

The cover page features a design with three main horizontal sections. The top section is a solid dark green rectangle. Below it is a thin, light green horizontal band. The middle section is white and contains the title text. The bottom section is a large, solid dark green rectangle that occupies the lower half of the page.

# **OVERVIEW OF THE MACAO SPECIAL ADMINISTRATIVE REGION IN 2018**

2018 was a critical year for continuing progress with implementing China's 13th Five Year Plan, and marked an important interim stage of the implementation of Macao's first Five-Year Development Plan. The Government fully supported the strategic development of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area (Greater Bay Area), implemented the Framework Agreement on Deepening Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Cooperation in the Development of the Greater Bay Area, leveraged Macao's advantages to serve our country's needs, and achieved organic integration of Macao's five-year development plan with local governance and development of the Greater Bay Area, to participate in national development.

During the year, the Chief Executive attended the first plenary meeting of the leading group for development of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area. The Government established the Working Committee for the Development of Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area, to coordinate Macao's engagement in the short-, medium- and long-term overall design of the Greater Bay Area and related deployments. The Chief Executive visited nine cities of the Greater Bay Area in phases, leveraged Macao's advantages to proactively establish connections, and cooperated with sister cities of the Greater Bay Area, to promote Macao's adequate economic diversification.

Macao followed the principle of making progress while ensuring stability. In 2018, the Government commenced formulating the Ten-year Plan for Disaster Prevention and Mitigation (2019-2028), developed short-, medium- and long-term plans to cope with typhoon and safety issues, and proceeded with the legislation process for the Civil Protection Fundamental Law, to enhance the crisis management capability to build a safer city. Furthermore, the Government continued improving healthcare services, social security, education and urban planning, to establish Macao as a Creative City of Gastronomy, and expedite Macao's development as a city with more favourable conditions for living, commuting, and visiting.



## Integrating with national development and undertaking mission for the Greater Bay Area



The Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area (“Greater Bay Area”) is a major integral part of overall national strategic development in the new era, a crucial step in the new implementation of the reform and opening-up policy, and an innovation in actions propelling the execution of “One country, two systems”. The development of Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area will deepen cooperation, leverage complementary advantages, foster synergies and win-win benefits, and promote mutual prosperity of Guangdong, Hong Kong and Macao.

The Government fully understands Macao’s role in the reform and opening up of the country in this new era. As we “fully leverage Macao’s advantages according to the country’s requirements”, the Government is determined to fully participate in the deepened implementation of national reform and opening-up strategy, with an innovative mindset and pioneering ambition.

### Outline Development Plan brings Greater Bay Area project to the next level

The Outline Development Plan for the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area (“outline development plan”) was officially announced on 18 February 2019, setting out the strategic positioning, development objectives, spatial layout and every

other aspect of the Greater Bay Area. According to the outline development plan, the Greater Bay Area will develop into not only an energetic world-class city cluster, an international innovation and technology hub, a strong pillar supporting the Belt and Road Initiative, a demonstration zone for comprehensive cooperation between mainland China, Hong Kong and Macao, but also a quality region for living, working and travelling, making itself an exemplar of high-quality development.

Macao is already positioned as “One Centre, One Platform” in China’s 12th Five-year Plan and 13th Five-Year Plan. The outline development plan adds one more aspect to Macao’s positioning: “A base for international multi-cultural exchanges and cooperation with an emphasis on Chinese culture”. In an article signed by Chief Executive Chui Sai On titled “Integrate with national development and take on Macao’s new-era mission”, the positioning of Macao in the development of the Greater Bay Area is said to reveal the positioning of Macao in the strategic development of the country. It is, on one hand, a kind of recognition, expectation and historical opportunity; and on the other hand, a duty and a challenge.

As pointed out by Chui Sai On, “The outline development plan, as the strategic regional development approach of the country, entrusts Macao with the tasks of ‘acting as a base for exchanges and cooperation among diverse cultures’ and ‘taking forward the transmission and development of the fine traditions of Chinese culture, emphasising Chinese culture as the mainstream’, having paid due recognition to Macao’s advantages with respect to its political system, its unique historical status, and its rich history and culture. In other words, Macao is expected to undertake even more responsibilities and tasks.

“Within the overarching strategy and context of national development, the future development of Macao will be oriented towards its defined positioning and tasks,” wrote Chui Sai On, who added, “No matter whether as a Centre, or a Platform, or a Base, Macao is positioned between China and the world. On one hand, this demonstrates the historical status and internationalisation of Macao; and on the other hand, it signifies the important mission of Macao in the interactions between China and the world.”

## **Fostering alignment to demonstrate the advantages of Macao**

On 1 July 2017, President Xi Jinping witnessed in Hong Kong the signing of the Framework Agreement on Deepening Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Cooperation in the Development of the Greater Bay Area between the National Development and Reform Commission and the three municipal governments, laying down the objectives and principles of the Greater Bay Area development, and outlining three major areas of cooperation.

2018 was a crucial year for the National 13th Five-Year Plan, and marked an

important period when the execution of Macao's first Five-Year Plan entered its medium term. To ensure consistent implementation of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area strategy and the Framework Agreement on Deepening Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Cooperation in the Development of the Greater Bay Area, the Government joined hands with representatives of ministries of the Central People's Government and local governments to seek breakthroughs in administrative policies with an open and innovative mindset, jointly pushing ahead with the development of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area.

At the Guangdong-Macao Cooperation Joint Conference held in early January 2018, both governments set out major areas for cooperation, including alignment regarding implementation of the seven major cooperative projects defined in the framework agreement on the Greater Bay Area, thereby joining both regions even more closely through the Greater Bay Area development. To better integrate Macao into the development of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area, and to consistently implement the Framework Agreement on Cooperation Between Guangdong and Macao, the Guangdong-Macau Development Cooperation Fund ("Guangdong-Macao Fund") signing ceremony was held in Guangzhou on 4 May.

The establishment of the Guangdong-Macao Fund was the first accomplishment of innovative financial cooperation between the two regions under the Framework Agreement on Cooperation Between Guangdong and Macao, essentially providing for the cooperative participation of Macao and Guangdong in the Greater Bay Area development. The fund will significantly contribute to infrastructure interconnection, the building of major platforms, the growth of nascent industries, and the building of a quality living area which is favourable for living, work and tourism within the Greater Bay Area, further unifying the development of Macao and Guangdong.

During late June to early July, Chief Executive Chui Sai On led a government delegation to visit nine mainland China cities within the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area: Zhuhai, Guangzhou, Shenzhen, Zhongshan, Jiangmen, Zhaoqing, Foshan, Huizhou and Dongguan. Building on long-standing good relationships and the Framework Agreement on Deepening Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Cooperation in the Development of the Greater Bay Area, the visits helped to further promote close cooperation between Macao and its Greater Bay Area sister cities, and facilitated discussions about cooperation in areas including urban industries, economy and commerce, transportation and youth development, making the best preparations for planning the Greater Bay Area.

As pointed out by Chief Executive Chui Sai On in his report to the Vice Premier of the State Council, Mr Han Zheng, on the Macao projects that are underway for the development of Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area, Macao is committed to the Greater Bay Area development to integrate into the country's master development plan, upholding the essence of the 19th National Congress of

the Communist Party of China. To this end, Macao attached special importance to local developments, launched abundant preliminary studies and preparations, taking the initiative to foster organic integration among Macao's five-year plan, annual administrative policies and the development of the Greater Bay Area.

As recent developments reveal, the adequate economic diversification of the Macao SAR has been limited by factors including inadequacies in talented people and land resources. Now, the Greater Bay Area brings Macao valuable new opportunities to foster the next phase of adequate economic diversification, thereby creating more new opportunities for various social sectors.

## **Five-year plan modified to align with Greater Bay Area development**

In 2018, the Central People's Government set up the leading group for development of Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area, and Chief Executive Chui Sai On, as one of the members, took part in the first plenary meeting held on 15 August. The leading group confirmed the Central People's Government's support for the building of an international technology and innovation centre in the Greater Bay Area, as well as enhanced cooperation among Guangdong, Hong Kong and Macao in technology and innovation.

Chief Executive Chui Sai On said the Macao SAR will fully support the overall national development plan, actively demonstrate its unique advantages in the building of the Greater Bay Area with a focus on the establishment of new mechanisms, modify Macao's five-year plan by adding new content complementing the Greater Bay Area development, and better support the Greater Bay Area with innovative policies and pilot projects.

On 1 September, the Macao SAR Government Policy Research Office and the mainland China affairs task force that was formed under the Chief Executive's Office merged to form the Policy Research and Regional Development Bureau. In line with the unified plan of the leading group for development of Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area, the Committee for Development of the World Centre for Tourism and Leisure led by the Chief Executive held its annual plenary meeting on 20 September, mainly to compile the addendum to Macao's five-year development plan by adding new content complementing the Greater Bay Area development, covering five major areas:

1. Promoting adequate economic diversification of the Macao SAR;
2. Participating in the technological innovation of the Greater Bay Area;

3. Supporting the employment, entrepreneurship and innovation of young people coming to the Greater Bay Area;
4. Fostering infrastructure interconnections in the Greater Bay Area, and
5. Improving measures for the convenience of Macao citizens working and living in the Greater Bay Area.

## Setting up the Working Committee for the Development of Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area

In November, the Chief Executive signed an executive order to set up the Working Committee for the Development of Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area to undertake duties including: overall design and planning of MSAR's participation in the development of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area over short, medium and long terms; pushing ahead with related studies and policymaking; devising annual work schedules and scrutinising their implementation; setting out the approach and guidelines for planned activities; and further improving the building of mechanisms. The Working Committee reports to and is chaired by the Chief Executive.



