in operating.

He hinted that such a move could be a criteria for the tendering of gaming concessions.

"MOP10 million is peanuts for a casino," he stressed.

In a post on social media, Martins revealed that the public had donated MOP75,673 to the centre in the last three months.

In April last year, Martins announced that the group may have to shut down due to insufficient funding, explaining that it was difficult to balance its annual expenses of MOP10.5 million.

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