

Macau casinos create more jobs for middle-aged people

Macau's gaming industry not only registered strong growth in recent years but also created more job opportunities for local middle-aged citizens, said Shuen Ka Hung, director of the Labor Affairs Bureau of the Macao SAR government.

Responding to a lawmaker's question on local residents' job security, Shuen said among the local employed population engaged in the gaming industry, number of employees, aged between 35 and 54, increased by over 10,000 or nearly 90 percent in the fourth quarter of 2007 compared with the same period of 2005.

At the end of 2007, there were 44,743 paid employees engaged in Macao's gaming industry, an increase of 22.9 percent over the previous year, and average monthly earnings (excluding bonuses and allowances) for full time employees in the industry stood at USD 1,862, according to the Statistics and Census Service (DSEC) of the SAR (Special Administrative Region) government.

Shuen promised that the SAR government will prompt local casinos to continue offering job opportunities to the locals, especially the middle-aged ones, through various measures, such as providing more vocational training and stepping up fight against illegal migrant workers, in a bid to improve local residents' employment conditions and enhance their income levels.

He also emphasized that if companies are found violating the SAR's employment and labor laws, the government will slash the number of imported workers they hired, in order to protect the employment rights of the local residents.

According to Macao's relevant laws, only residents of the SAR

are allowed to take up occupations as croupiers in local casinos. DSEC figures showed that the island city of 538,000 logged an unemployment rate of 2.9 percent from December 2007 to February 2008.