On 6 December, the Chief Executive, on behalf of the Government, signed the Arrangements for Supporting Macao's Full Participation in Belt and Road Construction together with the National Development and Reform Commission. Focusing on financial cooperation, economic and trade exchange, people-to-people bonds, and the

building of Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area, the arrangement serves to allow Macao to demonstrate its unique advantages, enhance its competitiveness, foster the growth of new strengths, and explore new development opportunities through supporting and participating in Belt and Road construction. Such further self-development has major significance for Macao, which can contribute even more value to the country's reform and opening up as well as further integrate into the country's master development plan.

## **Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge opens to facilitate close integration with Greater Bay Area**

The opening ceremony of the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge was held in Zhuhai, Guangdong, in the morning on 23 October. The General Secretary of the Communist Party of China (CPC) Central Committee, President of the People's Republic of China and Chairman of the Central Military Commission, Xi Jinping, attended the ceremony to announce the official opening of the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge followed by an on-site visit. The first massive sea-crossing transportation infrastructure jointly built by Guangdong, Hong Kong and Macao under the principle of "One country, two systems", the inauguration of the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge marks a major milestone for the development of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area.

With the support of related ministries and the Guangdong provincial government, the construction of the Macao border crossing management area of the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge together with the networking links and various preparatory works were essentially completed in December 2017. With the approval of the State Council, they were officially delivered to the MSAR at 0:00 a.m. on 15 March 2018, thereby coming under the jurisdiction of the Macao SAR.

The Macao border crossing management area on the artificial island for the Zhuhai/Macao boundary crossing facilities is a major component of the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge. The Zhuhai-Macao Passenger Clearance Building employs an innovative clearance mechanism of "joint inspections for one-stop border crossing". The opening of the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge and Zhuhai-Macao passenger clearance facilities are strong examples of regional cooperation under the principle of "One country, two systems", signifying the vast potential for effective development of Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area cities in future.

The opening of the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge also marks an acceleration in Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao integration, directly benefiting Macao in the economy, conventions and exhibitions, and trade and commerce.

According to the Outline Development Plan for the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao

Greater Bay Area, Macao will further demonstrate its advantages as a world tourism and leisure centre and a commercial and trade services platform between China and Portuguese-speaking countries, fostering the growth of nascent industries and expediting adequate economic diversification. Given the varied industrial orientation and positioning of Greater Bay Area cities, it is necessary for Macao to fully utilise its unique advantages, follow the strategy of positioned cooperation and complimentary development, and make the best use of policy benefits and the momentum of innovation to make Greater Bay Area cities the bases for its adequate economic diversification, thereby opening up vast development potential for Macao.

## Enhancing crisis management capacity to build a safer city



Building a city favourable for living, commuting and tourism is one of the major tasks in the MSAR Government's Five-Year Development Plan. While commencing various construction projects and enhancing living and commuting conditions, the Government attaches great importance to building a safer city, to protect the lives and property of Macao people.

Since Typhoon Hato hit Macao on 23 August 2017, the Government has continued to review and improve its mechanism for responding to major disasters and their aftermath, as well as promoting and implementing policies on weather disaster prevention and mitigation. The security related departments followed recommendations

from the National Commission for Disaster Reduction to draw up short-, medium-, and long-term plans for response to typhoon and safety issues, and launched relevant follow-up work and refinements for civil protection, disaster relief work coordination and reforming systems.

## **Promptly releasing accurate information to effectively coordinate disaster relief**

Ensuring accurate information flows is important for tackling disasters and preventing secondary disasters. The civil protection management team is strengthening the coordination mechanism while further expanding information distribution and communication channels. As the core of disaster prevention and mitigation, the Civil Protection Operations Centre set up a public broadcasting system to facilitate information exchanges between the centre's staff members.

Regarding external communications, the Civil Protection Operations Centre set up 12 assistance and enquiry hotlines after the civil protection management team commenced full operations. Hotlines have also been established for the Customs Service, the Public Security Police and the Fire Service. Upon commencement of operations of the civil protection management team, the number of public hotlines available will increase from 25 to 55. Police transceivers have also been distributed to neighbourhood associations in various districts, for communicating and enhancing cooperation with the Civil Protection Centre, medical institutions, water supplies and power companies for situation reporting and requesting assistance during disasters.

To ensure the public can receive accurate information on a timely basis, the civil protection management team set up audible sirens in low-lying areas, and installed high frequency alarms on the radio transmitters at Guia Lighthouse, Taipa Grande and Alto de Coloane, to broadcast weather warning, flood warning and typhoon warning signals. Civil protection information broadcasts and display systems have also been installed at major border checkpoints, to disseminate the latest news to any stranded passengers and the public.

After Typhoon Hato, the public security forces established a working group for dissemination of civil protection information. Apart from consolidating and coordinating releases of information under the fully operational civil protection management team, the working group also cooperates with other departments to deepen publicity and education on disaster relief, and raise public awareness of preventing and responding to disasters.

Coordinated by the Office of the Secretary for Security, various units and departments have been working with the Government Information Bureau to discuss and refine work related to dissemination of civil protection information, and will continue establishing

a mechanism for closer communication with and improved information dissemination to the media.

## **Effective measures proven and recognised for tackling another strong typhoon**

After a year of optimisation and preparation, the disaster prevention and mitigation mechanism was proven effective when Typhoon Mangkhut hit Macao on 16 September 2018. Led by the Chief Executive, the public security forces joined hands with other administrative units, departments under the civil protection management team and Macao residents, to cope with the typhoon. Casualties were prevented, injuries and losses were minimised, and society quickly returned to normal. The adopted measures received wide recognition and appreciation from all.

On 13 September, Typhoon Mangkhut was on a track towards Macao. The Chief Executive held a meeting and paid site visits to low-lying areas. He listened to reports from members of the civil protection management team on how to tackle Typhoon Mangkhut, and the implementation of the evacuation plan for storm surge in low-lying areas during the typhoon. As Macao was forecast to be hit by Typhoon Mangkhut, the Chief Executive visited the Civil Protection Operations Centre five times, to hold meetings to be briefed about the situation and give instructions on disaster response efforts.

On the morning of 15 September, the Secretary for Security called for a general meeting with the public security forces, urging all departments to maintain close communications, and be well prepared for the typhoon impact. That afternoon, the Secretary for Security and representatives of the civil protection management team jointly organised a press conference to introduce their preparations for tackling the typhoon.

Through coordination by the Government, 627 parking spaces of various government department car parks and many temporary parking spaces were opened for public parking. Six casino operators also provided 2,770 free private vehicle parking spaces to the public from 15 to 18 September, with the aim of minimising damage to vehicles arising from flooding.

Based on a risk assessment by the Civil Protection Operations Centre, the Chief Executive also requested the six casino operators to suspend operation from 11 p.m. on 15 September to 8 a.m. on 17 September, to ensure the safety of related personnel, and prevent public safety risks for casino workers and tourists, thus easing stress for casino employees.

After timely communication and coordination with the Zhuhai Municipal Government,

three checkpoints – at the Border Gate, the Zhuhai-Macao Cross-border Industrial Zone and Cotai – were closed at 1 a.m. on 16 September, to ensure the safety of local residents and visitors.

On 15 September, Macao issued the Red Storm Surge alert at 9 p.m. The civil protection management team commenced full operations, and implemented the evacuation plan for storm surge in low-lying areas during a typhoon. Twenty-nine representatives of bodies under the civil protection management team were stationed at the Civil Protection Operations Centre, to meet and coordinate all related operations.

From 2 a.m. to 11 p.m. on 16 September, Typhoon Signals No. 8, 9 and 10 were hoisted in succession. At 2 p.m., the Black Storm Surge alert was issued. Areas in S. Lourenco Market, Inner Harbour, Fai Chi Kei and Ilha Verde were heavily flooded, with the highest water depth of 1.9 metres recorded at the Inner Harbour. The Customs Service and Fire Service Bureau deployed a new model inflatable crafts and jet skis to evacuate residents.

As the evacuation plan for storm surge in low-lying areas during a typhoon was activated, all units of the Public Security Forces operated in their districts to evacuate residents and tourists from low-lying areas to safe places. Totals of 16 emergency shelters and four assembly points for people with limited mobility, and four places to stay during emergency evacuations were opened to the public. In all, 5,650 households were evacuated, with 1,343 people transferred to emergency shelters during the peak period.

When there were changes to typhoon signals and storm surge alerts, the civil protection management team broadcast the updated warnings in Cantonese, Putonghua, Portuguese and English via the alarm devices installed at three higher spots on Macao peninsula, Taipa and Coloane, and 90 closed circuit television camera posts in low-lying areas, to alert the public regarding the severity of the typhoon and urge evacuations.

During the typhoon, the Government disseminated accurate, detailed information on a timely basis through the media, to reassure people, allowing the Government to focus on its response measures so it could tackle the typhoon.

After Typhoon Signal No.3 was issued at 4 a.m. on 17 September, over 2,000 officials from the Unitary Police Service, the Customs Service, the Judiciary Police, the Public Security Police Force, the Fire Service and the Academy of Public Security Forces immediately joined hands with the Civic and Municipal Affairs Bureau to commence clean-up work. Major roads and streets were reopened to traffic before noon that day.

All clean-up work throughout Macao was completed on 18 September. The Correctional Service Bureau, Customs Service, Education and Youth Affairs Bureau and

over 2,700 volunteers from more than a dozen of community organisations formed clean-up teams. Three construction industry associations also offered their pumps and heavy-duty machinery, to assist in disaster relief work. Public order in Macao was restored within a short time.

The Government also decided to suspend classes for all students on 17 September, and exempted civil servants from going back to the office, to ensure smooth progress with clean-up work, to expedite the recovery of public order and people's normal lives.

