

MACAO'S LOPSIDED DEVELOPMENT

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Executive Summary

1. The 2007 Labour Day protest signaled public resentment of the government amidst strong economic growth propelled by casino liberalization in 2002.
2. Economic growth failed to generate extensive overspill effect and improve the livelihood of the people significantly. Only the gambling industry and related industries such as construction, hospitality, and food and beverage can benefit from the robust economy.
3. The new wealth generated by economic growth benefited mainly the government, new casinos, property developers, and privileged businesspeople. People-in-the-street do not benefit much.
4. The property price more than doubled in 3 years whilst the median income of many industries was suppressed by migrant labour, both legal and illegal.
5. The low level of education and skill made it difficult for many local workers to jump onto the bandwagon of the more knowledge-based economy and compete with the increasing number of migrant labour.
6. The increasing affluence of the society increased traffic volume and worsened traffic congestion.
7. The credibility of the government was undermined by a series of corruption scandals involving senior officials, legislators and huge amount of public monies. The incompetence of law enforcers in solving crimes fuelled public discontentment.
8. Though the government proposed several measures to cool down the property market and improve people's livelihood, public resentment remained high. The political system which obliges the government to respond to the public was to blame.