### Implementing short-, medium- and long-term plans to optimise disaster prevention and mitigation



Regarding facilities and hardware, the Government acquired a variety of rescue and reconstruction equipment and tools, to strengthen the public security forces' disaster prevention and mitigation capability. These included an unmanned undersea reconnaissance vehicle, a cable-operated underwater robot, underwater communication devices with snorkelling gear, a fibreglass offshore patrol boat with night vision and surveillance functions, several models of inflatable craft, generators, large diameter water pumps, motor saws, chain saws, large electric cutting machines, electric saws, and tree shears.

Medium-term plans include construction of the Civil Protection and Emergency Operations Centre Building. The construction plan was handed over to the public works department in 2018. Apart from building the essential facilities in the office building, storage for material supplies will be included for effective management and coordination of disaster relief work. Before the completion of the office building, the

Unitary Police Service has already commenced expansion work on the third floor of the Immigration Department Building in Taipa, which is serving as a temporary office before the authority responsible for civil protection affairs is established.

While optimising measures and operations, the Government also followed the short-, medium-, and long-term plans for responding to typhoon and safety issues, to review the existing legal system related to civil protection, organisational structure, work and operational mechanism, and began drafting the Civil Protection Fundamental Law and its supplementary regulations.

Coordinated by the Office of the Secretary for Security, the Unitary Police Service conducted a 45-day public consultation from 28 June to 11 August, to collect opinions and suggestions from different sectors of society.

Also, the Secretary for Security, the Unitary Police Service and the Public Security Forces Affairs Bureau cooperated with high schools and scientific research companies in mainland China to develop an emergency command application platform. Parts of the sub-system were completed in April 2018. The platform framework was tested during the “Crystal Fish” drill on 28 April.

The system was further enhanced through referring to the feedback on the test, with the aim of establishing a preliminary application platform: the “Single Puzzle”, with five sub-systems - resource management, incident reporting, emergency response, alert announcement, and a kernel module.

## **Safeguarding infrastructure to reduce impact of disasters on people’s livelihoods**

The Government also strived to further safeguard infrastructure against disasters, to support people’s livelihoods. In 2018, Macao finished installing infrastructure for power supply facilities, altered the power grid circuits, enhanced waterproofing of facilities related to public utilities, and began implementing related measures, to ensure the safety of power and water supplies.

There were also improvements in over 80 transformer rooms in low-lying areas. The Government reviewed Macao’s electricity supplies and expedited construction of the sets of new natural gas power generators, to upgrade local power generation capacity. It also worked with mainland China to review and formulate contingency plans, in order to safeguard emergency power supplies.

Three high-voltage substations have been built to optimise local power supply grids. Two of these – the substations at the Conde S. Januario Hospital and the Macao border crossing area of the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge – commenced operations on

schedule in 2018, while construction of the Islands District Medical Complex substation was completed by the end of the year.

In another measure to safeguard electricity supplies, cable laying for the third Guangdong-Macao high-voltage electric power transmission channel commenced in 2018.

Regarding optimisation of water supplies, construction of Seac Pai Van Water Treatment Plant commenced in 2018. After completion, it will satisfy the increased demand for water supplies in the Islands District. To ensure stability of emergency water supplies, the Government finished reviewing the Contingency Plan for Ensuring Safety of Water Supplies in Macao, and conducted research on building more high storage reservoirs in elevated locations in Macao; these are expected to extend the buffer time of water supplies from 4 hours to 12 hours. The Government also facilitated formulation of a regional disaster contingency response collaboration mechanism by a Guangdong-Macao water supply taskforce.

Targeting the problems with flooding in low-lying areas, in 2018 work commenced on implementing a series of flood prevention and drainage plans, to improve flood prevention capability and drainage infrastructure. This included expedited construction of sluices at the Inner Harbour, flood barriers in low-lying coastal areas, drains to intercept rainwater, and stormwater pumping stations in the Inner Harbour, to reduce the risk of flooding in low-lying areas.

Regarding the medium-to-long-term perspective, the Government completed its report on the Research on the Master Plan for Flood Prevention, Drainage Infrastructure and Drainage of Floods in Macao Inner Harbour Seafront Area, in accordance with comments from related ministries of the Central People's Government, and submitted the revised version to the ministries for approval. Meanwhile, the Feasibility Study on



Constructing Sluices in Macao Inner Harbour — Engineering Research and Research Study was approaching completion. The Government will continue communicating with related departments in mainland China, and implement the projects through regional cooperation.

Based on the improvement work that has been completed in the Inner Harbour, the Government commenced the Study on the Optimisation and Emergency Plan for Flood Prevention and Drainage of Floodwaters in the Inner Harbour of Macao. It is planned that flood control barriers will be constructed in the Inner Harbour area, to reduce the risk of seawater spilling over the bund and flooding the low-lying areas of the Inner Harbour. The design has been completed, and the tender exercise for the construction project will commence.

The Government is committed to improving weather monitoring and alert capability, to cope with extreme weather and climate disasters that may happen in future. To expand the climate monitoring range, the Meteorological and Geophysical Bureau (SMG) set up more weather stations including precipitation monitoring stations in 2018, to strengthen weather monitoring in densely populated districts. The Government also optimised the equipment of water-level monitoring stations, to enhance flood monitoring.

Moreover, the tropical cyclone signals and the storm surge warning system were revised, to optimise the warning systems. The SGM also adjusted the assessment of tropical cyclone strengths and wind speeds for typhoon signals, and expanded the bandwidth dedicated to sharing meteorological data with Guangdong province, to enhance the capability for providing alerts regarding approaching severe weather and potential climate disasters.

## **Implementing the Five-year Development Plan for more comfortable living and commuting**

Apart from being committed to boosting the ability to mitigate and prevent disasters, the Government continued implementing its Five-year Development Plan, with the aim of constructing a city for comfortable living and commuting.

There was further progress with reclamation for new urban areas. Work has commenced on designing infrastructure in Zone A, and the design of piping and sewage infrastructure within the district was completed in phases. For the New Urban Zone B (the government administration and judicial zone), a tender exercise has commenced on infrastructure and road design, while a study on selecting the site of the district's electricity substation was underway. The Government also expedited the

planning and analysis of facility construction in the district. Upon completion of the analysis, work will commence on preparing budgets and tenders.

The tender exercise for reclamation in New Urban Zone C was completed on schedule, and the project has already begun. The design of New Urban Zone D was also completed on schedule, and the tender exercise will soon be conducted.

To ensure that LRT Taipa line could satisfy the requirements for commencing operations in 2019, the Government established an LRT operating company in 2018. Drafting of the Light Rapid Transit Law was completed, and the draft law was submitted to the Legislative Assembly for deliberation.

As most work on the LRT Taipa line and construction of the LRT depot superstructure was completed, in 2018 the Government proceeded with installing the installation for LRT trains. A total of 110 carriages were delivered to Macao on schedule, and follow-up tests were conducted. Preliminary construction work of A-Ma station, which connects Taipa and Macao Peninsula, was completed in 2018, and construction of the major section of the station immediately commenced. Meanwhile, construction of A-Ma transport interchange proceeded as planned.

Regarding the LRT Seac Pai Van line, work on the connection between LRT Seac Pai Van line and Taipa line commenced on schedule in 2018, and the design of the route for LRT Seac Pai Van line was completed. During the year, work began on rerouting underground utilities along the route. The Government also conducted a study on the route for the LRT East line. According to the plan, this line will connect the Taipa Ferry Terminal, and pass through the New Urban Zone A to the Border Gate. The study on the route also assesses a plan to connect New Urban Zone A with the Macao border crossing area of Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge and the Outer Harbour Ferry Terminal.

To satisfy Macao people's demand for housing, construction of public housing continued during 2018. Projects completed during the year included Cheng Tou Building, Fai Ieng Building and Bairro da Ilha Verde Building. Moreover, construction of the second phase of Mong Ha Public Housing project, Toi San Public Housing Estate and Venceslau de Morais public housing project also commenced.

The public housing projects in the development plan include the tender exercise for the phase-one design of public housing in New Urban Zone A; and the tender exercise for the phase-one design of Wai Long public housing project; a feasibility study for the latter was completed on schedule in 2018.

Regarding public housing allocation and management, the Government continued upholding the policy of "Public housing as the core, supplemented by the Home Ownership Scheme" to accelerate the process for approving public housing

applications. The Government followed up the assessments of applications for multi-room housing units, and arranged for qualified applicants to select and purchase Home-Ownership Scheme housing units; it also followed up regarding assessments of public housing applications submitted since 2017.

## **Expediting construction of convenient border-crossing facilities for participation in development of the Greater Bay Area**

To support the operation of Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge, construction of the Macao border crossing area was completed, and it was handed over to the Government on 15 March 2018. Construction of two bridges in New Urban Zone A – which connect with the Macao border crossing area of Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge and Pérola Oriental of the Macao Peninsula, respectively – was also completed.

Construction of a new Guangdong-Macao border crossing is among the Guangdong-Macao cooperation projects. It mainly includes construction of the new border checkpoint (Qingmau Checkpoint), the border crossing channel, and the Canal dos Patos improvement works.

To support the first phase of the construction, the old wholesale market was demolished in 2018, immediately after the completion of construction of the new wholesale market. Construction of the two checkpoint buildings of the Qingmu Checkpoint (one on the Macao side, the other on the Zhuhai side) and the connected crossing commenced on schedule. Guangdong province and Macao also reached a consensus regarding the final plan for the Canal dos Patos improvement project, after which work commenced on the design.

The third phase of construction of Taipa Ferry Terminal commenced on schedule during 2018. Meanwhile, the facilities of Taipa Ferry Terminal and Outer Harbour Ferry Terminal were also optimised.

## **Promoting environmental protection to build an ecologically advanced city**

Environmental protection is an important element of sustainable development. In 2018, the Government made further progress in recycling, waste reduction, energy conservation, waste and sewage treatment, and air quality enhancement, to promote environmental protection.

According to Macao's Five-year Development Plan and the Framework Agreement on Cooperation Between Guangdong and Macao in Environmental Protection, the MSAR Government expedited coordination with related regulatory authorities in

mainland China regarding inter-regional transfers of scrapped vehicles. During the second half of the year, a pilot scheme was initiated to transfer two batches of pre-processing scrapped motor vehicles, totalling 300 vehicles, to mainland China. This was followed by the construction of a pre-processing facility for scrapped vehicles.

Regarding inert construction and demolition materials, the tender process for improving construction waste landfill material commenced in 2018. The Environmental Protection Bureau assisted the recycling industry by launching an equipment and vehicle subsidy scheme.

Regarding energy conservation and pollutant reduction, the number of light-vehicle charging spaces was increased to 170 by the end of 2018. Moreover, more than 30 percent of the transitional streetlights were replaced by LED lights, helping to save more energy.

The Macao Sewage Treatment Facilities Master Plan and the Assessment of Macao's Overall Solid Waste Management System were completed in 2018. Regarding the facilities, construction of the Cross-border Industrial Zone Sewage Treatment Plant in Macao – a facility for pre-processing sludge discharges from Qingzhou tap water supply company, was completed in 2018, further enhancing the water quality in Canal dos Patos. Tenders have been invited for design and expansion of Macao Incineration Centre, and optimisation and operational maintenance of Macao Peninsula Sewage Treatment Plant. Work has begun on the preliminary design for upgrading Coloane Sewage Treatment Plant.

The Government finished reviewing the new exhaust emission standards for imported vehicles and motor vehicles, and the exhaust emission standards for in-use vehicles. To tackle Macao's roadside air quality problem, the SMG assessed the roadside air quality monitoring stations in all districts, and acquired lightweight, mobile air quality monitoring equipment, which suits Macao's narrow streets.

The draft-by-law regulating the air pollutant emission standards and for monitoring companies operating facilities such as oil storage tanks, power plants and sewage treatment plants, and the chemical pharmaceuticals industry, has entered legislative procedures.

## Making Stable Economic Progress and Integrating into the Greater Bay Area to Enhance Driving Force



In 2018, the trade relationship between the United States of America and China led to uncertainties in the global economy, but Macao's economic foundation remained sound. Macao's gross domestic product (GDP) for the year amounted to 440.3 billion patacas, with a growth rate of 4.7 percent in real terms, somewhat slower than in 2017, when there was a 9.7 percent increase. The GDP per capita was 666,893 patacas.

Macao's public finances remained sound and healthy, and the job market was favourable. The unemployment rate for the year was 1.8 percent, representing a year-on-year decrease of 0.2 percentage points. This was the seventh consecutive year in which the unemployment rate remained at two percent or below. The overall median monthly income of Macao's employed population was 16,000 patacas, while that of local residents was 20,000 patacas; both figures were 1,000 patacas than in the previous year. For 10 consecutive quarters, the inflation rate has remained relatively low. The annual inflation rate was 3.01 percent.

Leveraging Macao's advantages and serving our country's needs, the Government rolled out a series of initiatives dedicated to actively engaging in the development of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area, striving to strengthen its positioning as "One Centre, One Platform", and supporting the implementation of the Five-year Development Plan of the Macao Special Administration Region (2016-2020).

## Engaging in regional cooperation and strengthening Macao's position as Sino-Portuguese platform

In 2018, the Government continued establishing a financial services platform between China and Portuguese-speaking countries, and developing Macao as a Renminbi clearing centre for Portuguese-speaking countries. The Monetary Authority of Macao signed the new Cooperation and Technical Assistance Agreement with the Portuguese Insurance and Pension Funds Supervisory Authority, while the Macao Branch of Bank of China signed the Renminbi Clearing and Settlement Agreement and the Renminbi Business Agreement with Portuguese Commercial Bank and Portuguese Agricultural Credit Cooperatives, respectively.

The Government also enhanced the promotion of Portuguese-speaking countries' products and expedited the development of Macao as a food trading and distribution centre for Portuguese-speaking countries. Through cooperating with chambers of commerce and enterprises, a display network for food products from Portuguese-speaking countries was formed in Macao and various cities in mainland China.

In the first half of 2018, Portuguese-speaking Countries Food Promotion and Business Matching Sessions were held in Foshan, Zhaoqing, Huizhou, Dongguan and Fuzhou; while in the second half of 2018, similar promotion and business matching sessions were held in Shenyang and Wuhan, to facilitate the entry of Portuguese-speaking countries' products to the mainland China market.

## Fostering development of nascent industries to promote adequate economic diversification

The Government continued improving the supporting measures and incentives for the development of the convention and exhibition industry, with conventions as the priority. In 2018, the number of large-scale quality conventions with over a thousand participants was more than doubled compared with that of 2017; meanwhile, to enhance the internationalisation and professionalism of the industry, the Government continued joining hands with "Convention Ambassadors" to attract more professional conventions and events to be held in Macao.

The Macao Trade and Investment Promotion Institute received the "Best Convention and Exhibition Bureau" award at the 29th Annual TTG Travel Awards. To promote external interactions and cooperation and raise the quality of human resources of the industry, for the first time, training places at CEMCHINA Certified Exhibition Management and the UFI Exhibition Management Degree (EMD) in Macao were reserved for employees in the convention and exhibition industry in countries and regions along the "Belt and Road", and in Portuguese-speaking countries, the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area and Pan-Pearl River Delta cities.

In 2018, the Cultural Industry Fund launched the Community Cultural and Creative Production Subsidy Scheme and the Specific Subsidy Scheme for Brand Building. Subsidies totalling 6.3 million patacas were provided to 22 projects in the first phase of the scheme, with the aim of encouraging retail and catering companies in the community to embrace culture and creativity, in order to tie in with Macao's positioning as a world tourism and leisure centre and a Creative City of Gastronomy.

The Specific Subsidy Scheme for Brand Building aims to encourage collaboration between more Macao enterprises in various sectors, especially in the fashion, design, cultural performance, and film and television industries, in order to expedite the export of Macao's cultural products and services to overseas markets.

By the end of 2018, a total of 108 enterprises had registered in the Traditional Chinese Medicine Science and Technology Industrial Park of Cooperation Between Guangdong and Macao (GMTCM Park), including 26 Macao enterprises in fields such as traditional Chinese medicine, health care products, medical devices and health care services. The Government expedited the park's software and hardware development. The public services platform was completed and commenced operations.

Regarding regional cooperation in Chinese medicine, the Liaison Office of Guangdong Food and Drug Administration and the Research Centre of Traditional Chinese Medicine Technology and Policy were officially launched in the park in July 2018; the Chengdu University of Traditional Chinese Medicine (Macao) International Education project was also driven forward; while traditional Chinese medicine enterprises of Fujian were helped to register in Macao, and register their products and engage in trade in Mozambique. A plaque unveiling ceremony for the Preparatory Office for the Traditional Chinese Medicine Centre of Mozambique was held in Maputo in July 2018, and preparations were made for establishing an overseas centre for Chinese medicine in Mozambique.



Regarding specialised financial services, the Government strived to attract quality financial institutions to establish bases in Macao, improved the legal system, and implemented several measures to foster the development of the financial leasing industry. In May 2018, the Legal System Governing Financial Leasing Business passed its first reading at the Legislative Assembly; the Government will proceed with the legislation.

Legal experts were commissioned to study the feasibility of introducing the Trust Law to Macao; and the industry was encouraged to create more investment products, especially Renminbi-denominated wealth management products.

Work commenced on amending the Interest Subsidy Scheme on Bank Loans to Enterprises commenced, and consideration was given to making green financial loans eligible for interest subsidies.

The Government organised professional training courses to facilitate development of the financial services industry and, through the interdepartmental cooperation mechanism, financial institutions were assisted with bringing in overseas professionals and senior management personnel who can also nurture the industry.

## **Strengthening supervision of the gaming industry and promoting integrated development with non-gaming industries**

In 2018, gaming revenue totalled 302.846 billion patacas, representing year-on-year growth of 14 percent, and a record high record since the peaks in 2012 and 2014.

The Government continued following up on the post-interim review of the gaming industry, and conducted special audits and audits of gaming enterprises and gaming promoters.

While strictly processing all gaming table applications, and regulating the pace of gaming industry expansion, the Government continued enabling gaming enterprises to increase input of non-gaming elements, and give priority to procuring local products and services, while monitoring how the gaming industry gave impetus to non-gaming industries and benefited local enterprises.

## **Improving the business environment to help SMEs grow and innovate**

In 2018, the Government continued implementing various schemes to support small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). Partnering with social groups, the Government commenced the procedures for assessing “Time-honoured Local Shops”, to support

the development of these shops. A first batch of 12 shops were bestowed the title of “Time-honoured Local Shop”. Also, the Government continued supporting chambers of commerce with launching the one-stop cross-boundary e-commerce service, to help Macao SMEs to more effectively tap into the mainland China market.

In 2018, the SME Subsidy Scheme for Installation of Anti-flooding Lifts and the SME Subsidy Scheme for Installation of Anti-flooding Gates and Water Pumps were rolled out, to subsidise the installation of anti-flooding lifts and anti-flooding gates by SMEs.

By the end of 2018, 53 applications had been received for the SME Subsidy Scheme for Installation of Anti-flooding Lifts, and 1,164 applications for the SME Subsidy Scheme for Installation of Anti-flooding Gates and Water Pumps. Also, the SME Assistance Scheme had received 11,249 applications, of which 9,930 were approved, for assistance totalling 2.924 billion patacas.

## Comprehensive support and multi-level coverage model to improve livelihoods



In 2018, the Government adhered to the administrative principle of “Be pragmatic yet enterprising, and share the fruits of development”, implemented the development

goals in the Five-year Development Plan of the Macao Special Administration Region (2016-2020), strived to enhance people's livelihoods, improved healthcare services, promoted building Macao as a healthy city, strengthened the social security system, upheld the development strategies of "letting Macao thrive through education" and "building Macao with talented people", promoted Macao as a "Creative City of Gastronomy" through interdepartmental collaboration, and facilitated development of culture, tourism and sports.

## Improving medical services and prioritising prevention to continue building Macao as a healthy city

Regarding health-related issues, the Government implemented the principle of "improve medical services and prioritise prevention", supported the Ten-year Plan for Disaster Prevention and Mitigation, strengthened the ability to respond to disasters and emergencies, optimised the contingency system and planning, prepared and applied for accreditation for membership of the WHO Emergency Medical Teams (EMT) Initiative; expanded sentinel surveillance of infectious diseases to private clinics, and encouraged residents to receive immunisation, thus building a strong immunological barrier in the community.

The Government attached extra importance to healthcare services for particular groups, including the elderly, women, children, the disabled and the underprivileged. In recent years, we have increased provision of early treatment services and strengthened family support, so that the average waiting time for diagnosis and treatment has shortened by 90 percent to one month, while people in urgent need receive immediate treatment. Some new measures were introduced, including a pilot scheme for specialist outreach treatment services, and health assessment services for senior citizens.

The Government added new check-up items in prenatal check-up services and tests for genetic diseases, and promoted breast-feeding, to ensure the health of pregnant women and children. The mortality rates of newborn babies and pregnant women remained at very low levels. The five-year survival rates of breast cancer, cervical cancer and colorectal cancer remained among the highest in the world. The average life expectancy in Macao was 83.4 years, which was among the highest life expectancies for any country or territory.

The public health services continued improving. The construction of the Ka Ho Rehabilitation Hospital was completed, to cater for the demands for rehabilitation services. On 31 July, the Bairro da Ilha Verde Health Centre commenced operations, increasing the total number of health centres in Macao to eight, and optimising the grassroots healthcare service network in the northern district.

The Health Bureau continued introducing new technologies and equipment,

extended service hours, optimised the mental health service mechanism, commenced work related to organ transplants, expanded the application of Chinese medicine in the community, commenced work under the Plan for Improvement of the Medical and HealthCare System, and further strengthened cooperation with non-profit and private medical institutions, to provide quality medical services.

The Macao Academy of Medical Specialists commenced operations, to coordinate specialist training for medical doctors in Macao. The Government strived to follow up the legislation for the System for Professional Qualifications and Licensing for Medical Workers, to ensure Macao meets international standards for medical professional accreditation.

The Government actively promoted “Smart Healthcare”, introduced electronic healthcare vouchers, and extended the vouchers’ eligibility period to two years. Self-service registration kiosks for the Electronic Health Record Sharing System were introduced, to make good use of the diverse new media channels and deepen health education. Moreover, the Tobacco Control Law was strictly enforced to foster healthy lifestyles.

Regarding sports, the Government promoted sports for all, and continued implementing a dual-track policy on promoting sport-for-all and competitive sports.

The Sports Bureau published the Report on an Investigation of Sports Venues in Macao 2017, showing that sports venues in Macao occupied a total area of 873,512.58 square metres. This provides scientific data for sports facility planning in future. The Government strived to expand sports facilities, create opportunities in sport, and expand the public sports facility network to cover different sectors in the community and develop sports businesses for the benefit of people’s health.

## **Improving the social security system to support the elderly and the underprivileged**

The Government continued perfecting the social security system, including the two-tier social security system, social support and social welfare, to enhance support for the underprivileged; widened the scope of innovative services – including rehabilitation and services for the elderly, children’s early treatment services, services for elderly persons with dementia, and child-care services; constructed accessibility facilities; supported the underprivileged and financially disadvantaged families; disbursed old age allowances and disability gratuities; and established a disaster prevention mechanism, to safeguard people’s wellbeing and safety.

Regarding social support, the Government has completed assessing 10,000 financial subsidy applications and formulated poverty alleviation plans for eligible applicants.

In the past five years, an average of some 500 families were lifted out of poverty every year. Their living burdens were also relieved by the food assistance programme and special living allowances.

The Law on Preventing and Combating Domestic Violence was fully implemented, and underprivileged families were prioritised for childcare services. In 2018, quotas for childcare services were increased to 11,000, ten percent more than in 2017.

To facilitate the long-term development of retirement protection, after years of research, discussion and consultation, the Legal System for Protection of Rights of the Elderly (Law No. 12/2018) was promulgated on 20 August 2018, and came into effect on 19 November.

There was further progress in implementing the Ten-year Action Plan for Elderly Services (2016-2025). Among the Action Plan's 141 medium-term (2018-2020) projects, 13 projects were completed ahead of schedule in 2017, and 58 projects were rolled out in 2018. The Outdoor Emergency Tele-assistance Service was introduced, to help dementia patients. The new Ka-Ho Nursing Home commenced operations, providing more than 200 places for residential care services.

There was also progress with rehabilitation services, as the Government continued coordinating with relevant departments regarding the implementation of the Ten-year Development Plan for Rehabilitation Services 2016-2025. Out of 125 medium term items (2018-2020), 53 had been completed in 2017, and 38 would be implemented in 2018.

To meet the needs of social development, the Taipa and Coloane Social Service Centre in Seac Pai Van commenced operation during the year, while the services provided by the Central and Southern District (Patane) Social Service Centre were restructured. The General Guidelines on Design and Construction of Accessibility Facilities in the Macao SAR were fully implemented, and projects to enhance social service facilities will be implemented.

A cross-departmental disaster prevention working committee was set up, to coordinate with the civil protection authorities. The Government set up 16 emergency shelters and four emergency assembly and evacuation points, which played important roles during Typhoon Mangkhut.

The Non-mandatory Central Provident Fund System came into effect in 2018, marking the official establishment of the two-tier social security system, to ensure retirement security for residents.

The Old-age Allowance was increased from 8,000 patacas per year to 9,000 patacas per year, representing an increase of 12.5 percent. The Government continued

disbursing disability gratuities, and converted temporary disability allowances into a long-term welfare measure through amendment to a law. These disability allowances are disbursed through the Social Security Fund. Meanwhile, the Employment Incentive Programme for Disability Pension Beneficiaries was launched, to promote community participation by people with disabilities.

To implement a healthy birth policy and increase the fertility rate, the birth allowance under the Social Security Fund was increased to 5,000 patacas, and both parents may simultaneously apply for this allowance for babies born after 1 January 2018.

The Government continued to open Non-Mandatory Central Provident Fund individual accounts for eligible Macao residents, who were entitled for a special allocation of 7,000 patacas. This marked the ninth year of allocations from the fund. In 2018, over 370,000 residents fulfilled the requirements for receiving allocations from the fund.

## Letting Macao thrive through education and emphasising cultivation of youth talent



The Government adhered to the development approaches of “letting Macao thrive through education” and “building Macao with talented people”, promoted talent cultivation through education, exchanges, internships and launching support and subsidy programmes, encouraged and supported young people in Macao to seize opportunities arising through the Belt and Road initiative and the development of the

Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area, to expand their scope for further studies, employment and potential for starting businesses.

Regarding non-tertiary education, the Government expanded the structure and content of cooperation on education in the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area. Eligibility for tuition fee subsidies for Macao students studying in Guangdong was expanded to cover 21 cities throughout Guangdong province.

The targeted completion rates of the Ten-year Development Plan for Non-tertiary Education (2011-2020) were raised to 83 percent. The public consultation on Non-tertiary Technical and Vocational Education System was completed. The Government prioritised free education and actively implemented integrated education to realise fair education. The by-law on Recurrent Education Subsidies Scheme came into effect in the 2018/2019 academic year, to enhance the competitiveness of students receiving recurrent education. The third phase of the Continuing Education Programme was implemented, to promote lifelong learning.

Regarding tertiary education, the Government continued supporting students in pursuing further studies. In 2018, 951 recommended students were admitted to 69 mainland China tertiary educational institutions. The enrolment rate to higher education institutions of third-year senior secondary school students receiving formal education remained at above 94 percent.

The Law on the Tertiary Education System and related regulations came into effect on 8 August 2018. The Tertiary Education Council and the Tertiary Education Fund commenced operation, with a start-up fund of 300 million patacas, providing tremendous support to the development of tertiary institutions. The Government encouraged tertiary institutions to launch more scientific research projects, stepped up efforts in scientific innovation, promoted the establishment of state key laboratories, and cultivated talented people. It also continued developing Macao as a base for tourism education, and a cradle for cultivating talented individuals who are bilingual in Chinese and Portuguese.

The Government announced the Macao Medium-to-long-term Talent Cultivation Scheme – Five-year Action Plan to consolidate data regarding shortages of talented people and compile lists of labour shortages in seven industries – including convention and exhibition, food and beverage, hotel, retail, gaming, finance and construction, to provide direction and a scientific reference for planning talent cultivation policies and measures.

The first phase of the Thousand Talents Programme was completed; over 3,300 local talented young people were identified and nurtured over a three-year period. A youth forum was held, with the theme of joining forces for developing the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area, to promote exchanges between young people in the Greater Bay Area, and seize opportunities arising from the development of the Greater Bay Area.

The Government also supported the development of innovative business start-ups by young people. The first national-level mass innovation space in Hong Kong and Macao regions opened at the Young Entrepreneur Incubation Centre, to further enhance cooperation with innovative mainland China entrepreneurs, and provide more opportunities to local newly-founded enterprises, especially regarding career development for young people.

## **Facilitating exchanges on culture conservation and developing Macao as a world tourism and leisure centre**

Regarding culture, the Government worked actively on heritage conservation, cultural exhibitions, and development of cultural and creative industries. We completed the Update Report on Urban Renewal of the Historic Centre of Macao, which was submitted to the UNESCO by the State Administration of Cultural Heritage.

The second phase of the public consultation for the Plan for Protection and Management of the Historic Centre of Macao was completed. The Lai Chi Yun Shipyard area was listed as a heritage site. The Government also commenced an assessment of the second batch of nine tangible cultural heritages in Macao, and achieved progress in compiling the List of Macao Intangible Cultural Heritage.

The Mandarin's House was officially opened, the restoration of five houses in the Ka Ho Village of Our Lady was completed, and the renovation of St. Mary Village Activity Centre (the original Chapel of Our Lady of Sorrows) was in progress.

The Cultural Affairs Bureau organised the first "Encounter in Macao – Arts and Cultural Festival between China and Portuguese-speaking Countries", marking the establishment of an art and cultural exchange platform between China and Portuguese-speaking countries. The bureau will organise more events and festivals. To facilitate development of the cultural industry, the Cultural Industry Fund launched the Community Cultural and Creative Production Subsidy Scheme and the Specific Subsidy Scheme for Brand Building, to support the development of competitive cultural and creative brands.



The Government was committed to raising public awareness of cultural heritage conservation – encouraging the public, especially young people, to become involved in inheriting and disseminating local culture. We also continued identifying, training and supporting talented local people in culture and art, and implementing the Arts and Cultural Studies Subsidy Scheme; strengthened cooperation across the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area, and co-organised activities with other groups and organisations – such as “A Showcase of Guangdong, Hong Kong and Macao Cantonese Opera New Stars”, “Youth Internship Programme at the Palace Museum” and “Cultural Heritage Summer Course for Secondary School Students of the Mainland, Hong Kong and Macao”, to facilitate cross-border exchanges and cooperation.

Regarding tourism, the Government leveraged its advantages to establish Macao as a destination for tourism along the Belt and Road and in the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area. There was progress with implementing the Master Plan for Developing the Tourism Industry of Macao, including through work on 67 short-term action plans. The Government also actively developed maritime tourism and began renovating the Grand Prix Museum.

The Macao Year of Gastronomy 2018 was officially launched, to enhance Macao’s comprehensive strength as a Creative City of Gastronomy. We continued leveraging synergy of large-scale events through a combination of sports, tourist, cultural and creative elements, to enrich the experience of residents and tourists, and hence enhance the attractiveness of Macao as a world tourism and leisure centre.

In 2018, the tourism industry in Macao enjoyed favourable development. During the

year, Macao received 35.8 million tourists, representing year-on-year growth of 9.8 percent. The Government improved the tourism environment, promoted application of smart tourism, implemented the tourism information interchange platform, conducted studies on tourism carrying capacities, conducted site management and developed strategies for crowded tourist attractions, explored the possibilities for developing potential tourism areas into new tourist attractions, to create new activity spaces for residents and visitors, in order to foster the sustainable development of the tourism industry and the city as a whole.

## Legislative Assembly Addresses Public Aspirations through Legislation, Fulfils its Supervisory Functions and Listens to Public Opinion



During the first session of the sixth Legislative Assembly, from 16 October 2017 to 15 October 2018, 51 plenary meetings and 167 committee meetings were held, with 13 laws, one resolution and 24 simple-majority resolutions passed during the plenary meetings.

## Legislative function:

Regarding people's livelihoods and the economy, the Legislative Assembly passed Law No. 1/2018 on Amendments to Regulations on Urban Real Estate Tax and Law No. 2/2018 on Stamp Duty for Non-first Time Buyers of Residential Property through emergency procedures. The former abolished the provisions of the relevant regulations whereby vacant properties were exempt from taxation, thereby reducing the hoarding of vacant properties for speculation; the latter imposed an additional five percent or ten percent stamp duty on non-first time buyers of residential property, thereby discouraging property speculation.

Regarding the protection of rights of the disabled, in order to ensure long-term financial support for the disabled, promote employment, and help them integrate into society, the Legislative Assembly passed Law No. 6/2018 on Amendments to Law No. 4/2010 on the Social Security System, and Law No. 8/2018 on Provision of Tax Concessions to Employers Who Hire People with Disabilities, thereby transforming the temporary disability allowance scheme into a long-term measure, and granting employers hiring people with disabilities a certain amount of tax deduction.

Law No. 12/2018 on Legal System for Protection of Rights of the Elderly was also passed, to establish the overall framework for the protection of rights of the elderly, and provide the Government with clear principles and guidelines for formulating policies on elderly persons.

The Legislative Assembly also passed Law No. 3/2018 on Amendments to the General Rules for Disciplined Personnel of Macao Security Forces, approved by Decree-Law No. 66/94/M dated 30 December 1994, concerning public administration, thereby improving the human resources allocation of the public security forces.

Regarding the enhancement of system establishment, Law No. 9/2018 on Establishment of the Municipal Affairs Bureau was passed, thereby establishing a municipal body that is not an organ of political power, in strict compliance with the Basic Law of Macao, to ensure a smooth transition of the functions and personnel of the Civic and Municipal Affairs Bureau.

For optimisation of division of functions, Law No. 11/2018 on Amendments to the Rights of Assembly and Demonstration, approved by Decree-Law No. 2/93/M dated 17 May 1993 was passed, under which notification of a demonstration should instead be given to the Public Security Police Force, thereby simplifying the administrative procedure and improving administrative efficiency.

Regarding improvement of welfare for civil servants, Law No. 5/2018 on Adjustment of the Amount of Birth Allowance was also passed, thereby increasing the birth allowance for civil servants giving birth to their children to an amount comparable to that under the Social Security Fund, hence fully implementing financial support measures to encourage childbirth.

For stability of financial order, Law No. 4/2018 on Amendments to Law No. 9/2012 on the Deposit Protection System was passed, thereby improving the effectiveness of the deposit protection system by improving its payout efficiency and reinforcing account holders' confidence in the deposit system.

Furthermore, in response to the cancellation of registration of a large number of damaged vehicles following the passage of Typhoon Hato on 23 August 2017, Law No. 10/2018 on Special Tax Concession for Acquisition of Motor Vehicles was passed, thereby offering a special tax concession to relieve the financial burdens of those who had to purchase new vehicles due to the damage caused by the typhoon.

As the Central People's Government had demarcated Macao's marine boundaries, with an area of 85 square kilometres of inshore waters falling under the administration of Macao, Law No. 7/2018 on Maritime Area Management Framework Law was passed, to define the objectives and principles of maritime area management, and foster the establishment of an overall planning system, thereby ensuring the effective management and appropriate development and use of the maritime area.

The above-mentioned laws were proposed by the Government.

## **Supervisory functions:**

In accordance with the authority conferred by the Basic Law of the Macao Special Administrative Region, the Legislative Assembly oversaw the government budget and public finances. This involved tasks included passing Law No. 16/2017 on the 2018 Government Budget, deliberating the Government's Reports on Budget Implementation for 2016, and listening to and discussing the 2018 Policy Address delivered by the Chief Executive.

In addition, during the legislative session, legislators raised 636 written and 63 oral questions, and called for eight plenary meetings regarding the oral questions. During the plenary meetings, legislators gave 341 pre-agenda speeches, covering housing policy, public transport, healthcare and education, economy and culture, environmental protection, public administration, talent cultivation and labour rights protection.

Moreover, the Follow-up Committee for Land and Public Concession Affairs, the Follow-up Committee for Public Finance Affairs and the Follow-up Committee for Public Administration Affairs actively followed up on and prepared 14 reports on important administrative issues and implementation of relevant laws.

Other responsibilities of the Legislative Assembly include listening to and fully reflecting different views, suggestions and criticisms from the public, and making prompt responses regarding public aspirations. During the session, legislators

continued to strengthen the roster system for receiving public visitors, and 50 residents were personally received by legislators through this service. The Legislative Assembly also received 169 opinions and suggestions from the public through phone and email. Moreover, the Legislative Assembly received three petitions from citizens and groups, and handled these appropriately.

## CCAC successfully combats corruption and CA promotes optimal use of public funds



In 2018, the Commission Against Corruption (“the CCAC”) stepped up its efforts in fulfilling its anti-corruption mission. Building on past experiences, the CCAC continued improving law enforcement models, strengthened law enforcement skills, upgraded law enforcement equipment and optimised workforce management, to achieve the anticipated results in anti-corruption and regional law enforcement cooperation.

Regarding complaints to the Ombudsman, the CCAC actively monitors the operations of public departments, conducts special investigations on cases of major public interest, and publishes reports on the investigations. With the combination of traditional media and online platforms, the CCAC has expanded promotion and education regarding integrity. During the year, the CCAC continued organising activities to promote external exchanges and cooperation at all levels with related organisations.

In 2018, the CCAC received 733 complaints and reports, of which 141 involved anti-corruption cases and 592 were complaints to the Ombudsman.

At the end of the year, the CCAC concluded 889 cases, 180 of which were concluded and transferred to the Public Prosecutions or were closed; while 709 complaints to the Ombudsman were concluded and closed.

The CCAC also received 1,171 inquiries of various kinds during the year, 728 of which involved criminal offences, while 443 were complaints to the Ombudsman.

Regarding promotion and education, the CCAC continued fulfilling its duty of promoting integrity education. In all, 476 talks and seminars were held during the year. They were attended by 23,443 participants, and targeted civil servants, members of community organisations, employers and employees in the private sector, young people, and primary and secondary school students.

In 2018, the CCAC published its first integrity education picture book for parents and children, *Big Tooth's Jackpot*. It also launched a series of related promotional and educational activities. To align with ways teachers use moral education teaching kits, an integrity education resources website was launched, to enable teachers to readily search for CCAC's teaching resources.

The two CCAC branch offices, in Areia Preta and Taipa, continued their promotional functions in the community, along with receiving complaints and reports. They received 940 complaints, reports, requests for assistance and simple inquiries during the year.

Regarding external affairs, the CCAC organised delegations to visit, in China, the National Supervisory Commission, the Supreme People's Procuratorate, the Ministry of Public Security, the Hong Kong and Macao Affairs Office of the State Council, the Department of Public Security of Zhejiang Province, and Zhejiang Police College; and in Portugal, the Ministry of Justice, the Office of the Ombudsman, the Institute of Registries and Notaries, the Embassy of the People's Republic of China in Portugal and the Macao Economic and Trade Office in Lisbon. The CCAC also sent delegations to attend the Presentation Ceremony of the Ombudsman's Awards 2018 in Hong Kong; a conference related to the United Nations Convention against Corruption (UNCAC) in Vienna; and the third International Academic Conference on Criminal Investigation and Forensic Science in Shenyang, Liaoning Province.

The CCAC also received delegations from the People's Procuratorate of Guangdong Province, the Hong Kong and Macao Affairs Office of the Jiangsu Provincial People's Government, officials of the People's Government of Changzhi, Shanxi, who were attending an advanced training course in Hong Kong and Macao, the Supreme Office of the Prosecutor of the Democratic Republic of Sao Tome and Principe, the Supreme Office of the Prosecutor of the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste, the Casino Regulatory Authority of Singapore, and the Government Inspectorate of Vietnam, to exchange work experiences and enhance cooperation with these parties.

In 2019, in response to the development of information technology, the CCAC will optimise its law enforcement technology and equipment, enhance staff training, improve the effectiveness of anti-corruption, and comprehensively monitor the fifth Chief Executive Election, to ensure a corruption-free, fair and just election.

The CCAC will also continue paying attention to issues that are of major public interest, conduct special investigations and provide recommendations for improvements when necessary, strengthen liaison and collaboration with public departments, and enhance the effectiveness of prevention of work-related crimes and administrative irregularities. It will continue updating strategies for advocating integrity, deepening integrity education for all walks of life, and strive to deepen and broaden the scope of international and regional cooperation.



In 2018, the Commission of Audit (CA) released four audit reports: two performance audit reports – Management of Public Library Collections and Planning and Implementation of Electronic Governance; a special audit report – Light Rapid Transit System – the Fourth Report; and the Audit Report on the General Accounts 2017.

The performance audit report Management of Public Library Collections mainly covers the Cultural Affairs Bureau’s processes regarding new books, from acquisition to their release to the public. The audit assessed whether the books in storage areas are in good condition, and whether the Cultural Affairs Bureau sets suitable standards for the acquisition of books.

The audit result shows that by the end of May 2017, there were around 100,000 library items in the “registered but not catalogued or in the process of being shelved” status in the new computer system for public libraries. Most had been in this status for more than five years, while some had been for 17 years. Moreover, the hygiene of

the central reserve was of very poor quality, while the standard of purchasing books was not uniform. The Cultural Affairs Bureau is determined to solve the problems and undergo a thorough reform.

The performance audit report Planning and Implementation of Electronic Governance analyses whether the Public Administration and Civil Service Bureau (SAFP) had planned and implemented electronic governance work with detailed consideration and arrangements, to ensure this work would be properly carried out and meet the expected targets.

From 2001 to 2016, SAFP invested 237,346,502.41 patacas into developing electronic governance and drew up four planning documents. Until 31 December 2016, 61 projects were available for investigation by the auditor, and only 39 of them had been completed, representing 63.93 percent of this total, reflecting a low implementation rate. Of the 22 uncompleted projects, 16 had been proposed at least 10 years ago yet were still unfinished.

As for the personnel management system and the ePass developed by SAFP, the auditor randomly assessed their implementation, and found that the three personnel management modules proposed in 2001 had been developed in a reckless way without basic analyses. This led to these systems only becoming available to departments after 9 to 13 years of development. Regarding the implementation of ePass, the SAFP was unable to achieve the anticipated results in terms of planning service targets, enactment of laws to regulate ePass, and the number of registered users.

The Commission of Audit also released the special audit report Light Rail Transit System – the Fourth Report, which revealed that until December 2017, only the civil engineering work for the 9.3 kilometre long Taipa Line, had been completed, accounting for 44.28 percent of the construction work in phase one of the Light Rail Train (LRT) project, while for the Macao Peninsula Line, only preliminary work had begun on Barra Station.

Regarding the investment cost, the estimated construction cost for the LRT phase one was significantly increased from 4.2 billion patacas in 2007 to 14.273 billion patacas in September 2012.

The main finding of this follow-up audit is that for the three sections of Taipa Line, approval had been given several times to extend the construction period after work had commenced, and the extension periods were 95 percent to 111 percent as long the original construction period. It was found that there were serious deficiencies in the Transportation Infrastructure Office regarding analyses and approvals of applications for extensions, as well as the coordination and management work. CA urged departments regulating public works to enhance their management mechanisms regarding construction periods and implementation of all public works, to help resolve

the long-standing problems.

As a member of the China Audit Delegation, the Commissioner of Audit, Ho Weng On, attended the 14th Assembly of the Asian Organization of Supreme Audit Institutions from 19 to 22 September. During the assembly, he exchanged views on the assembly's theme and the management and development of audit authorities with the Commissioner of Audit of the National Audit Office, Hu Zejun; the then Deputy Director of Audit of Hong Kong Audit Commission, John Chu; and leading officials from the audit authorities of various Asian countries.

From 26 to 28 September, Mr Ho attended as an observer the Tenth General Assembly of Supreme Audit Organisations of the Portuguese-speaking Countries Alliance (OISC/CPLP), which was held in the capital of Timor-Leste, Dili. He held discussions with other participants based on the assembly's theme – "The impact of cooperation between public and private institutions on improving the supervision and management work of supreme audit institutions".

To maintain good communications with the audit industry, and keep up with the latest information related to auditing, the Commissioner of Audit, Ho Weng On, led delegations to the National Audit Office and the Audit Office of Guangdong Province in April and June, respectively. He met with the Commissioner of Audit, Hu Zejun, and the Secretary of the Leading Party Members' Group of Audit Office of Guangdong Province, Lu Rongchun, to exchange views on boosting the development of computer-aided audit systems, leveraging Macao's positioning as an economic and trading service platform between China and Portuguese speaking countries, management of government audit, planning for big data audits, and provision of training for auditors.

On the invitation of China Society of Audit, a CA delegation participated in the Cross-Strait, Hong Kong and Macao Audit Theories and Practices Conference 2018, which was held in Ordos, Inner Mongolia, in August. Apart from delivering two reports, the delegation also exchanged views with audit practitioners and academics on the latest developments in auditing.

To enhance professional knowledge of the auditing team, in 2018 the CA invited experts and academics from the National Audit Office and Hong Kong, respectively, to host training courses. These courses, including "Accountability Audit on Government Leaders and Employees", "Audit Laws and Regulations", "Public Works Investment Audit", "Information System Audit" and "International Financial Reporting Standard (IFRS) 15 – Revenue from Contracts with Customers", were offered to auditing staff, providing updated audit knowledge and an understanding of the latest situations in various regions. The courses were applicable to auditing work, enabling participants to fulfil their duties in a more professional manner.

Regarding promotion and publicity, CA continued organising talks on auditing

culture, for cadets of the Academy of Macao Public Security Forces, new government recruits and community organisations, to promote optimised use of public funds. In all, 25 talks were held during the year, and were attended by about 900 participants.

## Adjudicating according to the law and judicial independence, and prosecuting to secure justice and rule of law



### Numbers of cases handled by the three-tier court system

2018	Court of Final Appeal	Court of Second Instance	Court of First Instance (including the Examining Magistracy)	Administrative Court	Total
Cases handled	121	1,204	19,401	96	20,822
Cases concluded	110	1,219	19,971	1,478	22,778
Cases pending	76	725	12,632	103	13,536

The majority of the cases in the three-tier court system were criminal cases and

criminal labour cases, which totalled 7,403 (excluding Examining Magistracy cases). Ranking second were civil and labour cases, which totalled 5,103. There were also 327 administrative cases, and 7,989 other cases.

## Law promotion and legal consulting services

To strengthen the promotion of law and foster transparency of the judicial system, starting from 9 October 2013, the court issues press releases about typical concluded cases, and publishes them on the websites of the court and the Government Information Bureau. Various media may republish and report on these cases, which will hopefully promote legal awareness and law abidance in society, and inform the public regarding the judicial approaches and methods for settling various disputes. As at the end of 2018, an accumulated total of 555 articles had been released, 89 of which were released in 2018.

Summary of consulting services provided by the Court of First Instance is as follows:

2018	Criminal Courts	Civil Courts	Court for Minor Civil Cases	Total
Total number of inquiries	6,210	4,649	1,482	12,341
Number of cases	6,362	4,313	1,482	12,157
Number of cases directly handled by the information centre	6,249	3,897	1,482	11,628
Number of cases transferred to the Public Prosecutions Office	100	366	-	466
Number of cases transferred to other departments	13	50	-	63
Number of telephone inquiries	598	875	-	1,473

## Legal assistance and enforcement

Regarding delivery of judicial writs and assistance in investigations and evidence collection in civil and commercial cases, in 2018 the Court of Final Appeal received 188 judicial writs from mainland China courts, and delivered 52 judicial writs to mainland China courts on behalf of courts in Macao.

In 2018, the Court of Second Instance received 21 requests for reviewing and endorsing judgments made by mainland China courts or arbiters; of these, three judgments endorsed by the Court of Second Instance were sent to the Court of First Instance for enforcement.

## **Declarations of assets and interests**

In 2018, the Court of Final Appeal followed the regulations in Law No.11/2003 amended by Law No.1/2013 in the process of receiving individuals for the declaration of assets. It opened 201 individual dossiers, processed 2,071 documents for the declaration of assets that involved 1,575 people, and organised and updated the contents of the individual dossiers according to the law.

According to the stipulations in Law No.11/2003, which was amended according to Law No.1/2013, the office of the Court of Final Appeal has uploaded Part IV of the disclosure document of asset declaration to the website of the Courts of Macao, ensuring it is available in the public domain as required by law. In 2018, the disclosure documents (Part IV) of 457 individual dossiers, involving 319 people, were published online and can be retrieved. A total of 2,727 disclosure documents, involving 712 people, are now published online and can be retrieved.

## **Adhering to legal judgments to uphold judicial independence, promoting justice to support Greater Bay Area development**

Speaking at the opening ceremony of the 2018-2019 judicial year, the President of the Court of Final Appeal, Sam Hou Fai, said that the courts put the judiciary at the heart of struggles pertaining to the MSAR's policies, economy and society in the previous judicial year, since they handled typical cases of judicialisation of politics and cases involving significant public interest and interests of corporate legal persons. The judiciary had no other choice but to face these challenges.

However, some people deviated from the basic requirements of fairness and justice of the judiciary, and criticised the judges of rigid adjudication or even openly requested the judicial officers handling certain cases to adjust the mainstream judicial opinions for different interests, when there was no change in law. Yet, judicial officers could only execute laws but not create new laws or amend or revoke old laws that were still in force, and could not bend laws with judicial opinions to satisfy claims by certain parties.

People should adhere to the rule of law, and society's requirements and expectations regarding the judiciary and judicial officers, when attempting to resolve various conflicts and disputes with the judicial mindset and legal means.

Judicial independence was the premise and foundation of a fair judiciary, and respect for judicial authority and maintenance of judicial independence were the core values of Macao. When the judiciary was not independent and judicial authority was not respected, the judiciary would not be free of interference and judicial decisions could be ignored. If so, the law would no longer be the fair standard of judgment, and the judiciary would no longer be the last line of defence in protecting the public interest. The value of a fair judiciary and authority of law could not be maintained.

The President of the Court of Final Appeal, Sam Hou Fai, also mentioned that the development of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area was a major decision of the Central People’s Government for the national development strategy, with “One country, two systems” as its significant characteristic and advantage. Since its establishment was a result of the cooperation between different judicial systems, judiciaries and legal systems, legal conflict is an inevitable challenge.

Regarding civil and commercial legal assistance, although the MSAR has signed five agreements on mutual legal assistance with mainland China and Hong Kong, there remained a problem regarding how to increase the efficiency of legal assistance, which requires reviewing and revising the existing arrangements in response to the establishment of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area.

Regarding criminal legal assistance, Macao has only signed an agreement on arrangements for the transfer of sentenced persons with Hong Kong. However, work has not commenced on the arrangements for delivery of documents, investigations and collection of evidence, transfer of fugitives, and recognition and enforcement of criminal judgments. Notably, there was no agreement on arrangements for criminal legal assistance between Macao and mainland China. Therefore, it was necessary to focus on promoting criminal legal assistance throughout the region, and striving to make progress in formulating and implementing supporting laws and regulations regarding regional criminal legal assistance, as prescribed in Article 93 of the Basic Law.



The operations of the MSAR's Public Prosecutions Office in 2018 are summarised as follows:

1. Actively performed its prosecution duties to fight crime and maintain fairness and justice in rule of law and society;
2. Performed its prosecution functions to maintain legality, remained concerned about pressing issues in society, and protected the public interest and society's legitimate rights and interests;
3. Strengthened legal research to provide assistance with legislation and professional recommendations for refining and developing Macao's legal system;
4. Strengthened communications and coordination with government departments and provided legal opinions for legislation and legal amendments;
5. Continued enhancing internal administration of the Office of the Public Prosecutor-General, and strengthening the technical and administrative assistance functions of the Office of the Public Prosecutor-General, and judicial work of the Public Prosecutions Office; and
6. Continued enhancing information technology infrastructure to improve quality and efficiency of prosecutions.

Regarding cases in 2018, the number of criminal cases initiated by the Public Prosecutions Office was 14,418, 0.42 percent more than the 14,358 cases in 2017. The number of cases concluded by the Examining Magistracy was 14,453, representing a decrease of 11.35 percent; the number of prosecutions was 4,264, representing a decrease of 2.27 percent; the number of cases filed was 9,906, representing a decrease of 14.98 percent; and the number of cases reopened due to discovery of new evidence was 263, representing an increase of 5.62 percent.

There were slight decreases in the numbers of cases concluded and filed, and prosecutions, mainly due to the efforts of the Examining Magistracy of the Public Prosecutions Office's judicial officers in clearing old cases while handling newly initiated cases in 2018. The three major reasons for cases being filed were failure to identify offenders after investigations, victims of reported crimes no longer wishing to hold the purported offenders accountable, and insufficient criminal evidence.

During the year, the Public Prosecutions Office initiated investigations regarding:

- 4,938 theft, robbery and property damage cases (up 3.83 percent year on year);
- 1,559 offences involving physical assault (down 8.24 percent year on year);

- 1,482 fraud and extortion cases (up 26.78 percent year on year);
- 11,153 crimes related to traffic accidents (down 7.17 percent year on year); and
- 915 illegal immigration and immigration-related crimes (down 15.04 percent year on year).

In addition, the Public Prosecutions Office initiated relatively high numbers of investigations of the following crimes:

- 817 cases of illegal gambling and loan-sharking (up 2.77 percent year on year);
- 509 cases of forgery (up 56.62 percent year on year);
- 395 crimes against public authority (down 37.2 percent year on year); and
- 352 computer crimes (up 79.59 percent year on year).

Also in 2018, the Public Prosecutions Office initiated investigations of 53 money laundering cases, 8.62 percent less than 58 such investigations in 2017; and 190 investigations of drug-related crimes, 23.39 percent less than 248 such investigations in 2017. These figures revealed success in prevention of money laundering and drug-related crimes in 2018.

Each year since 2015, the Public Prosecutions Office has referred an average of over 4,000 prosecutions to the Lower Court. In 2018, besides handling criminal case trials and executing cases, the judicial officers of the Public Prosecutions Office handled 82 judicial appeals and 437 replies to appeals.

The judicial officers of the Public Prosecutions Office also handled litigation regarding civil and labour cases, and pre-litigation procedures for related cases, to help ensure the impartiality of the judiciary.

When handling labour cases, to maintain the rights of the relatively weak working class to the greatest extent and as quickly as possible, the Public Prosecutions Office attempted mediation to protect labour interests in accordance with the Code of Labour Procedure; in 2018, the Public Prosecutions Office was involved in 735 cases in the Labour Tribunal, as follows:

- 397 cases involving labour accidents and occupational diseases (395 were successfully mediated, while 28 cases required litigation due to failure to reach a mediation agreement);
- 338 ordinary labour litigation procedures were initiated (366 were successfully mediated, while further litigation was required for nine cases).

During 2018, 761 workers were involved in the successful mediation procedures

conducted by the Public Prosecutions Office, and 89 workers were involved in the cases initiated following failure to achieve mediation.

In addition, to protect the interests of minors and disadvantaged groups and the public interest, the Public Prosecutions Office handled civil cases involving minors, missing persons and incapacitated persons. In 2018, the Office investigated 44 maternity or paternity cases, and initiated 140 court actions for minors (18.64 percent more than the 118 such actions in 2017); and handled 564 proceedings concerning interdiction, disqualification, custody, litigation fees, bankruptcy, mandatory property inventories and settlement of unpaid taxes on behalf of the Finance Services Bureau (increased by 7.02 percent compared to 527 in 2017).

The Public Prosecutions Office also initiated 1,238 civil and labour pre-suite cases (administrative cases) in 2018, 16.14 percent more than the figure of 1,066 cases in 2017, in order to commence related civil and labour legal proceedings.

In 2018, the Administrative Court Office of the Public Prosecutions Office received 71 judicial appeals, 10 litigation cases and six cases involving urgent procedures, participated in four litigation procedures, completed 2,614 pleadings, and concluded 408 cases.

In 2018, the Public Prosecutions Office received fewer cases than in 2017. However, it also handled several cases that were received in 2017 and transferred to 2018, including administrative penalty cases concerning Uber, litigations related to public projects, arbitrations concerning qualifications of Home-Ownership Scheme and public housing, cases of medical incidents involving public medical services, and cases involving illegal guesthouses and taxation. Through the joint efforts by all staff of the Administrative Court office of the Public Prosecutions Office, the case conclusion rate was significantly higher in 2018 than in 2017.

In 2018, the five judicial officers of the Public Prosecutions Office before the Court of Final Appeal and the Court of Second Instance participated in 1,272 criminal, civil and administrative proceedings of the Court of Second Instance in the Court of Second Instance. They issued 1,354 opinions on appeals and replies to appeals, handled 129 cases of the Court of Final Appeal, and issued 102 opinions on appeals and replies to appeals.